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# AP<sup>®</sup> Research Academic Paper

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

### **Inside:**

#### **Sample I**

- Scoring Guideline**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

AP® Research — Academic Paper 2021 Scoring Guidelines

The Response...				
<b>Score of 1</b> Report on Existing Knowledge	<b>Score of 2</b> Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method	<b>Score of 3</b> Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding	<b>Score of 4</b> Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding	<b>Score of 5</b> Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base
Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.	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.	Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method <b>AND</b> overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
Describes a search and report process.	Describes a nonreplicable research method <b>OR</b> provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning <b>OR</b> insufficient evidence.	Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning <b>AND</b> sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.	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.
Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	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 <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few errors or inconsistencies.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.

## Academic Paper

### Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to their stated research question. 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 implications;
- 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.

# **How have the different eras of Disney Princesses influenced Sexism to the public?**

**Abstract-**

In the research conducted below the question answered revolves around the sexism towards women in society created by Disney Princess Movies. The variety of Disney princess movies have evolved throughout the years but there are many consistent themes that most often influence the idea of women's role in society. From the first movie ever created by Disney to the most recent ones, there is a large amount of gender stereotyping and sexualization against women. The most common theme that is created by these entertaining movies is that women are most often put down. The four movies that my research will revolve around are Snow White, Cinderella, The Little Mermaid, and Moana. These four movies symbolize the different eras in which they are created starting from the oldest to the newest. My research will prove how these movies will all show these themes and how children grow to think about women's role in society according to each of the themes the movies represent. The examination of early childhood comprehension for these movies usually stimulates long term effects in terms of when they begin to think about how they want to be treated as well as how they will treat others when they begin to start their friendships and relationships. The most common theme that I speculated while researching this is that Gender stereotyping depicted in princess movies stimulates bad influences for children to think women are weaker and less smart than men. Therefore as the years go by and the eras of Disney princess movies evolve the more sexist stereotyping becomes hidden and less obvious through the characteristics women play in these children's fairy tales.

**Intro-**

Disney Princess films have been around for a very long time now. So have the expectations of genders in society. From the start of the first Disney princess film, women have always been changed to shape society's expectations and social norms. Media has had a huge impact on these social stereotypes. As decades have passed people have learned to grow and

teach their younger children the correct way to treat one another without putting women down but in this research paper you will learn more about how Disney princess animated films have influenced children to think that gender stereotyping is exceptional in our society. In other words, Disney has grown fond of becoming a huge part of the movie industry and has many themes articulated in their movies to display gender roles in our society today. This study focuses on how gender stereotypes are shown in the three main eras of Disney princess films. The first era is called the classics era which began in the 1930s through the 1950s. The second era is the renaissance era which began in 1989 through 1999. Lastly is the revival era which is from the year 2009 to the present movies. Each era has a huge impact on society's perspective on gender stereotypes which misleads many people to be sexist. As the years go by you are able to tell how women are granted more power and are unstoppable. While during the older eras men are stronger and women are more vulnerable. The movies that my study will focus on are Snow White, Cinderella, The Little Mermaid, and Moana.

### **Lit Review-**

Throughout history, we learn that media and more specifically movies reveal many stereotypical gender roles that stimulate gender inequality in our society today. Gender stereotypes are characteristics used to define female and male differences. As the eras of Disney princess movies evolved throughout the years, there have been many different types of stereotypes found in each Princess movie. (Ward,2017) The importance of these eras is that they answer why these gender stereotypes are found in each Disney movie since they answer what society's perspectives are on women during the time the movie was made while also answering how these movies have evolved. Most of the time gender stereotyping is appointed towards

women. The fairy tales as we know of today influence children all around the world to look up to these role models and make them believe that life should be filled with fantasy morals.

First and foremost, during the classic eras which began in 1937 with the Disney princess film *Snow White* (1937), she is depicted as a housemaid for the seven dwarfs. *Snow White* (1937) while showing her naiveness by innocently taking a bite of the poisonous apple she is depicted as being weak and vulnerable. She continues to wait for her prince to come and save her. This movie stimulates the theme that women should not be independent; they should be homemakers that depend on men. *Snow White* (1937) gives the message to young women all around the world that women should stay home and clean for men. She does not complain about cleaning and doing the chores for the seven dwarfs but instead enjoys taking care of others and doing the duties of others. This movie was made during the classical era which began in 1937. During this film, the most common gender stereotype is called the act of women damaging in distress. (Gupta,2017) This is when a woman calls the attention of a man when she is in trouble and awaits being saved because she is incapable of saving herself. Men are painted to be more independent than women during this era, which influences people during this era to think that it is okay to settle with this social norm. (Gerson,2019)

Second, another movie going down the Disney Princess era that shows sexist gender stereotyping is *Cinderella*(1950). Although this fairytale is centuries old it contains many interesting social gender stereotypes. Since this film was created during the 1950's many would agree that during this year there was a lot of sexism going around. (Garabedian,2014) The most common factor shown in *Cinderella* (1950)was gender issues where women were being pressured into marriage and wanted to be swept off their feet. In the *Cinderella* (1950) story when she is forced by her stepmother and stepsister to stay home and clean for them while she

really was hoping to go to the ball and meet her prince. One of the themes in that movie was that women need to change themselves in order to attract a man. This is shown when Cinderella (1950) asks her fairy Godmother to change her wardrobe in order to find herself presentable and go to the ball. This makes it seem like women should be forced to dress up when they leave their homes in order to satisfy men and society's crucial and specific rules. This is just one of the examples of how women are being sexualized in Disney princess movies and how small children will grow to think that these themes are normal. This also causes controversy between genders and makes each gender create their own rules towards each other. Which most of the time is unfair.

Third of all another film that implies sexism is *The Little Mermaid* (1989). The main character also known as Ariel is being told by her father what he wants her to become. Her childhood friend and father's chorus conductor, Sebastian is always warning Ariel of the consequences of her actions. She shows very little importance since she is more concentrated on finding acceptance from a prince who does not know she has lived in the water all her life. This film was created during the golden era of Disney princess films, which was released in 1989. (Guo,2019) Like most of the Disney princess films, Ariel acts rebelliously and independent to find true love but during the climax, she was pictured as being very desperate enough to give up her most attractive trait being her voice in exchange for legs so that she can get an opportunity to meet her prince. In *The Little Mermaid* (1989), Ariel is depicted as being a more rebellious princess because she wants to be a human. (Gerson,2019) A gender stereotype that connects to the one in *Cinderella* is that women should have to change in order to find true love and meet the expectations of men in society. In this case, Ariel is disappointing her father by not following his wishes and going off to be on land with the person with whom she thinks she is in love.



Therefore she risks her life and his life to be happy while physically changing her body to fit into the acceptable norms. The social stereotype implicated onto children convinces them that women are expected to change in order to be liked by a man or even be noticed. (Yang,2017)

Lastly as shown in the new era is Moana(2016). This new era of Disney princess shows a very different perspective for women. Moana (2016) premiered during the year 2016 which is very new compared to older movies that contain more gender stereotypes. Although there are hidden stereotypes against women like Moana (2016) being told that she is incapable of leaving beyond the reef to save her village she is able to prove them wrong and with the help of Maui she is able to retrieve the heart of Te Fiti to regain growth in the island. (Ramadhan,2016)Through her adventures in the water, Moana (2016)is shown to be more independent as she learns how to sail a boat and help Maui defeat the monsters. In this case, we see that women are helping men and although she leaves her worried family behind, the fairytale ends in an enthusiastic and happy ending. This proves how as society evolves Disney tends to adapt their movies to fit society's norms in order to have successful movie production.

### **Conclusion-**

Therefore throughout the different eras of Disney princess movies gender stereotyping stimulates bad influences for children to think women are weaker and less smart than men. Often in Disney princess movies, women are usually portrayed to have to give something up to the villain in order to be with a man. This symbolizes that women are always praising men and have to make sacrifices when they want to be happy again with a man. All princess films contain women having to look for a man to help with a task. Most eras of Disney princess films contain stereotypes that suggest that women have to give something up in order to be happy with a man.

This can be changed if there was a new era of independent Disney princess films where it would change those stereotypes.

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## Academic Paper

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

**Sample: I**

**Score: 1**

This paper is a search and report of previous research on Disney princesses found in three different Disney films. While the paper does make use of several scholarly sources and contains a narrowing topic found on page 3, which are typical markers of a paper that scores a 2, there is no method either implicitly or explicitly mentioned that would allow for student-generated evidence that would lead to a new understanding. Because this paper does not add to the existing body of knowledge and does not reference a method, it earned a score of 1.