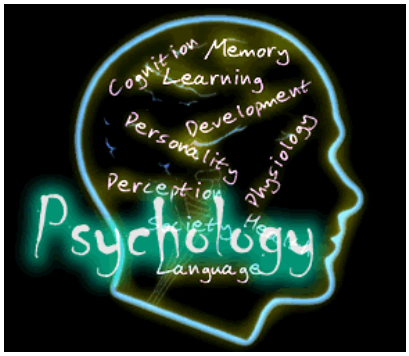

Introduction to Psychology Investigation

Psychology is all about the study of human behaviour using scientific methods. In order to understand this further and to give you an idea of how psychology works you will carry out a piece of psychological research into human memory.

Aims

The aim of this research is to investigate whether using imagery improves recall. Some cognitive psychologists have suggested that imagery and imagination can make things more memorable. Some people find mind maps, diagrams and colours help with revision.

Materials

- Powerpoint slides of objects and instructions (these can be shown on a screen or printed out)
- 12 volunteers (if you have not got many friends or family members you can get together with someone else)
- Stopwatch
- Scrap paper & pens

Procedure

1. Ask the volunteer if they would mind taking part in a study about memory which should only take a few minutes. Show them **either slide 1 or 3 (**you should choose which one randomly to avoid bias).
2. Ask them if they have any questions then show them the pictures for 2 minutes **either slide 2 or 4** (depending on which instructions they read).
3. When the time is up make them count backwards in 3s from 999 for 1 minute.
4. Give them a piece of paper and ask them to write down as many objects as possible in 2 minutes.
5. When they have finished give them a participant number, write this on their answer sheet along with the word **image** or **no image** depending on which instructions they were given.
6. Explain to them that you are testing whether imagery affects recall and thank them for taking part.
7. When you have collected data for all your participants present your result in a table and calculate the mean score for each group. Produce a bar chart to show the findings and write a short conclusion.

Questions

1. *Explain why you need to allocate participants to instructions on slides 1 or 3 randomly. What do we mean by 'to avoid bias'?*
2. *What is the function of point 3 (counting backwards)?*
3. *Why do you think you have been asked to select some participants for slide 1 and different participants for slide 3? Would it be better to have each person do both conditions?*
4. *Why would you wait until after the experiment to tell participants that the research is about imagery?*
5. *Why is it better to give participants a number rather than write their name in the results table?*
6. *Why do you think making an image might affect recall?*

Look up the following web sites to gain a better understanding of this area of research.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/memory/understand/
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VugIEW5_9n0
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mental-imagery/theories-memory.html
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21946012