

INSTRUCTIONS

Assignment A— your choice of one of five topics presented in modules 2-5—is to be submitted by the date listed in the course calendar. The paper you choose to hand in as Assignment A is worth (15%) of your course grade. Your paper should use APA format and be a maximum of 5 pages in length.

OPTION 1: PHILOSOPHY, BACKDROP TO OUR CULTURE

Popular culture draws on large philosophic questions to help us understand ourselves better. (Yes, popular culture provides entertainment, but our most loved stories are about the things we care about the most — ourselves.) Choose a cultural touchstone: a movie, TV series, entertainer, and analyze the story they are telling in terms of their philosophical description of the human experience and the applicable large themes of this course: nature/nurture, active/passive, continuous/discontinuous, universal/individual.

Once you have analyzed your cultural touchstone, imagine your life is a “story.” What philosophical assumptions can you make about yourself?

Hint: There is plenty of research material if you search for *Philosophy* + “Lost” or “The Matrix” or “The Simpsons”; however, extra consideration will be given to cultural stories that don’t already have a book published titled *Philosophy and...*(your subject).

OPTION 2: BIRTH WEIGHT RESEARCHER

The scientific option involves researching statistical birth weight data for two different countries (including a developed country a developing country). As part of your research, you will need to investigate the issues surrounding low birth weights in underdeveloped countries. Your assignment will highlight the following findings:

- A statistical description of birth weight information for a developed country including: average birth weight, high birth weight (one standard deviation above average), low birth weight (one standard deviation below average)
- A description of the frequency of low birth weight in: a developing country
- A discussion of how similar or disparate low birth weights are across both countries, and how these findings may relate to the large developmental themes presented in this course: nature/nurture, active/passive, continuous/discontinuous, universal/individual

Note: You will need to provide references for each of the three studies that you select, as well as a short rationale of how each country meets the criteria of being developed, developing, or underdeveloped.

Hint: Several reliable international agencies provide health statistics.