

Handout 1
Investigation: Group influences on behaviour
Information letter

Dear student,

As part of this psychology unit, you will be examining group influences on behaviour. Specifically, you will investigate the influence of the presence of others on behaviour and how this influences group decision making.

Participants will be involved in completing a small group activity before responding to a questionnaire regarding their feelings about the decision-making processes used by the group. The data collection for this investigation will take place during regular class time.

To safeguard anonymity, written student responses will be identified by a code number and all individual student data will be shredded at the completion of the unit.

To give your consent to being involved in this investigation, please read, complete and sign the attached consent form.

Your parent or guardian must also provide consent for your participation in this investigation. If they agree, please ask them to also sign the provided consent form.

Even if you have signed the consent form, you may withdraw from this investigation at any time. There will be no consequences if you do not want to participate, or if you initially agree to participate and later decide to withdraw. Your rights and responsibilities are detailed in the consent form.

Please ask me if you do not fully understand the information provided or if you would like further information or have any concerns about what is required of you in this investigation.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Davey

Handout 2
Investigation: Group influences on behaviour
Consent form

Participant's name:

Investigation title: Group influences on behaviour

Teacher's name:

I consent to participate in the research investigation named above. The nature of the research, including the procedures, has been explained to me, and is summarised in the information letter I have been given.

I give permission for the responsible teacher, named above, to use the outlined investigation procedures with me.

I understand that:

- (a) I am free to withdraw from the investigation at any time. There will be no consequences if I decline to participate or if I initially agree to participate, but later decide to withdraw.
- (b) The investigation is for the purpose of teaching and learning.
- (c) The confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded. Written responses will be identified only by a code number in order to ensure that responses are anonymous.
- (d) There are no known adverse effects of participation in this investigation.
- (e) I will maintain the confidentiality of other participants in this investigation.

Please return this signed consent form to your teacher.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Student)

Students under the age of 18 may participate in this investigation only if a parent or guardian completes the following section.

I consent to the participation of _____ in the above research investigation.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
(Parent/Guardian)

Handout 3
Investigation: Group influences on behaviour
Questionnaire

Using the questionnaire below, please record your feelings in regards to the decision-making processes used by your group.

Please circle the number of the group you worked in: 1 2 3 4

(a) How understood and listened to did you feel in your group?

not at all 1 2 3 4 completely

(b) How much influence do you feel you had in your group's decision making?

none 1 2 3 4 a great deal

(c) How committed do you feel to the decisions your group made?

very uncommitted 1 2 3 4 very committed

(d) How much responsibility do you feel for making the decisions work?

none 1 2 3 4 a great deal

(e) How satisfied do you feel with the amount and quality of your participation in your group's decision making?

very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 very satisfied

(f) How would you rate the cohesiveness in your group?

uncohesive 1 2 3 4 very cohesive

Handout 4

Investigation: Group influences on behaviour Data Record Sheet

In the table below, record and collate the ratings given by each participant from the three groups to each question. The percentage ratings for each question for each group can be calculated and comparisons can be made between the groups.

Group Members (G1)	Autocratic (Group 1) Ratings for each question						Group Members (G2)	Democratic (Group 2) Ratings for each question						Group Members (G3)	Laissez-faire (Group 3) Ratings for each question					
Participant	a	b	c	d	e	f	Participant	a	b	c	d	e	f	Participant	a	b	c	d	e	f
1							1							1						
2							2							2						
3							3							3						
4							4							4						
5							5							5						
6							6							6						
7							7							7						
8							8							8						

Psychology assessment task

Assessment type: Investigation

Conditions

Time for the task:

- one week to conduct the investigation, collect the data and research how the form of leadership influences the performance of a group as a whole
- two lessons to write the poster in class under supervised conditions

Task weighting

xx% of the school mark for this pair of units

Group influences on behaviour

You will be allocated randomly to one of three groups and be given a role to perform within this group. Each group will be provided with 20 straws and one metre of masking tape. The groups will compete against each other to see which group can construct the tallest, free-standing structure in 10 minutes. After completing the task you will complete a questionnaire on the decision-making processes of the group during the activity.

Using your class notes and library research, make succinct notes on the theories and evidence related to this topic. You will produce an A3 poster in class under supervised conditions. You are permitted a half-A4 page of notes to produce your poster.

Come prepared with:

- data (tables and graphs)
- list of references
- half a page of notes.

Your A3 poster will need to include:

- an introduction – provide general background and research related to the topic, an aim, hypothesis and relevant variables
- method – describe the participants, materials and procedures so that the investigation can be replicated
- results – represent data in a written summary, tables and graphs
- discussion
 - discuss the results of the investigation and how they relate to relevant psychological theories
 - evaluate the design of the investigation and explain how the investigation could be improved
 - discuss how ethical issues were addressed
 - explain the relevance of the results to the population from which the sample was drawn, and to theory or other research
 - state a conclusion that relates the results to the hypothesis or research question
- references – provide an alphabetical list of any references used in the report.

Marking key – Group influences on behaviour

Description	Marks
Introduction	
Provides general background information/theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes a relevant statement about group influences on behaviour • identifies relevant examples of the types of group influences on behaviour • describes examples of the types of group influences on behaviour 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cites relevant research • makes links between the research and the topic 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • succinctly writes a specific aim 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides a general aim 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes research question/prediction as a hypothesis that follows on logically from the aim 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poses a research question/prediction 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the independent variable • identifies dependent variable 	1–2
Subtotal	11
Method	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes participants in sufficient detail to be replicated, e.g. number, age, gender • describes the selection process 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes materials in sufficient detail to be replicated 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes the procedure including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ addresses anonymity ▪ describes the process for allocating participants to groups and roles ▪ describes task in sufficient detail to be replicated ▪ describes the collection, collation and presentation of questionnaire results 	1–4
Subtotal	8
Results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organises all relevant data logically in correctly labelled tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ correctly organises table ▪ correctly labels table, including units where appropriate ▪ includes relevant data 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presents data in a graph <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ correctly graphs data ▪ uses appropriate labelling ▪ uses appropriate titles 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • states results of the investigation • provides an accurate and detailed description of the data 	1–2
Subtotal	8
Discussion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyses critically the results of the investigation, relates the results to the hypothesis and explains how they relate to relevant psychological theories 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describes what happened in the investigation and cites relevant psychological theories 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluates the investigation design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explicitly explains how variables are controlled ▪ discusses any methodological flaws ▪ explains steps taken to ensure reliability and how it could be improved 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discusses ethical issues and describes how these were addressed 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discusses relevance of results to the population from which the sample was drawn as well as to theory or other research referred to in the introduction 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes accurate conclusions that relate to the hypothesis or research question 	1–2
Subtotal	13
References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes a range of relevant references 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • includes relevant references 	1
Subtotal	2
Total	42