

EXAM STRATEGIES – UNDERSTANDING THE KEY VERBS IN EXAM QUESTIONS

Match each verb below with its exam hint

Name	Requires exact short response/definition (usually, but not always, drawn from a source).
Identify	Requires a specific answer (e.g. what type of experiment) based on the source but drawn from your own knowledge.
Evaluate	Find a specific word or phrase from the source (quote this).
State	Use your knowledge to give points & reasons for HOW a theory/study is used or gives us an understanding on a specific area (e.g. How displacement affects memory). <i>You may be asked to put this into the context of a study or source, but use your own words.</i>
Explain	Include a specific detail drawn from a source (but may not necessarily be quote from the source).
Outline	Asks you to apply your knowledge to a specific area (e.g. describe how...) so you MUST use your knowledge & examples based on the specific focus in the qu. <i>You may be asked to put this into the context of a theory, study or source, but use your own words.</i>
Give	Give criticisms of this theory or study with EXAMPLES. <i>E.g. The theory/study says/did..... This is limited because... (must link back to validity/ethical considerations of theory/findings of study and/or ability to generalize findings to a wider population.</i>
Describe	Give clear knowledge points based on marks using examples.

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ANSWERS

TIP: You **MUST** read the question very carefully and look for the key **VERB**. This can be difference between 3 (or 6) and 0 marks!

Key Verbs & what they are asking you:

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Describe – Asks you to apply your knowledge to a specific area (e.g. describe how...) so you **MUST** use your knowledge & examples based on the specific focus in the qu. *You may be asked to put this into the context of a theory, study or source, but use your own words.*

Evaluate – Give **criticisms** of this theory or study with **EXAMPLES**. *E.g. The theory/study says/did..... This is limited because... (must link back to validity/ethical considerations of theory/findings of study and/or ability to generalize findings to a wider population.*