

Mental illness is a health condition involving changes in thinking, emotion, or behavior, commonly associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work, or family activities. Anxiety, depression, ADHD, bipolar disorder, OCD, schizophrenia, and eating disorders are just some examples of these conditions. Statistically, 1 in 5 people experience some form of mental illness, making it very common. Your mental health can be considered your inner thoughts, and therefore your outward actions. There are many factors that go into influencing a person's mental health that range from the physical makeup and chemical balance of an individual's brain to life experiences and experienced trauma. Mental illness is wrongfully perceived through the media and by stigma; it's overlooked by many, and false information given out leads to inaccurate labeling and misunderstanding of individuals struggling as well as a lack of support and funding for mental illness. With how common mental illnesses are there is a large gap in the care of them. Often times these illnesses are overlooked and not seen as real problems which causes to the lack of care dedicated to them. Mental health is a very important factor into the physical health of a person and the same amount of care needs to be given to physical and mental health. In order to close this gap art can be used to bring awareness to mental health.

Commented [1]: I like how you started with a definition

Art is more than just a picture or a song, art is a form of expression and can be an effective way to communicate a message. A large reason behind the gap in the care for mental health and the amount of people living with it every day is the stigma that mental health has behind it. Often people with mental health can be looked down on as weak or that they are dramatic and overexaggerating what is happening. Everybody has bad days, can be anxious or be mad but a large misunderstanding is the difference between a bad day and having a mental illness. This results in people who truly suffer to be afraid to speak up about what they are experiencing for fear that they will be looked at as a liar. Art can be a way for people who experience mental illness to express what is happening in a less invasive way then answering questions from doctors. Studies have been done that show that art is a way to make ideas regarding the health field more digestible for everyone, "the use of arts in health care contexts demonstrates effectiveness in areas such as supportive care, health promotion and addressing health inequities" (Ryan.) Art can be used as an ice breaker when someone decides to talk about their mental health because there are so many methods to express a thought through art. This would also make the information given more digestible for people who don't understand mental illnesses which can lead to a better understanding overall and therefore lessening the gap in care for mental health and the amount of people living with mental illnesses everyday.

Commented [2]: be more specific, awareness through what? other than that very good thesis

Commented [3]: how so? good topic

Commented [4]: Good topic sentence

Commented [5]: yes!! overusing the term depression when it shouldn't be used

The mental health of a person directly correlates to the physical health of the individual. However these two things are not looked at equally which creates a gap in the care of mental illnesses. Art can be an understanding medium for people who have not experienced mental illness to understand the importance the gap in care be closed.

Commented [6]: good choice of quote

Commented [7]: how so? examples?

Commented [8]: can you give some examples?

Commented [9]: maybe touch on physical symptoms of some mental illnesses to further your point

"In this sense, the arts are an incredibly rich data set, providing science with a glimpse into its blind spots."

"What neuroscience needs is a new method, one that's able to construct complex representations of the mind that aren't built from the bottom up

Katies Note

So far so good! It is below the word count but once you add in the paragraphs that go along with the quotes it should be all good. Make sure to include Lehrer and Ma as well as providing a short summary of each in the first paragraph. I really liked your choice of topic because it is something that I am passionate about, and is also similar to my multi modal essay topic. You mentioned the impact of art on your topic quite a bit, to follow with the prompt a bit better you need to include science as well. You made some really good points, some just need to be further explained and elaborated on. Another thing to help your essay would be if you gave specific examples for different mental illnesses as well as examples for the different ways art and science can affect your topic.

Good job so far, you should expand on some of your ideas and give more quotes about mental illness. Also, you need to add in Lehrer and Ma's articles. You are short on words but once you add in both those articles you will be able to get up on the word count. I really like the topic you chose and I think you relate it to art very well. Your conclusion should be expanded a bit more, maybe add more ideas summed up in your previous paragraphs. Your thesis is very good but add something about how art can bring awareness to mental health. Also, add more about art bringing actual awareness into your essay or change your thesis to say art can help people cope and express their mental illness. Overall, it is a very good start and I can see where you are going with this. I love this topic! Good job!

Lila