

William perry's
examsmanship and
the liberal arts, a
study in educational
epistemem...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

William Perry's "Examsmanship and the Liberal Arts", a study in educational epistemology

Instructions: I need 2 separate 250 word essays about the same author. The first is, Once you are done reading William Perry's "Examsmanship and the Liberal Arts," post your 250 word response.

2. essays as follows, this week I want your response to focus on the answer to this question: "What does all of this discussion about cow and bull have to do with a research paper?"

1. This is an impressive and interesting essay. It is as true today as when it was written several decades ago. Perry describes two different types of students, or users of knowledge. The cow is someone who can regurgitate data but cannot put it into an order that makes it useful or gives it purpose. The bull is someone who can put together a rhetorically effective argument without any substance or information. Both are as present in the academy today as they are elsewhere. These two types of individuals treat knowledge in different ways. The cow may be good at collecting information, but information itself has no real meaning to him or her. This person doesn't understand the purpose of data; all that they are capable of doing is presenting it as a lump. This is what is today called a data dump. It is very hard to make meaning out of information that is not filtered and well organized. The bull has the opposite problem, as the mischievous Mr. Metzger shows. They can make a convincing sounding argument out of anything. And yet there is no content to what they say: it only sounds good. I think these are extremely valid points. The main thing I take away from this essay is the notion that these people exist in places other than universities. They are present throughout society: in business, in homes, in the courts. They have been present throughout society. Ideally, we should all strive to combine the best of both bull and cow.

2. The distinction

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between cow and bull is a very important one to keep in mind with regards to research papers. Research papers are slightly different than exams because when writing papers you can seek out and organize information over a period of time. You set your own schedule, unlike during an exam when this schedule—for example, two hours to answer four questions—is set for you. The key to a research paper is to be both bull and cow. You must organize and argue effectively. Without the proper presentation, the material will simply sit on the page. And yet you must also collect and find a massive amount of data by going to the library and looking through many primary and secondary sources. In the writing of research papers some people fail to follow policies regarding plagiarism. These people are the real cows in that they regurgitate information without citing it. They do not properly present the information in a way that adds to or improves their work: they simply copy and paste. The bull is someone who at least takes delight in his own work and enters the playground of language intent to make something of his intelligence. Like Metzger he can swing on the monkey-bars or go down the slide. Because of the way his brain works, he is at home in arguing any position in a research assignment. He needs no sources. This person can make something out of nothing. In the age of the Internet, one wonders what Perry would say about today's academic environment.