PSYCHOLOGY INDUCTION WORK

This work must be completed and handed in during your first psychology lesson in September.

You will need paper, a way of measuring time, a pen and 10 different objects.

1. Aim: to test the duration of small chunks of information in Short Term Memory.

Carry out a replication of a classic study by Peterson & Peterson. A "trigram" is a combination of three random letters without meaning. Examples to use are given below. You will need to write each of these onto a piece of paper and you will need all 10.

Experimental Procedure

a) 5-10 participants aged 12+ to complete the memory task.
b) Participants are given a three digit number and shown a card with a consonant trigram (e.g YCG).
c) Trigram card is removed and participant tries to remember the Trigram
d) When experimenter says START, participant must count down out loud from their three digit number.
e) After 3 seconds, experimenter says STOP – participant must recall trigram.
f) Giving a new Trigram each time, repeat steps c-e for 6,9,12,15,18, 20 seconds of counting backwards OR until participant cannot recall Trigram.
g) Record the number of seconds at which Trigram can no longer be recalled.
h) Experimenter should continue extending time period until this occurs.

2. Write up your results in a table.

Participant	Results
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	

In your results column the number of seconds at which the participants CANNOT recall the given Trigram. Your next tasks are below:

3. draw a suitable graph of your results. Use the example in Fig.1 from Peterson & Peterson. Your "y axis" should be number of participants correct, "x axis" is time interval.

4. Write a conclusion stating your findings – describe the trend of the data.

5. How do your results compare to Peterson & Peterson (see Fig.1)?

6. How could you have made your results more reliable?

7. Comment on whether you think Peterson & Peterson's experiment reflects the way memory works in real life – explain your answer.

8. Do you think practice had any effect on the length of time were able to remember trigrams? Did age of each participant have any effect? How could you improve the experiment to be sure these effects don't alter your results?

Fig. 1.

Peterson & Peterson (1959)