



Beauchamp College

Year 12/13 - A- Level Transition Work

PSYCHOLOGY

A researcher wanted to compare the effectiveness of two therapies for people who had a phobia of flying. A newspaper advertisement was used to recruit a sample of 50 volunteers who were afraid of flying.

The participants were randomly allocated to therapy A (group 1), or therapy B (group 2).

Each participant's anxiety of flying was tested before and after therapy. The assessment involved the use of an anxiety scale on which the participants were asked to rate how they felt at the time. A high score indicated extreme anxiety.

For the pre-therapy assessment, all participants experienced realistic pre-flight conditions in an airport terminal and on board an aircraft. Although they expected the plane to take off, it remained on the ground. Once the engines were turned off, participants were asked to complete the anxiety scale on board the aircraft. For the next four weeks they then attended weekly sessions of one of the two therapies.

At the end of the four weeks they then had the same procedure as in the pre-therapy assessment to calculate a post-therapy anxiety score.

TABLE 1: median anxiety scores before and after therapy for the two therapy groups.

	Pre-therapy assessment	Post-therapy assessment
Therapy A	50	40
Therapy B	32	10

1: Outline what the data in table 1 tells us about the effectiveness of the therapies. (3 marks)

2: Identify one variable other than the therapy itself that could have caused the change in anxiety scores. (2 marks)

3: Briefly describe how the design of the study could be improved to take account of this variable. (3 marks)


