

Moderate Comprehension Answer

Exam 2 Question: People from a variety of marginalized racial minority groups tend to claim a more prominent role for racism in current events than do White Americans. Mainstream discourse tends to portray these claims of racism as a form of exaggeration or even a strategy of “playing the race card”. Apply decolonial strategies of a cultural psychology analysis to respond to this characterization.

Points possible: 10

Points awarded: 10

Student Sample: Decolonizing strategies help prevent us from making quick judgements about cultures different from our own. People tend to see other cultures’ differences from their own rather than their similarities, which usually results in negative stereotypes. There are two decolonizing strategies: denaturalizing + normalizing. Denaturalizing can be applied to limit ideas about other cultures being incorrect + our own culture as “just natural”. Normalizing helps prevent thinking other cultures are abnormal, making our own culture the standard “norm”.

Minorities tend to claim that race is a factor in many current events + White Americans accuse them of “playing the race card”. White Americans are essentially normalizing prejudice. They also tend to think of racism as individualistic + think of events involving race as situational and isolated. White Americans are ultimately portraying that prejudice is the norm + even more so that Black Americans are exaggerating their claims of racism in everyday life + the US as a whole. White Americans see race as “just natural”. Black Americans tend to see the systematic nature of racism in the US and how it is ingrained in American society. Black Americans have used the “normalizing” strategy to make an accurate observation about the world they live in. White Americans need to employ the decolonial strategy of denaturalization to combat the idea that racism is a part of everyday life in the US and the idea that racism only exists on an individual level. Moreover, if White Americans used the normalizing strategy they, too, would be outraged and outspoken about the systematic construction of racism.

Rubric and Evaluation:

Students get 2 points for defining the ‘normalizing’ strategy: Student received 2 points for defining normalizing as a strategy to combat characterizations of minority/Othered cultural practices as abnormal or unreasonable.

Students get 3 points for applying the normalizing strategy to racial minority perceptions of racism: Student received 3 points for explaining Black American’s perceptions of racism as observations of systematic inequalities.

Students get 2 points for defining the ‘denaturalizing’ strategy: Student received 2 points for defining denaturalizing as a strategy to combat characterizations of majority/hegemonic cultural practices as “just natural” or superior.

Students get 3 points for applying the denaturalizing strategy to White American perceptions of racism: Student received 3 points for utilizing class material on differing conceptions of racism & prejudice; the student applied this work to explain White American perceptions as attributed to constructions of racism as “just natural” isolated incidences of individual prejudice.

Overall comments: The student shows a general understanding of the purposes of the two decolonizing strategies. They apply empirical work on constructions of prejudice as functioning at individual or systemic levels to explain racial differences in perceptions of racism. Ideally, they would have provided more detail when applying the normalizing strategy to racial minorities’ understanding of racism, but the logic of their argument is established in the previous paragraph on White Americans.