

ENG101 Spring 2015 Essay I Log

Turn in this log with your completed Essay I. Essay logs and vocabulary sheets are worth 10% of your final grade.

PART 1. On separate sheets of paper, write complete answers to all of these questions.

Support your answer with a quotation from the article. The quotation will prove, explain, or illustrate your answer to the question.

SUPER-REPLICATING BELIEFS

1. “Genes tend to be transmitted when they make us do things that transmit genes. What’s more, even bad genes -- those that make us prone to cancer or heart disease -- can become super-replicators if they compensate for these costs by promoting their own means of transmission” (213). Find some sentences in the article that apply this same logic to the transmission of beliefs (accurate and inaccurate). Copy those sentences between quotation marks followed by the page number in parentheses.
2. Why would a false belief become a super-replicator? It doesn’t make sense, so how does Gilbert explain this?

THE CASE OF MONEY AND HAPPINESS

1. In which paragraph do you find the results of research on the connection between making money and happiness. What does the research show?
2. How do rats respond to having enough of a good thing (such as cheese)? How do humans react to having enough of a good thing (such as money)?
3. Quote sentences in the article that give Gilbert’s explanation for the paradox that people continue to work long and hard even after they have more than enough money to satisfy their needs and even desires.
4. Discuss Gilbert’s claim that “the production of wealth does not necessarily make individuals happy, but it does serve the needs of a stable society, which serves as a network for the propagation of delusional beliefs about happiness and wealth” (216). What does he mean?

THE CASE OF CHILDREN AND HAPPINESS

1. In which paragraphs do you find the results of research on the connection between having children and happiness. What does the research say?
2. Explain this statement: “‘Children bring happiness’ is a super-replicator” (217). How is this similar to the way that the false belief that money makes people happy is also a super-replicator?

PART 2. Write a SUMMARY and REACTION to the reading by Gilbert:

- Summarize Gilbert’s ideas about how money and children are connected to happiness. YOU WILL USE THIS SUMMARY IN YOUR ESSAY.
- Write about your reaction to Gilbert’s ideas and research. Do they surprise you? Did Gilbert change your thinking about whether money and children can make people happy?