BRIEFING / CONSENT SHEET

Measuring reaction time of a human reflex reaction

The purpose of this practical is to measure the speed of a reflex action, and possibly to find out how that speed is affected when we consume caffeine. You and your classmates will be the humans that are used for this assessment.

SAFETY: Take care walking around the room with metre rulers – always carry them vertically and close to you. If your source of caffeine is coffee, take care with the hot liquid. You must not consume drinks in a laboratory where there is any possibility of contamination by chemicals or microorganisms.

In the investigation you are going to catch a metre ruler that your colleague drops between your fingers and thumb. Measuring the distance dropped will give you an idea of how quickly you have caught it.

In this investigation, everyone tested will show a different speed of reaction. We will put the class results together to find out the range and the mean average. The results will tell us something about the reflex reactions of group, and you will see how your speed of reaction compares with others. But, when we put all the information together, no one will know who has provided each answer – so only you will know which data are yours.

* You are participating in a piece of scientific research.
* The activity is **not** a competition.
* The results will **not** give definitive results for any individual because we are measuring only one reflex action on one occasion, with simple equipment and we are not experienced investigators.
* If your reflex speed is very different from others in your group, don’t worry. It may be that some in your group have not done the test in exactly the same way as you.
* If you are worried about the results at the end of the practical, please stay to talk to your teacher about it.
* You do not have to take part in the activity and you can stop at any time (but tell your teacher).
* You don’t have to put your results into the class set.
* There will be no long-term effects.

Please write your name and tick the boxes to show how you feel. Then return this slip to your teacher.

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Name: ……………………………………………………………

* I am happy to start the investigation.
* I am used to consuming caffeine in soft drinks or coffee with no ill-effects.
* I do not have any conditions that make it difficult for me to consume caffeine, artificial sweeteners or sugar (in coffee or soft drinks).
* I know I can stop at any time.
* I know I can leave my results out of the class set if I want to.