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| **Stage 2 Psychology** **Investigations Folio: Design and Deconstruct – Relaxation and stress****Curriculum Topic Link: Psychological Health and Wellbeing****Student First Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****SACE No: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | **School Number****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****Grade \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

Purpose

This task provides students with the opportunity to investigate psychological concepts and relationships through deconstructing a psychological problem, designing an ethically appropriate psychological experiment, and analysing psychological data.

General Capabilities required

☒ Literacy ☒ Critical and Creative Thinking ☒ Ethical Understanding

☒ Numeracy ☐ Intercultural Understanding ☐ Personal and Social Capability

☐ Information and Communication Technology

Context

Life in the modern world is full of tension. With society becoming more competitive, pressures to stay on top or be in the mainstream pushes one to over-exert. These excessive efforts, in turn, cause tensions which become manifest in emotional and psychological disorders. Clearly, quality of life is negatively affected. To effectively combat stress, you need to activate your body’s natural relaxation response.

Yet, rest and relaxation as an essential activity is often ignored and simply pushed aside in the rush of things to do, real or imagined. For many of us, relaxation means flopping on the couch and zoning out in front of the TV at the end of a stressful day. But this does little to reduce the damaging effects of stress. Rather, you need learn how to effectively to activate your body’s natural relaxation response, a state of deep rest that puts the brakes on stress, slows your breathing and heart rate, lowers your blood pressure, and brings your body and mind back into balance.  Relaxation reduces stress and the symptoms of mental health conditions like [depression](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/depression), anxiety and [schizophrenia](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/schizophrenia). Relaxation also has other related health benefits, including:

* **lowering your**[**heart rate**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/resting-heart-rate)**,**[**blood pressure**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/how-to-lower-blood-pressure)**and breathing rate**
* **reducing**[**muscle tension**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/muscle-aches-and-pains)**and**[**chronic pain**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/chronic-pain)
* **improving concentration and mood**
* **reducing**[**fatigue**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/self-help-tips-to-fight-fatigue)
* **reducing**[**anger**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/anger-management)**and frustration**
* [**boosting confidence**](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/self-esteem)**to handle problems**

**Task Overview**

This task has four parts:

Part A: Deconstruction

Part B: Design

Part C: Data collection and analysis of results

Part D: Report on findings

***Part A: Deconstruction***

In this section of the task, investigate the question:

***‘Which mindfulness or relaxation techniques lower an individual’s perceived stress levels most effectively’***

From this broad question, deconstruct its more specific aspects and generate an original research question linked to THREE specific mindfulness/relaxation techniques of your choice.

*NOTE: Participants will complete the Cohen et. al 1988 Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) as their Psychological Measure of Stress (this will be provided by the teacher), or another psychological measure as negotiated with their teacher.*

***STEPS SUMMARY***

Step 1: Deconstruct the main question into smaller parts and select THREE specific relaxation techniques to test

Step 2: Explore the range of technique options for your Independent Variable and generate ideas that will influence a solution to the question.

Step 3: Identify any possible considerations/limitations with relation to research choices/pathways.

Step 4: Select THREE techniques to test and Identify likely solutions and that would support a successful design method.

Step 5: For each of the THREE techniques selected, conduct research, summarise findings, and obtain materials required to test each technique.

***Part B: Design***

Using the information discovered in part A (deconstruct), design and justify the method you will use to test your research question.

***STEPS SUMMARY***

Step 1: State the research question developed from the deconstruction

Step 2: Clearly state a testable hypothesis for a psychological experiment.

Step 2: Identify and describe the independent, dependent, constant and extraneous variables.

Step 3: Design in detail a method for your original Psychological Experiment you wish to undertake

Step 4: Provide justifications for choices made in your experimental design.

Step 5: Identify the type and amount of data to be collected.

Step 6: Complete a risk assessment for your design, acknowledging any potential ethical and social cultural considerations that could arise, and what practices will be put in place to minimise harm to participants and uphold the code of Psychological ethics.

***\*\*Part A and B should be presented as a maximum of 4 sides of an A4 page.***

***Part C:* Data collection and analysis of results**

In this section of the task, carry out **one** of the following:

1. The experimental method designed above
2. The experimental method designed about with some alterations
3. The experimental method designed by another student or supplied by the teacher.

***STEPS SUMMARY***

Step 1:Carry out the experimental method and record data

Step 2: Calculate and use appropriate descriptive statistics (means, medians)

Step 3: Present the data in appropriate graphs and tables

Step 4: Identify and discuss trends, patterns, and correlations

Step 5: Interpret standard deviations

***Part D: Report on findings***

In this section of the task, students will use data generated from Part C and Produce a report analysing and evaluating their findings.

***STEPS SUMMARY***

Step 1: State Research question and hypotheses

Step 2: **Introduction** (summarise the theory behind your chosen experiment and explain the purpose of your chosen design and method)

Step 3: Re-state the **Method** and provide a description of appropriate equipment and techniques (if appropriate) used. State the variables (IV, DV and controlled) or factors under investigation.

*NOTE: If you have done this in detail already in Part A, simply put “Refer to the hypothesis, variables & method as evidenced in Part A”. If using a method that was changed from the design, designed by another student, or provided by the teacher include a copy of this method*

*(THIS SECTION IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE WORD COUNT AND ASSESSMENT OF IAE1 IS PURELY BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL DESIGN)*

Step 4: **Results**. (Insert appropriate tables and graphs summarising your findings form Part C - DO NOT include raw data in this section of the report)

(THIS SECTION IS NOT INCLUDED IN WORD THE COUNT)

Step 5: **Discussion – Analysis** (analysis of your results to make meaning of your findings –Part C)

Step 6: **Discussion – Evaluation.** (Evaluate your procedures used and consider the impact on results obtained. Identify sources of uncertainty, evaluate validity and reliability of the data, and discuss how sample size and representativeness of sample could have affected the data. Suggest any ethical concerns encountered).

Step 7: Make and justify **Conclusions**. (Explain limitations and definitiveness)

**\*\* Part D should be a maximum of 1500 words if written, or a maximum of 9 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form.**

\*\* Ensure you communicate your knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts using psychological terminology throughout the report.

\*\* You must include a Reference list (in Harvard Format), and in text referencing where appropriate. (RERERENCING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE WORD COUNT)

\*\*See Supporting notes provided by your teacher in separate document for more in depth information about what is required in each section of the report

Assessment conditions

* Class time will be given for students to individually design the investigation question/hypothesis and to deconstruct the question.
* A double lesson will be provided for students to undertake data collection.
* Each student is to submit a practical report and will individually deconstruct the problem.
* Students may submit one draft for feedback, due one week after the experiment is completed.
* Final copy is due 2 weeks after the experiment is completed and submitted via SEQTA.

**The Perceived Stress Questionnaire**

The PSS Scale is reprinted with permission of the American Sociological Association, from Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 24, 386-396.

**Participant ID No: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Participant Age: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Participant Gender: M / F**

**The Perceived Stress Questionnaire**

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is the most widely used psychological instrument for measuring the perception of stress. It is a measure of the degree to which situations in one’s life are appraised as stressful. Items were designed to tap how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded respondents find their lives. The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. The PSS was designed for use in community samples with at least a junior high school education. The items are easy to understand, and the response alternatives are simple to grasp. Moreover, the questions are of a general nature and hence are relatively free of content specific to any subpopulation group.

*For each statement, tick the number box that describes how strongly it applies to you, right now.*

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|   | **Strongly Disagree(1)**  | **Disagree(2)**  | **Neutral(3)**  | **Agree(4)**  | **Strongly Agree(5)**  |  | **SCORE**  |
| 1. You feel rested.  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ = |
| 2. You feel that too many demands are being made on you.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. You are irritable or grouchy.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. You have too many things to do.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. You feel lonely or isolated.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. You feel as though you are involved in situations of conflict.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7. You feel like you are able to do the things you like.  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 8. You feel tired.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. You fear you may not be able to attain your goals.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. You feel calm.  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 11. You have too many decisions to make.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12. You feel frustrated.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13. You feel full of energy.  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 14. You feel tense.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15. Your problems feel as though they are piling up.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16. You feel you’re in a hurry.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17. You feel safe and protected.  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 18. You have many worries.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19. You feel under pressure from other people.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20. You feel discouraged.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21. You are enjoying yourself.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 22. You are afraid of the future.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23. You feel as though you are doing things because you *have to* rather than because you *want to.*  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24. You feel criticized or judged.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25. You are light-hearted.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 26. You feel mentally exhausted.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27. You are having trouble relaxing.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28. You feel loaded down with responsibility.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29. You have enough time for yourself.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  5 - \_\_\_ =  |
| 30. You feel under pressure from deadlines.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |



**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

**PART A and B: Deconstruct and Design**

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|  | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **E** |
| **Investigation, Analysis & Evaluation 1: Deconstruction of a problem and design of psychological investigation** |
| **IAE 1**  | Critically deconstructs a problem and designs a logical and coherent psychological investigation with detailed justification.  | Logically deconstructs a problem and designs a well- considered and clear psychological investigation with reasonable justification. | Deconstructs a problem and designs a considered and generally clear psychological investigation with some justification. | Prepares a basic deconstruction of a problem and an outline of a psychological investigation  | Attempts a simple deconstruction of a problem and a procedure for a psychological investigation  |
| **Knowledge & Application 2: Application of psychological concepts in contexts** |
| **KA 2**   | Highly effectively application of psychological concepts in diverse contexts  | Mostly effective application of psychological concepts in diverse contexts  | Generally effective application of psychological concepts in diverse contexts  | Applies some psychological concepts  | Attempts to apply psychological concepts  |
| **Knowledge & Application 4:** **Communication of knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts and information, using appropriate terms, conventions, and representations** |
| **KA 4** | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology coherently, with highly effective use of appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology mostly coherently, with effective use of appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology generally effectively, using some appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates basic psychological information, using some appropriate terms, conventions, and/or representations  | Attempts to communicate information about psychology  |

**PART C and D: Data Analysis and Report**

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|  | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **E** |
| **Investigation, Analysis & Evaluation 2: Obtaining, recording, and representation of data** |
| **IAE 2**  | Accurately and thoroughly obtains, records, and represents data  | Logically obtains, records, and represents data  | Obtains, records, and represents data with some errors  | Obtains, records, and represents data with occasional accuracy and effectiveness  | Attempts to record and represent some data  |
| **Investigation, Analysis & Evaluation 3: Analysis and interpretation of data and other evidence to formulate and justify conclusions** |
| **IAE 3**  | Systematically analyses and interprets data and evidence to formulate logical conclusions with detailed justification  | Logically analyses and interprets data and evidence to formulate suitable conclusions with reasonable justification  | Undertakes some analysis and interpretation of data and evidence to formulate generally appropriate conclusions with some justification  | Describes data and undertakes some basic interpretation to formulate a basic conclusion  | Attempts to describe results and/or interpret data to formulate a basic conclusion  |
| **Investigation, Analysis & Evaluation 4: Evaluation of procedures and their effect on data** |
| **IAE 4**  | Critically and logically evaluates procedures, and their effect on data  | Logically evaluates procedures and their effect on data  | Evaluates procedures and some of their effect on data  | Attempts to evaluate procedures or suggest an effect on data  | Acknowledges that procedures affect data  |
| **Knowledge & Application 4:** **Communication of knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts and information, using appropriate terms, conventions, and representations** |
| **KA 4** | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology coherently, with highly effective use of appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology mostly coherently, with effective use of appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates knowledge and understanding of psychology generally effectively, using some appropriate terms, conventions, and representations  | Communicates basic psychological information, using some appropriate terms, conventions, and/or representations  | Attempts to communicate information about psychology  |