Writing tips

Guide to writing an SAQ:

1) Understand the command term - use signpost
2) Rephrase the question - use key words
3) Organisation - concise but detailed
4) Show knowledge & understanding of the issue
5) Use research to support response (I study needed)
   Link findings to Q

Explain one bias in thinking and decision making.

One bias in thinking and decision making is the peak-end rule, in which people judge an experience largely based on how they felt at its peak and at its end. This effect takes place regardless of whether the experience was pleasant or unpleasant. A research used to help explain this rule was conducted by Kahneman et al., who asked participants to hold their hand up to the wrist in cold water until they were asked to remove it. The researchers used 2 conditions, one of which participants were asked to submerge their hand for 60 seconds at 14 degrees Celsius, after which they were handed a warm towel. The other condition involved 90 seconds of immersion - at the end of 60 seconds, the researchers warmed the tub slightly. When participants were asked whether they would rather do condition 1 or 2 again, 80% chose the second condition. The fact that the second trial was longer was not taken into account by participants and they based their choice on how the condition ended, rather than making an overall assessment of the pain.

The peak-end rule is a key example of System 1 thinking as it does not correspond to the values of System 2. Although we believe that duration is important, our memory tells us it is not. The neglect of duration combined with the peak-end rule causes a bias that favours a short period of intense joy over a long period of moderate happiness. The mirror image of the same causes us to fear a short period of intense but tolerable suffering more than we fear a much longer period of moderate pain. Duration neglect also makes us prone to accept a long period of mild unpleasantness because the end will be better, and it favours giving up an opportunity for a long happy period if it is likely to have a poor ending. However, this thinking can be countered against with System 2.
If the person thinks deeply about why they would rather experience one thing over another, if they come to realize that their system 1 thinking is telling them to pick the worse experience, they would be able to ignore that urge and pick the better option.

In conclusion, the peak-end rule is a heuristic in which people use system 1 thinking to make poor and hasty decisions rather than using system 2. However, this heuristic can be countered with if people think deeply about what caused them to come to that decision. 

Bias in memory:

Theory - Reconstructive memory
Supporting research - Loftus and Palmer (1974) effect of leading questions

Aim:

Method - Research method
Participants - Procedure

Findings:

Evaluation: