Pearson

Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Psychology (5PS01)

Paper 1 Perception and Dreaming

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Introduction

Unit 1 of GCSE Psychology tests two topics, 'perception' and 'dreaming', both carrying equal weight in a 60 mark paper. There are no options in the paper, which is designed to test a range of skills. Specifically, candidates need sound knowledge of the concepts in both topics, including methodology (for example questions 1 and 2), and the ability to evaluate some of the content (for example: Q3 - Q6; Q10(b) and Q10(c)). In addition, candidates must be able to use their understanding to answer applied questions relating to both content and methodology, such as in the following questions: Q7(a); Q9 and Q11 - Q13; and Q20(a), Q20(b) and Q20(c).

This paper offered candidates many accessible questions. Marks in longer questions offered opportunities to earn credit across the mark range (for example Q9 and Q19). Many candidates demonstrated good understanding in their ability to apply their knowledge to scenarios and images, although others need practice with this skill. Such individuals would benefit from underlining parts of the text or annotating images and reading the question carefully (such as Q9 and Q20). More successful candidates were readily able to extract key points from the text or image and link it to their answers. Less successful candidates frequently muddled depth cues and Gestalt laws (Q9) or simply described the image. In addition, although many candidates were able to answer the question set, less successful candidates tended not to do so, for example in Q19, less successful candidates offered confused responses which contained correct concepts used incorrectly. For question 9 they did not follow the instruction to identify the part of the image the depth cue could be found in. Although not impossible, this made it harder for candidates to pick up full marks for each depth cue.

Question 7(a)

The question presented an image containing two bird cages. It required the candidate to apply their knowledge and understanding of how the blind spot works to the image. Some candidates attempted to use 'stereopsis' to explain why the bird disappears and, unless they go on to explain the lack of rods and cones (or this is where the optic nerve leaves the eye), they gained no credit. The first mark was awarded for the acknowledgement that the bird falls on the blind spot. This was seen in most responses.

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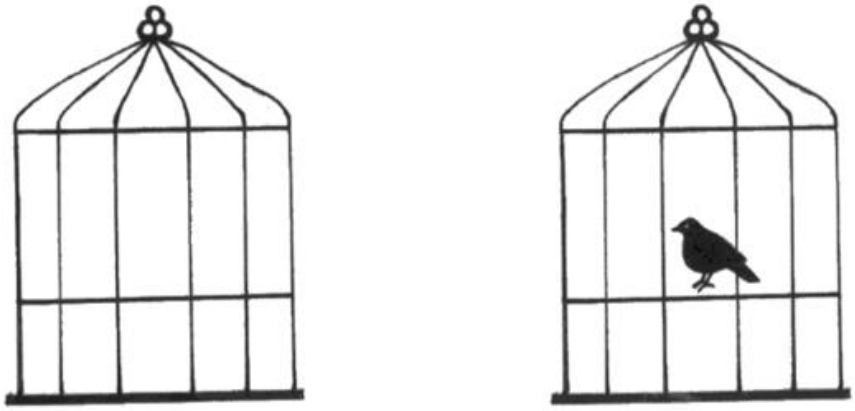

Figure 1

Figure 1 is a blind spot test. A participant closes their left eye and looks at the cage on the left. The bird should disappear from the cage on the right.

(a) Describe why the bird should disappear.

(2)

When seeing the empty cage we use Similarity to percieve the other cage as being the same. Since the bird is in our blind spot we assume hes not there.

Examiner comment – The first sentence is incorrect/irrelevant and gained no credit. However, the second point correctly identifies that the bird is in our blind spot. So, this gains 1 mark.

Candidates gaining full marks were able to explain why the brain is not able to process the image. This second mark did not have to explicitly link to the bird/cage to gain credit.

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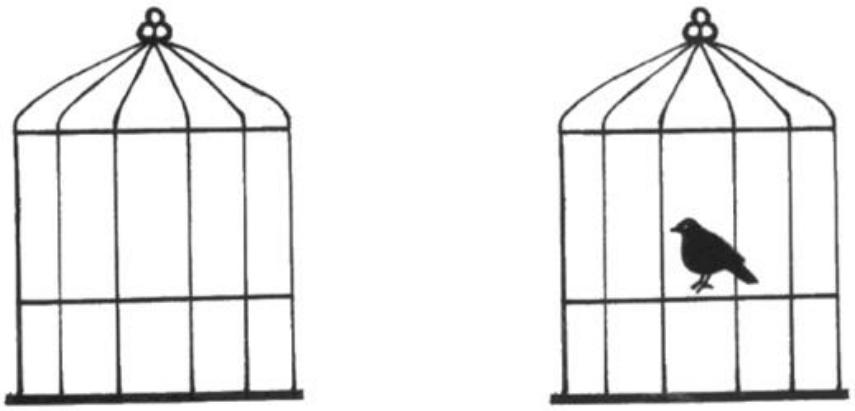


Figure 1

Figure 1 is a blind spot test. A participant closes their left eye and looks at the cage on the left. The bird should disappear from the cage on the right.

(a) Describe why the bird should disappear.

(2)

The bird is in the blind spot: where there are no rods and cones to see the image.

Examiner Comment – Brief but correct response where the first point relates directly to the image of the bird in a cage and the second point explains why the image isn't processed.

Examiner Tip – When there is a scenario or image in the question, it is very likely the response will have to use the stimulus to gain credit.

Question 9

This question asked candidates to apply their knowledge of depth cues to a picture. This is likely to be the kind of task they have done in class and many were able to offer good answers as a consequence. For each cue, the question asked for an identification of the cue and where in the picture it could be seen, for the first mark, and then two further marks for explaining how it gives the impression of depth. Many candidates however, did not identify the aspect of the picture when they named the depth cue which meant they had to say a lot to gain full marks for each cue. Most candidates demonstrated their knowledge of the depth cue by illustrating it with the picture, which isn't what the question was asking for, however, these answers could gain full credit.

9 Figure 2 is an advertisement for washing powder. The image uses cues to give the impression of depth in the scene.

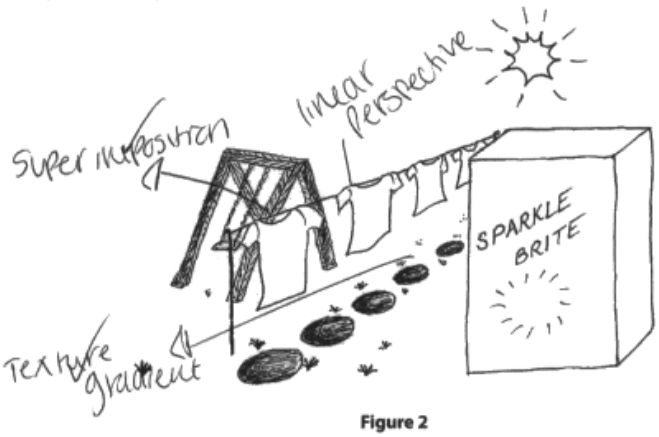


Figure 2

Name **three** different monocular depth cues that you think help to give depth to Figure 2 and describe where you can see them.

For each cue that you have named, explain how it helps to give the impression of depth.

(9)

Name of cue 1 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

Superimposition - the t-shirt is covering the swing

Explanation:

This tells us that the swing is further away because the t-shirt in the forgrand, is covering parts of it, this shows that the t-shirt must be infront of the swing. This creates depth because it shows you that some things eg the swing is behind others eg the t-shirt

Name of cue 2 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

Texture gradient - the grass next to the path stones.

Explanation:

The detail in the grass slowly fades away into the back grand to show that its further away. You can tell that the grass near the bottom of the picture is closer because you can see the grass blades whereas towards the horizon of the picture its just dots. This creates depth in the picture

Name of cue 3 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

linear perspective - the washing line and path

Explanation:

As the washing line and path gets further away the start to get closer to each other and would join if the box wasn't in the way. This shows depth because the further away it seems the closer the lines get, this shows the lines of perspective.

Examiner Comments – This candidate correctly identified each cue and located it in the picture Superimposition – the t-shirt is covering the swing, texture gradient – the grass next to the path stone and finally, linear perspective – the washing line and the path. The candidate then went on to explain clearly how each depth cue works, illustrating with the picture.

Examiner Tip - As identified in previous series, 'height in the plane' wasn't commonly used and when it was it often was not explained well in part. Note that things which are further away appear to be closer to the horizon rather than 'higher up'.

Some candidates are still confusing depth cues with Gestalt laws and the use of these often resulted in no credit.

9 Figure 2 is an advertisement for washing powder. The image uses cues to give the impression of depth in the scene.

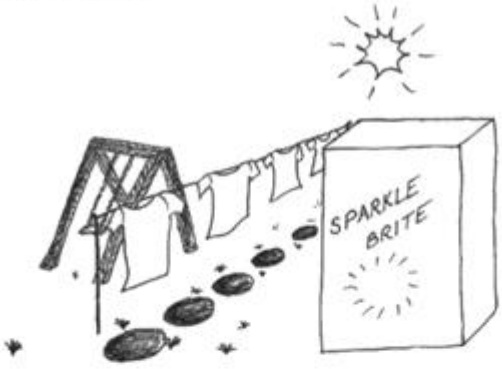


Figure 2

Name **three** different monocular depth cues that you think help to give depth to Figure 2 and describe where you can see them.

For each cue that you have named, explain how it helps to give the impression of depth.

(9)

Name of cue 1 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

continuity

Explanation:

the ~~black~~ black circles are all ~~similar~~ following the same pattern so it is predictable that they're going to carry on doing that same pattern even though you cannot see it anymore.

Name of cue 2 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

Similarity

Explanation:

all of the white t-shirts look the same so they are perceived to be a group. Therefore the t-shirts support the cue, similarity.

Name of cue 3 and description of the part of Figure 2 containing that cue:

figure-ground

Explanation:

the 'sparkle brite' box ~~is a~~ does seems more detailed than the t-shirts behind it make it to look more clearer. ~~The~~ Therefore the box is the figure and what is behind it is the ground.

Examiner Comments – This candidate attempted to apply Gestalt laws, Continuity, Similarity and Figure-ground, to the picture and, although some responses did contain the odd comment that could be interpreted as a depth cue and could therefore gain some credit, this response gained no credit at all.

Examiner Tip – Create some kind of mnemonic to remember depth cues as different from Gestalt laws.

Question 10(a)

This question asked for a description of the procedure used by Bartlett in his 'War of the Ghosts' study. It required pure knowledge and understanding of what Bartlett did. Few candidates produced full descriptions including aims and results, which was good to see. A number of candidates described the procedure of both serial and repeated reproduction studies but only one could be credited as they were different studies using the same materials and investigating the same aim. Added details like, 'participants were asked to read twice' or 'participants were allowed to read at their own pace', gained the credit that often made the difference between 2 and 3 marks. Few candidates referred to Bartlett's recording of the changes in the story.

10 Bartlett (1932) used the 'War of the Ghosts' story in his study.

(a) Describe the procedure of Bartlett's study that used this story.

(3)

Bartlett had two groups for his experiment. The first group (Person in) read the story, 'War of the Ghosts' twice through, at their own reading pace. He then (15 mins later) asked them to re-tell the story to another participant who then retold the story to another participant - this was done ~~for~~ through all participants in group 1. (Serial Reproduction) Then Bartlett asked all of group 2 to read through the story twice and re-tell it at different time intervals. For example, 15 minutes, 8 days, 6 weeks, 6 months, a year etc. (Repeated Reproduction)

Examiner Comment – this candidate added the detail that gave this response two marks for the second sentence i.e. 'read the story twice through' with the final mark coming from retelling the story to another participant. Had full marks not already have been given, the repeated production version, despite being correct, would not be credited as it is a separate study.

10 Bartlett (1932) used the 'War of the Ghosts' story in his study.

(a) Describe the procedure of Bartlett's study that used this story.

(3)

he had two groups to repeat the story: serial reproduction and repeated reproduction. The serial reproduction group read the story to themselves and 10 minutes later, read to another participant from memory and so on. Repeated reproduction group read the story to themselves and were tested on it 5 minutes later, 20 minutes later and up to ten years later. Both groups lost finer details such as names or numbers.

Examiner Comment - This response described both serial and repeated reproductions and gained 2 marks for each but, as only one reproduction can be credited, it achieved 2 marks overall.

Examiner Tip – Be sure of the details. Many candidates wrote that Bartlett had read the story to his participants, which is incorrect.

Question 10(b)

This question asked for one strength of Bartlett's study. Candidates found this question difficult and sometimes presented the conclusion, that memory is unreliable, or made generic comments about it being a controlled/lab experiment or left it blank. Few commented on its application to the real world.

Responses that gained credit, often referred to Bartlett's use of other stories and pictures to show that the results weren't peculiar to this story.

(b) Describe **one** strength of Bartlett's study.

(2)

He used other stories and not just the 'war of ghosts' to see if he got the same results.

Examiner comment – This candidate correctly identified that Bartlett used other stories to see if the same results were found, but didn't then explain why this is a strength.

The better responses were the ones that identified the strength and then explained why it was a strength.

(b) Describe **one** strength of Bartlett's study.

(2)

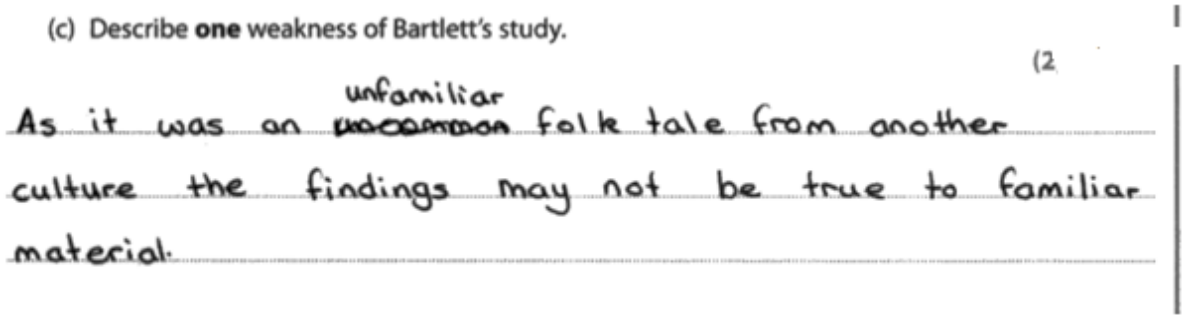
Bartlett also used different stories in his study to show that the results were not just limited to 'war of the Ghosts'. This produced generalisable results.

Examiner Comment - This response identifies that there is support for the findings from other stories used by Bartlett and it was clear about why this is a strength i.e. it shows that the results were not just limited to 'War of the Ghosts'.

Examiner tip – When asked for a strength/weakness, identify what is good/bad about the study, and then explain why it's a strength/weakness.

Question 10(c)

Candidates were asked to describe a weakness of Bartlett's study. This could have been about the sample, procedure, controls etc. Of the 2 marks available, only 1 could be generic – the other point had to relate directly to one of the 'war of the Ghosts' studies. Again, candidates struggled with their response to this question with many citing the problem of generalising to everyday stories. It seems that this is a taught weakness which doesn't acknowledge Bartlett's need to have no prior schema for the story.

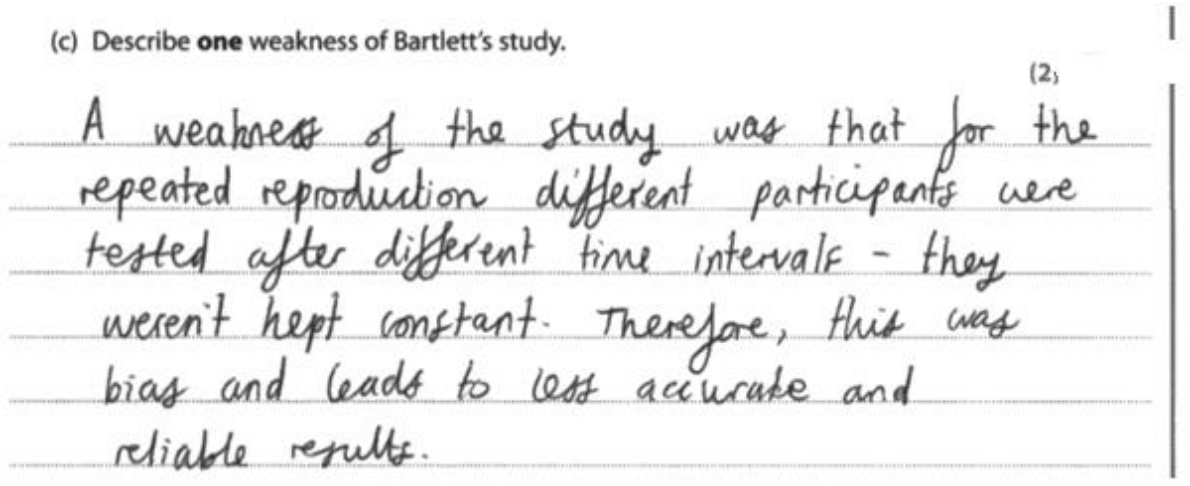

(c) Describe **one** weakness of Bartlett's study.

(2)

As it was an unfamiliar folk tale from another culture the findings may not be true to familiar material.

Examiner Comment - Bartlett chose to use an unfamiliar story so that he could be sure that prior schema did not affect recall. Using familiar material could not guarantee that the recall hadn't been influenced by existing schema.

Although some candidates wrote about a lack of control in terms of reading time, the majority of successful responses were able to explain that the recall intervals were not controlled which could affect the accuracy of the recall.


(c) Describe **one** weakness of Bartlett's study.

(2)

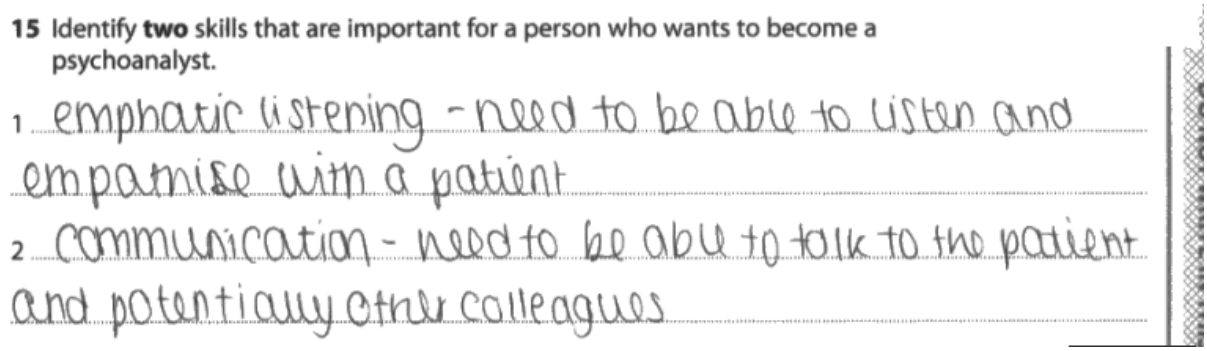
A weakness of the study was that for the repeated reproduction different participants were tested after different time intervals - they weren't kept constant. Therefore, this was bias and leads to less accurate and reliable results.

Examiner Comment - The first mark for this response comes from identifying that the time intervals were different for each participant. The second mark is given for the explanation of why it is a problem i.e. it makes the results less accurate and less reliable.

Examiner Tip - Formulaic evaluations (such as GRAVE) are not always appropriate. Think about what the research is trying to achieve before using any of the elements.

Question 15

The most popular skills were probably good listening, empathy and non-judgemental. This question was generally well answered. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and gave responses that a qualified psychoanalyst might have learned. For example: able to interpret dreams, and others gave qualifications rather than skills. These responses were not credited.


15 Identify **two** skills that are important for a person who wants to become a psychoanalyst.

1 emphatic listening - need to be able to listen and empamise with a patient

2 communication - need to be able to talk to the patient and potentiaily other colleagues

Examiner comment – This candidate gained both marks for Empathetic listening 'and 'communication'. Both skills were explained well but this was not necessary to gain the marks.

Question 19

This question required knowledge and understanding of how a neuron works. Some candidates interpreted this as what are the functions of a neuron and so did not gain credit. The very best answers gave a logical account of how the neuron works; usually starting at the receiving of the neurotransmitters at the receptor sites/dendrites, and ending with the crossing of the synaptic gap. Many answers were confused, using concepts incorrectly, or confusing the terminal buttons with the dendrites. These answers typically picked up just 1 or 2 marks for saying that the impulse travels down the axon to the terminal buttons.

19 The function of neurons is to pass messages around the body and brain.

Explain how a neuron works.

a neuron works by sending an electricent impulse down the axon. this impulse then cresses the synaptic gap through the release of synaptic transmitters. These chemical transmitters are recieved by the terminal bulb after leaving the other neurons' denerides. Once received at the terminal bulb bulb the electrical impulse continues down the axon and the process continues until the impulses reach the part of the body they weren't sent for.

Examiner Comment – This response correctly identifies that a neuron sends an electrical impulse down the axon. The candidate picks up a second mark by explaining that the impulse then crosses the synaptic gap by the release of '(synaptic) transmitters. Although the candidate has used the incorrect term here, the idea of the impulse crossing the synaptic gap was enough the gain the mark.

Candidates with better answers were able to organise their knowledge, about elements of a neuron, into a logical order.

19 The function of neurons is to pass messages around the body and brain.

Explain how a neuron works.

A neuron works by an electrical impulse being sent from the cell body to the terminal button by travelling down the axon. When the impulse has reached the terminal button it triggers the release of a neurotransmitter at the synapse. The neurotransmitters then travel across the synaptic gap through diffusion and attach to the dendrites of the synapse on the other side where they are ~~but~~ diffused back into the neuron for the process to happen again.

Examiner Comment - This response picks up two marks for the first sentence by stating that an electrical impulse is sent to the terminal button by travelling down the axon. A third mark is given for the sentence explaining that neurotransmitters are then released at the synapse and a fourth mark is given for the idea that it is received by the next neuron's dendrites. The final mark can be given here for the last sentence describing how the neurotransmitter is then released back into the synapse for the process to happen again (reuptake).

Examiner tip – It is useful to draw a quick diagram to help describe the process in a logical order. This acts as a plan.

Question 20(a)

In general there were some very sensible and plausible suggestions made, such as 'making a noise such as playing loud music to see whether the patient woke up'. There were a minority who clearly had little idea of what may be required. Some misunderstood what happens to the brain during REM sleep and suggested seeing whether there was brain activity when a noise was made by using an EEG.

Some responses were a little too vague with one of the elements of their suggestions.

20 Yana is a student observer at a sleep laboratory. Participants for future studies spend several nights there before an experiment, to become familiar with the setting.

Yana is allowed to conduct an experiment of her own on these people. She is going to test Hobson & McCarley's idea of the sensory blockade. She thinks people will be less sensitive to sounds when they are in REM sleep than during other stages of sleep.

(a) Yana's dependent variable (DV) is how sensitive people are to sound during sleep. Suggest **one** way that Yana could measure this variable.

(2

Yana could play some music ^ or sand and everytime increase the voume to see how sensitive to sound each person is and compare her results

Examiner Comment – This response gained one mark for the suggestion of playing some music but they were too vague on how they would know that this was having an effect. To see how 'sensitive to sound each person is' cannot not clearly measured, unlike waking or stirring, for example.

20 Yana is a student observer at a sleep laboratory. Participants for future studies spend several nights there before an experiment, to become familiar with the setting.

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(a) Yana's dependent variable (DV) is how sensitive people are to sound during sleep. Suggest **one** way that Yana could measure this variable.

(2

once the participants are asleep, create sounds at different volumes to test how quickly they awaken, in or not in REM sleep.

Examiner Comment - This was typical of the responses that gained full marks. It identified what could be done to bring about an effect, and what that effect is. In this case, 'create sounds at different levels' and 'how quickly they awaken'

Question 20(b)

This question was not answered well. The question was asking for the independent variable which, when operationalised was whether the patient was in REM or non-REM sleep. Many candidates identified the sounds they would make or the volume they would change, as their independent variable. Some gained a mark, almost by accident, by referring to measuring the loudness of the noise made in different stages of sleep, but far too many candidates seemed to have no idea at all what the IV might be. Better responses correctly identified the independent variables as the sleep stages and the best answers identified both levels of the stages i.e. REM and non-REM sleep.

(b) Describe Yana's independent variable (IV).

(2

The stage of sleep the participant is in.

Examiner Comment - Although correctly identified as the stage of sleep, this response identified only at a basic level. Whether the patient was in REM or non-REM sleep was needed for the full two marks.

(b) Describe Yana's independent variable (IV).

(2

The independent variable is what Yana's changing. This is the stage of sleep : REM sleep, or other stages.

Examiner Comment – Although brief, this response identifies both levels of the independent variable, REM and 'other stages of sleep' and so gains both marks.

Examiner Tip – When asked to describe the independent variable, try to add enough detail to identify the difference between the two groups/measures.

Question 20(c)

This question asked for a problem with Yana's sample of participants. It added that the problem must be drawn from the scenario presented, which acted as a warning against generic responses. The problem could be about the participants or the sampling technique used. Many candidates identified that the participants were already sleep lab patients and so have problems with their sleep cycle, so their results may not be typical of others' sleep. However, the majority of the better answers suggested that the patients were not in their own beds and so might have suffered from sleep patterns which were not typical of their normal sleep, so it lacked ecological validity.

(c) Explain **one** problem with the sample of participants that Yana is being allowed to use.

Your problem **must** be drawn from the description of Yana's experiment.

(2

The participants spent "several nights there". They may still not feel fully comfortable at the laboratory, even after sleeping there on other [redacted] nights beforehand. The amount of nights isn't specified, therefore some participants may not be able to sleep properly, due to discomfort.

Examiner Comment - This response was typical of the better answers where the candidate explained what the problem was i.e. the participants were not fully comfortable, and then went on to explain why this is a problem, therefore they may not be able to sleep properly.

(c) Explain **one** problem with the sample of participants that Yana is being allowed to use.

Your problem **must** be drawn from the description of Yana's experiment.

(2

She is only allowed to use a few people because in a sleep laboratory their isn't many people in there so her sample is quite small.

Examiner Comment – This response identified an appropriate problem, that the sample would be quite small because it's based in a sleep lab, but didn't then continue to explain why this is a problem, so picked up just the one mark. Had the candidate have said, 'and so may not contain a cross section of patients so can't be generalised', they would have gained the extra mark.

Examiner Tip – When giving a problem, try to identify the problem and then explain why it's a problem e.g. so may not be representative, so it isn't measuring natural behaviour, or similar.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this, the final paper of this specification, candidates of the new specification are offered the following advice:

- Ensure strengths and weaknesses / problems questions identify the issue and then explain why it's a strength/weakness.
- Practise scenario based questions to improve their application skills.
- Know their measures of averages / central tendency as separate from the measures of dispersion
- Use diagrams or brief plans to help with the longer answer questions.