Psychology – Core 2: Research methods in psychology – Sample assessment task

Contents

[Sleep observation study 2](#_Toc122018684)

[Outcomes 2](#_Toc122018685)

[Task instructions 3](#_Toc122018686)

[Sleep study report 3](#_Toc122018687)

[Sleep report scaffold 3](#_Toc122018688)

[Marking criteria 6](#_Toc122018689)

[Record of sleep: Week 1 9](#_Toc122018690)

[Record of sleep: Week 2 11](#_Toc122018691)

[Analysis of sleep 13](#_Toc122018692)

[Data analysis activities 14](#_Toc122018693)

[Additional information 16](#_Toc122018694)

[Assessment for learning 16](#_Toc122018695)

[Differentiation 17](#_Toc122018696)

[About this resource 18](#_Toc122018697)

[References 21](#_Toc122018698)

## Sleep observation study

**Note:** This task may be used to address content and outcomes from both Core 2 and Option 1.

Teachers may choose relevant information and adjust for their contexts and their school-based practices. Relevant information should be transferred into the school’s assessment task template.

Due to the extended time frame required for students to collect data, it is suggested that students be provided with this task 4 weeks before the due date. The weighting of the task is a school-based decision.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PSY5-2** explains the main approaches to the study of the nature of human behaviour and the strengths and weaknesses of those approaches
* **PSY5-5** demonstrates an understanding of the importance of ethics in psychology, research and the interpretation of data
* **PSY5-8** communicates psychological information and ideas using appropriate written, oral and visual forms.

Learning adjustments enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Under the Department’s [Inclusive Education Policy for students with disability](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Feducation.nsw.gov.au%2Fpolicy-library%2Fpolicies%2Fpd-2005-0243&data=05%7C01%7CKAREN-MAIA.JACKAMAN%40det.nsw.edu.au%7C6a8dad1e85734247fdf308dab22cca21%7C05a0e69a418a47c19c259387261bf991%7C0%7C0%7C638018202688710804%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=eQofTLu1oD%2BUUljynd%2BV3MQj619F%2Fd25E%2FaEkrlHhGE%3D&reserved=0) and the [*Disability Standards for Education* (2005)](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.education.gov.au%2Fdisability-standards-education-2005&data=05%7C01%7CKAREN-MAIA.JACKAMAN%40det.nsw.edu.au%7C6a8dad1e85734247fdf308dab22cca21%7C05a0e69a418a47c19c259387261bf991%7C0%7C0%7C638018202688867116%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=fT27CRyqIybA5XxFCeBQy0EQaCYxZyBbeCIpqeCkdlE%3D&reserved=0), all staff must implement reasonable adjustments for students with disability, in consultation with parents/carers, to support students with disability to access the curriculum.

## Task instructions

**Note:** Students will access [How Sleep Works: Understanding the Science of Sleep](https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works) prior to being issued the task. This will help them to understand the process and reasoning for collecting behavioural data. When using video resources, ensure closed captions are used. Providing students with a transcript of the video is also useful, as the pace of the closed captions can be quick. Transcripts are available for all YouTube videos with closed captions. To find out how to get the transcript, access [How to Get the Transcript of a YouTube Video (2:13)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWdyhFiyH0Y).

The [Normal sleeping patterns 0-16 years factsheet [PDF 510KB]](https://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/files/factsheets/sleep_-_normal_sleep_patterns_0_-_16_years-en.pdf) from the Sydney Children’s Hospital Network and Kaleidoscope Children, Young People and Families may also be used as a resource when completing the task.

### Sleep study report

You will complete a sleep study report using data that you record from your own sleep patterns. This sleep study will involve recording data over 2 weeks.

* **Week 1** – observe and record your sleeping habits. Record your observations on the [Record of sleep – Week 1](#_Record_of_sleep) worksheet.
* **Week 2** – change ONE thing about your sleep habits and record your observations on the [Record of sleep – Week 2](#_Record_of_sleep_1) worksheet. Some suggested changes include:
* going to bed 30 minutes earlier
* turning your phone off or leaving it outside the bedroom
* not watching TV in your bedroom
* not drinking any caffeinated or carbonated drinks at least 3 hours before bed
* going to bed the same time every night for the week (including the weekend)
* exercising for 1 hour every day.

### Sleep report scaffold

* Use the headings below to scaffold your sleep report.
* Plan and respond to each of the numbered prompts and questions to scaffold your paragraphs.
* Attach your completed record of sleep tables to this report before submitting.

#### Constructing a hypothesis (max 250 words)

1. Locate 2 pieces of research into sleep behaviour related to the factor that you change in Week 2.
2. Summarise what the research says about the sleep behaviour.
3. Construct a hypothesis by explaining what impacts you think the change will have on your sleep as a result of the change made (Note: ‘impacts’ implies more than one possibility).

#### Identifying variables

1. What things will change across the span of the study?
2. What variables beyond your control could influence the results? (for example, visiting a relative or extra-curricular commitments)
3. What variables within your control could influence the results? (for example, a social event)

#### Method

**Note:** Use one of the following activities to contextualise the task for your class.

**Option A:** Students use the assessment task notification and the sleep report scaffold to create a method for the sleep study.

**Option B:** Provide the method for the task using the instructions given in this sample assessment task notification.

#### Apply statistical techniques (max 200 words)

1. After you have completed your sleep study, complete the [analysis of sleep](#_Analysis_of_sleep) worksheet.
2. Include the graph you create in this section and summarise the relevant details from the answers to your questions.

#### Drawing conclusions (max 250 words)

1. Identify and account for any significant changes to sleep observations and how they may be attributed to the change undertaken in Week 2.
2. What conclusions can be drawn (made) about your sleep patterns from the data you examined in the analysis of sleep activity?
3. How does the research support or refute your findings? How do your findings relate to your hypothesis?
4. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of this set of observational data. How might they impact the validity and reliability of the data obtained?

## Marking criteria

Table 1 – Assessment marking criteria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| **A** | * Develops a well-researched and considered hypothesis
* Maintains a comprehensive record of sleep to support the validity of the experiment
* Discusses in depth the accuracy of their experiment by identifying variables and accounting for strengths and weaknesses in the design
* Uses statistical techniques to provide a detailed and thoughtful analysis of the data set
* Presents information and ideas logically with appropriate structure, written language and graphical representation
 |
| **B** | * Develops a consistent hypothesis based on research
* Maintains a thorough record of sleep to support the validity of the experiment
* Discusses the accuracy of their experiment by identifying variables and accounting for strengths and weaknesses in the design
* Uses statistical techniques to provide an accurate analysis of the data set
* Presents information and ideas with appropriate structure, written language and graphical representation
 |
| **C** | * Develops a hypothesis based on research
* Completes a record of sleep to maintain the validity of the experiment
* Identifies variables and accounts for strengths and weaknesses in the design
* Uses statistical techniques to provide an analysis of the data set
* Presents information with appropriate structure, written language and graphical representation
 |
| **D** | * Develops a hypothesis
* Completes a basic record of sleep
* Identifies variables or strengths and weaknesses in the design
* Applies simple statistical techniques to the data set
* Presents written information with limited structure and graphical representation
 |
| **E** | * Completes a limited record of sleep
* Makes statements about the data or sleep
 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Feedback:** |

## Record of sleep: Week 1

**Note:** Co-constructing a [Likert rating scale](https://www.simplypsychology.org/likert-scale.html) for items that require a score will allow for a consistent understanding of the scale used and will be a useful activity to develop students’ understanding of using this recording sheet.

Table 2 – Record of sleep recording sheet Week 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Example | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Naps (time and duration) | 2pm, 40 minutes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Food and Drink (4 hours before bed) | 1 coffee, 4 slices of pizza, chocolate bar |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pre-bed activity | Watched TV, washed dishes, took a shower |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Day fatigue level (0-5, 5 being most tired) | 4 – quite tired |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| In-bed activities | Music and games on phone for 30 minutes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lights out | 10:30pm |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Time to fall asleep (estimate) | 20 min |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Waking time | 6:00am |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hours slept | 7hr 10min |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Waking during the night (times and duration) | Once at 2am, awake for 10 minutes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rest score (0-5, 5 most rested) | 1 – alarm to wake up and wanted to sleep longer |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Record of sleep: Week 2

**Habit changed –**

Table 3 – Record of sleep recording sheet Week 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Example | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Naps (time and duration) | nil |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Food and Drink (4 hours before bed) | 1 coffee, pasta, ice cream |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pre-bed activity | Watched TV, vacuumed, took a shower |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Day fatigue level (0-5, 5 being most tired) | 3 – a bit tired |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| In-bed activities | Music and games on phone for 30 minutes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lights out | 9:30pm |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Time to fall asleep (estimate) | 40 min |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Waking time | 6:20am |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hours slept | 8hr 10min |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Waking during the night (times and duration) | Twice at 11pm and 3:30am, awake for 10 minutes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rest score (0-5, 5 most rested) | 3 – woke up 5 minutes before alarm |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Analysis of sleep

A core element of psychological research is to manipulate data and draw conclusions based on what the data shows. There is no single method that will allow meaning to be drawn from raw data but comparing and contrasting (looking for similarities and differences) will usually allow you to come to conclusions. In the example below, you will use the data from your record of sleep tables to see if you can find any correlation, relationships, or patterns between how much you slept and your overall sleep quality.

Table 4 – Sleep quality analysis data

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Day | Hours slept | Rest score | Day fatigue | Sleep quality |
| **Example day** | **6** | **3** | **4** | **1 (Rest score – day fatigue)** |
| Monday |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday |  |  |  |  |
| Monday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Tuesday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Wednesday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Thursday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Friday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Saturday 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Sunday 2 |  |  |  |  |

### Data analysis activities

To complete a data analysis of your sleep quality data, complete the following steps using the information from Table 2.

1. Input data from your hours slept, rest score, and day fatigue.
2. Calculate your overall sleep quality for each day. To do this, minus your day fatigue from your rest score. This number may be negative.
3. Draw a coordinate plane with increases of 1 on the Y-axis, and days of the week on the X-axis.
4. For each day, have one bar representing hours slept and another recording sleep quality. This could be done using colour coding or shading.
5. Use the questions below as a guide to analyse your sleep patterns. You can go beyond these questions when considering the patterns your sleep analysis graph shows:
6. Which nights did you sleep the longest hours?
7. Which nights did you sleep the shortest hours?
8. When were your poorest sleep quality scores recorded?
9. When were your best sleep quality scores recorded?
10. Are there any patterns before or after days with a very low sleep quality score?
11. What seems to be the optimum (best) amount of hours to sleep? How do you know?
12. What seems to be the worst amount of hours to sleep? How do you know?
13. Can you observe any patterns between the trends in your graph and other data recorded in your sleep diary? For example, time you went to bed, using your phone before bed and less hours of sleep, exercise before bed and better sleep quality score the next day. What do these patterns suggest about your sleeping patterns and other activities?

## Additional information

**Resource evaluation and support**: Please complete the following [feedback form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=muagBYpBwUecJZOHJhv5kbKo2q_ZUXlHndJMnh2Wd8NUOUk0VTIzUDVVSlVFQVM5MkdOMkJGTjVKNCQlQCN0PWcu) to help us improve our resources and support.

The information below can be used to support teachers when using this teaching resource for Psychology.

### Assessment for learning

Possible formative assessment strategies that could be included:

* Learning intentions and success criteria assist educators to articulate the purpose of a learning task to make judgements about the quality of student learning. These help students focus on the task or activity taking place and what they are learning and provide a framework for reflection and feedback. [Online tools](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/622) can assist implementation of this formative assessment strategy.
* Eliciting evidence strategies allow teachers to determine the next steps in learning and assist teachers in evaluating the impact of teaching and learning activities. Strategies that may be added to a learning sequence to elicit evidence include all student response systems, [exit tickets](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/543), mini whiteboards (actual or [digital](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/575)), [hinge questions](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/557), [Kahoot](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningTool/Card/621), [Socrative](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningTool/Card/587), or quick quizzes to ensure that individual student progress can be monitored and the lesson sequence adjusted based on formative data collected.
* Feedback is designed to close the gap between current and desired performance by informing teacher and student behaviour (AITSL 2017). AITSL provides a [factsheet to support evidence-based feedback](https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/improve-practice/feedback#:~:text=FEEDBACK-,Factsheet,-A%20quick%20guide).
* [Peer feedback](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/549) is a structured process where students evaluate the work of their peers by providing valuable feedback in relation to learning intentions and success criteria. It can be supported by [online tools](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Browser?cache_id=1d29b).
* Self-regulated learning opportunities assist students in taking ownership of their own learning. A variety of strategies can be employed and some examples include reflection tasks, [Think-Pair-Share](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/645), [KWLH charts](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/562), [learning portfolios](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/583) and [learning logs](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/564).

The primary role of assessment is to establish where individuals are in their learning so that teaching can be differentiated and further learning progress can be monitored over time.

Feedback that focuses on improving tasks, processes and student self-regulation is the most effective. Students engaging with feedback can take many forms including formal, informal, formative, summative, interactive, demonstrable, visual, written, verbal and non-verbal.

[What works best update 2020](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/research-reports/what-works-best-2020-update) (CESE 2020a)

### Differentiation

Differentiated learning can be enabled by differentiating the teaching approach to content, process, product and the learning environment. For more information on differentiation go to [Differentiating learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/teacher-quality-and-accreditation/strong-start-great-teachers/refining-practice/differentiating-learning) and [Differentiation](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub/primary-school/teaching-strategies/differentiation).

When using these resources in the classroom, it is important for teachers to consider the needs of all students in their class, including:

* **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**. Targeted [strategies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec/aboriginal-education-in-nsw-public-schools) can be used to achieve outcomes for Aboriginal students in K-12 and increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories and cultures. Teachers should utilise students’ Personalised Learning Pathways to support individual student needs and goals.
* **EAL/D learners**. EAL/D learners will require explicit English language support and scaffolding, informed by the [EAL/D enhanced teaching and learning cycle](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald/enhanced-teaching-and-learning-cycle) and the student’s phase on the [EAL/D Learning Progression](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency). In addition, teachers can access information about [supporting EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency) and [literacy and numeracy support specific to EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald).
* **Students with additional learning needs**. Learning adjustments enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Teachers can use a range of [adjustments](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/adjustments-to-teaching-and-learning) to ensure a personalised approach to student learning. In addition, the [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning) can be used to support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies. Subject specific curriculum considerations can be found on the [Inclusive Practice hub](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub/primary-school/teaching-strategies/differentiation).
* **High potential and gifted learners**. [Assessing and identifying high potential and gifted learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/assess-and-identify#Assessment1) will help teachers decide which students may benefit from extension and additional challenge. [Effective strategies and contributors to achievement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/evaluate) for high potential and gifted learners help teachers to identify and target areas for growth and improvement. In addition, the [Differentiation Adjustment Tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/implement/differentiation-adjustment-strategies) can be used to support the specific learning needs of high potential and gifted students. The [High Potential and Gifted Education Professional Learning and Resource Hub](https://schoolsnsw.sharepoint.com/sites/HPGEHub/SitePages/Home.aspx) supports school leaders and teachers to effectively implement the High Potential and Gifted Education Policy in their unique contexts.

All students need to be challenged and engaged to develop their potential fully. A culture of high expectations needs to be supported by strategies that both challenge and support student learning needs, such as through appropriate curriculum differentiation. (CESE 2020a:6).

### About this resource

All curriculum resources are prepared through a rigorous process. Resources are periodically reviewed as part of our ongoing evaluation plan to ensure currency, relevance and effectiveness. For additional support or advice contact the Teaching and Learning Curriculum team by emailing secondaryteachingandlearning@det.nsw.edu.au.

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**:

This resource aligns to the School Excellence Framework elements of curriculum (curriculum provision) and effective classroom practice (lesson planning, explicit teaching).

This resource supports teachers to address [Australian Professional Teaching Standards](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/teacher-accreditation/meeting-requirements/the-standards/proficient-teacher) 5.1.2, 5.5.2

This resource has been designed to support schools with successful implementation of new curriculum, specifically the NSW Department of Education approved elective course, Psychology © 2021 NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

The resource is produced to assist schools with promoting and implementing the course for the first time. As the course may be taught by teachers from a range of key learning areas, the resource is designed to support teachers from a variety of KLA expertise.

**Department approved elective course**: Psychology

**Course outcomes**: PSY5-2, PSY5-5, PSY5-6, PSY5-8

**Author**: Curriculum Secondary Learners

**Publisher**: State of NSW, Department of Education

**Resource**: Teaching resource

**Related resources**: Further resources to support Psychology can be found on the Department approved elective courses webpage including course document, sample scope and sequences, assessment materials and other learning sequences.

**Professional Learning**: Join the [Teaching and Learning 7-12 statewide staffroom](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms) for information regarding professional learning opportunities.

**Universal Design for Learning Tool**: [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning). Support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies.

**Consulted with**: Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships, Inclusion and Wellbeing, EAL/D, Macquarie Fields High School, and Sydney University.

**Reviewed by**: This resource was reviewed by Curriculum Secondary Learners and by subject matter experts in schools to ensure accuracy of content.

**Creation date**: 5th December 2022

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**Evidence Base**:

‘The long-term vision is for a curriculum that supports teachers to nurture wonder, ignite passion and provide every young person with knowledge, skills and attributes that will help prepare them for a lifetime of learning, meaningful adult employment and effective future citizenship’ (NESA 2020:xi).

The development of the course and the course document as part of department approved electives aims to respond to the goals articulated in NESA’s curriculum review. Consistent messages from the review include:

* ‘flexibility’ was the word most used by teachers to describe the systemic change they want
* teachers need more time to teach important knowledge and skills
* students want authentic learning with real-world application.

This teaching resource provides teachers with some examples of explicit and authentic learning experiences. The suggested activities create opportunities for explicit teaching and assessment. ‘The evidence shows that students who experience explicit teaching practices perform better than students who do not. Explicit teaching reduces the cognitive burden of learning new and complex concepts and skills, and helps students develop deep understanding (CESE 2020a:11).

## References

**Links to third-party material and websites**

Please note that the provided (reading/viewing material/list/links/texts) are a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher, or book title. School principals and teachers are best placed to assess the suitability of resources that would complement the curriculum and reflect the needs and interests of their students.

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AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2017) ‘[Feedback Factsheet](https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/improve-practice/feedback#:~:text=FEEDBACK-,Factsheet,-A%20quick%20guide)’, AITSL, accessed 07 December 2022.

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