

2024



AP[®] Research Academic Paper

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Inside:

Sample I

- Scoring Guidelines**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

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5 Points

Score of 1	Score of 2	Score of 3	Score of 4	Score of 5
Report on Existing Knowledge	Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method	Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding	Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding	Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry. • Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works. • Describes a search and report process. • Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry. • Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader. • Cites AND/OR attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or intext), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline specific style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning. • Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works OR through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works. • Describes a nonreplicable research method OR provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry. • Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry. • Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader. • Cites AND/OR attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or intext), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline specific style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method AND overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing. • Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear • Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry. • Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning OR insufficient evidence. • Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization. • Cites AND attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND intext), with few errors or inconsistencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion. • Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives AND logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap. • Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry • Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning AND sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified. • Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization. • Cites AND attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND intext), with few to no errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion. • Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives AND logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap. • Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry. • Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice. • Enhances the communication of the student’s ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors. • Cites AND attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited AND intext), with few to no errors.

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Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and develop an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates a conclusion or new understanding stemming from a clearly articulated research question or project goal. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing its implications to a larger community of practice;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Pro Wrestling Injuries:

A case study of the pro wrestling industry and
its effects on the wrestlers

How do physical and mental aspects affect pro wrestlers?

Literature review

Professional wrestling has traditionally followed a moral narrative of good versus bad, emphasizing hard work, religiosity, and clean living. However, the performances have evolved to include more varied and nuanced themes. These themes now focus on excitement through violence, sexualization, and theatrical storylines, as well as intrigue through high-risk situations, character transformations, and open-ended narratives. As a result, standard wrestling moves have taken a backseat to more dramatic and exciting maneuvers. Certain moves have become associated with specific wrestlers, making violence a central aspect of both competition and displays. While the scripted outcome is what captures public attention, the means of victory may hold greater significance. Anabolic steroid abuse is often associated with 'roid rage, but it is actually one of the least common side effects. More common side effects include cardiovascular disease and an enlarged heart. A study found that steroid users had weaker hearts and more plaque build-up in their arteries compared to non-users. The longer the steroid use, the worse the arteries became. Steroid abuse, combined with cocaine use, can lead to fatal heart attacks. Steroid abuse is also linked to mood disorders like depression and mania, which can further worsen cardiac issues.

Methodology

The method of my study addresses the question: Through a qualitative lens of this case study, how have professional wrestlers past and present coped with the demands of the pro wrestling industry mainly during its rise in popularity since the 90s. But before this question could be answered, the research process must have a few categories to to be covered in order to get a full grasp of what is being studied. The first category covers me deep diving into how the wrestlers perform and train what they do in the ring. The second category covers the different cases in injuries, particularly the career ending ones, which have mainly happened in the 90s and early 2000s. The third category covers steroid use which has been a huge controversy back in the 90s. The fourth category covers the financial situations that the wrestlers deal with. The fifth category covers any drug addiction taken by the wrestlers. The sixth category covers the mental health of the wrestlers and how they cope with the business. The seventh category covers ethical concerns that not only the wrestlers have, but also the concerns the consumers of this product have. Since I'm going to use qualitative data, I'm going to use resources such as text, images, documentaries, Interviews, and news sources.

Performance in the ring

With me trying to get a deep dive into what happens on TV when these wrestlers do their thing, I would have to use some sort of qualitative evidence to provide insight. I will use interviews to get the wrestlers perspective into what they experience during training. This will not only be for physical training, but will also be for mental readiness before having a match and healthy and unhealthy habits they have. Me receiving insight will be able to know what the wrestlers do that contribute to certain injuries. But this will only be from wrestlers that have a huge history with injury.

Injuries

For this category I will talk with the wrestlers who have experienced career-ending injuries, exploring the circumstances leading to the injury and the aftermath. I will also analyze medical reports and case studies of wrestlers who suffered significant injuries during the 90s and early 2000s. Then I will examine visual evidence from documentaries and images that examine the impact of injuries on wrestlers. Then I will identify patterns in the types of injuries that led to early retirements. Finally, I will examine the long-term physical and mental effects of career-ending injuries. Investigate how the industry responded to and addressed these injuries over time.

Steroid Use

For this one I will first investigate historical records, articles, and reports on the overdosage of steroid use in professional wrestling during the 90s. Then I will speak with wrestlers who were wrestling during this period and gather their perspectives on steroid use within the industry. I will go ahead and examine the impact of steroid controversies on individual careers. Then make a connection by exploring how the industry's thoughts on steroids have evolved over time. Then lastly I will analyze the role of higher ups in the industry putting measures in place for controlling steroid use.

Financial Situations

So for this I will conduct interviews with wrestlers to understand the financial challenges they face, including contract negotiations they have had, payment structures, and financial planning. I will also analyze documentaries and news reports covering financial aspects of professional wrestling. Then I will identify common financial challenges faced by wrestlers. Then explore the impact of financial instability on wrestlers' well-being. Then finally I will examine changes in the industry's approach to wrestler repayment over the years.

Drug Use

I will talk with wrestlers to explore the historical and current accounts of drug use in the industry. I will try to understand the motivations behind drug use, the types of substances involved, and any changes in behavior over time. I will sit and watch documentaries and news reports that cover different cases of drug use within the professional wrestling community. I will then examine the impact of drug use on wrestlers' physical and mental health. Then investigate how the industry has addressed and responded to issues related to substance abuse. Finally I will explore the role of rehabilitation and support programs within the wrestling community.

Mental Health

I could conduct interviews with wrestlers to gain insights into the mental health challenges they face, both during their careers and after they retired. Explore factors such as stress, anxiety, depression, and the issues they have had in terms of seeking out the help they need. Then I could review psychological studies or literature related to the mental health of professional wrestlers. After this I could identify common mental health challenges faced by wrestlers. Then explore the impact of the wrestling environment, including the pressure to perform and the physical toll, on mental well-being. Then examine the industry's efforts to promote mental health awareness and support.

Data

Epidemiologists have discovered that wrestlers in the United States between the ages of 25 and 49 have mortality rates 4.5 times higher than the general population. This increased mortality is because of cardiovascular disease and concerns related to concussions. In 2007, when Chris Benoit was found to have Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), it brought focus to the dangers of repeated head injuries in wrestling. This led to a lawsuit by 60 former

wrestlers against WWE, similar to actions taken by ex-NFL players, resulting in a \$1 billion settlement. When people get concussions from playing sports, it can be hard to address the problem because many people think getting hurt is just part of playing sports. Even though experts suggest using more detailed approaches, most solutions just look at specific things that can cause concussions and try to explain them in simple ways for everyone to understand.

Wrestling is like a sport that is closely connected to other sports because it involves a lot of physical contact and injuries can happen often. Sociologists look at how there is a culture in wrestling where getting hurt is common and sometimes people care more about winning than staying healthy. In wrestling, getting hurt and continuing to fight through the pain is often seen as a way to show how tough and manly a wrestler is. Wrestlers believe that being able to handle pain and injuries makes them stronger and more masculine.

In the world of wrestling, especially in the United States, people are becoming more worried about the health and safety of wrestlers. A wrestler named Chris Benoit has made people in the UK pay more attention to these concerns. Another wrestler, Phil, has praised the efforts of Chris Nowinski, who used to be a wrestler but now works to promote brain health. Phil is cautioning that wrestlers who were active in the 2000s might be at risk of suffering severe brain damage. In the past, wrestlers didn't take concussions seriously and thought of them as minor injuries like stubbing a toe. But nowadays, younger wrestlers understand that brain injuries are very serious compared to other injuries. This awareness has led to more focus on preventing and treating concussions in wrestling to keep wrestlers safe and healthy.

In a study, people who were interviewed said that the medical help they received as wrestlers was not consistent and often not very skilled. They mentioned that bigger and wealthier wrestling events had better healthcare. But there were no rules to protect the wrestlers' health like

there are in other sports. This means that wrestlers don't get the same level of medical care as athletes in team sports or even in other combat sports.

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Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Sample: 1

Score: 1

This paper earned a score of 1. The research question is presented on the top of page 3, “Through a qualitative lens of this case study, how have professional wrestlers past and present coped with the demands of the pro wrestling industry mainly during its rise in popularity since the 90s.”, but this narrowing focus is not sustained throughout the paper. The topic’s changing focus is evident on pp. 3–7.

This paper did not earn a score of 2 because although the paper is organized into subsections, the paper does not contain a single citation. The paper lacks multiple scholarly perspectives, and there is no works cited page to clarify perspectives outside of the single perspective presented. Additionally, there is no evidence of an attempt to describe nor use a method. The paper indicates the researcher “will talk with the wrestlers,” “investigate historical records,” and “conduct interviews with the wrestlers” on pg. 4, but there is no student generated data to indicate use of this method.

The paper did not earn a score of 0 because the paper has a topic, wrestling.

The paper merely reports on existing knowledge.