**Using Psychology to help us become better Psychologists: Part 1**

The goal of this Tutorial task is to examine how we should approach learning in Psychology.

One of the most important learning experiences students need to reflect on is what they do during lectures. What to do in lectures might seem obvious, but is it? Everyone might have different opinions on how people should learn, but Psychology is about producing empirical evidence to support certain claims.

Let’s focus on a specific example – how should students make notes in lectures? Specifically, should they use laptops or make

Please read the following article

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0956797614524581>

Please note, the first few pages feature correction of mistakes made in previous versions (‘Corrigendum’). You might want to read this, but feel free to skip to the main article (page 1159).

When I make notes on a study, I break it down into four main sections.

* **Why:** Why was the research conducted? What question were they trying to answer in doing this research and what were they expecting to find.
* **How:** How did they go about addresses their main research question
* **What:** What did the authors find? What were the results of the study.
* **Where next? :** Has the article provided a decisive answer on the question. What are the limitations that need to be addressed.

Let’s try to fill out some notes here:

* **Why:** Why was the research conducted? What question were they trying to answer in doing this research and what were they expecting to find (You may focus on Study 1)

[Input box]

Answer: Mueller et al (2014) sought to examine whether making notes via a laptop or a notepad led to superior retention for factual vs. conceptual questions.

**How:** How did they go about addresses their main research question – (Again, you can confirm your description to Study 1, but please also look at why Study 2 and Study 3 were done).

[Input box]

Answer: There were two conditions. Participants either made notes on some TedTalks using a notepad or a laptop. Their recall for the factual and conceptual information contained in the talks was assessed 30 minutes after the lecture (and after performing a distractor task).

* **What:** What did the authors find? What were the results of the study?

[Input box]

**Answer:** Study 1 found superior recall for conceptual information after making handwritten notes compared to using a laptop to make notes. However, no differences were found for factual information.

* **Where next? :** Has the article provided a decisive answer on the question. What are the limitations that need to be addressed.
* [Input box]

**Answer:** There is no right or wrong answer here – there are only possible, reasonable and fair interpretations. The study has demonstrated the same effect across 3 different studies (and different Universities/campuses). This can lead us into having some faith in the conclusions. However, we might have concerns about whether this generalises from TedTalks to the actual content students might be encoded at University. Also, would this hold for different degrees or modules? The reality is that verbatim notes on a laptop is sometimes the best thing to do and sometimes might be less ideal.

**Your Task going forward:**

In your forthcoming lectures, try having one lecture where you make notes with your laptop and one where you make notes by on a physical notepad.

Did you notice a difference in your experience of the lecture?

Did you notice a difference in retention?