

RANCH



in-schools testing - verbal instruction manual

General Introduction

Hello my name is XXXX and I work at XXXX. The others here today are XXXX (*introduce the others*). We are researchers who are working on the SA RANCH project.

We have lots of different activities to get through but hopefully you'll enjoy doing them. RANCH is a scientific project and because of this we need you to listen to instructions very carefully and to work in silence for each of the activities.

Are there any questions before I start? Hands up...

On the front of your folder is a page that looks like this (*point to information sheet and consent form*). Before we start the activities I will tell you a few things about RANCH and will ask for your consent. Does everyone have this sheet in front of them (*monitors check*), follow it as I read it out to you.

(top half of sheet is read out)

Emphasize This is not a test or an exam. We do not want anybody to worry about the activities or to feel upset or stressed by them. We're researchers, not teachers, so are only interested in seeing how you get on – just try your best.

(At the end of the information section)
Does anybody have any questions?

(Moving on to consent form, point at the shaded box)

Hands up if you know what confidential means?

(Explain what confidential means.)

All your answers will be kept completely confidential. I guarantee that. Your parents, carers and teachers do not have access to your answers as they are taken back to the University.

We need you to be as honest and as accurate as possible when you work with us today because you are helping us with an important scientific project.

Does anybody not understand that point?

(Read the consent form, shaded box, to them)

If you are happy to take part in the activities please write your name on the line at the bottom the page, just your first name is fine. It has a picture of a pencil next to it. (*Hold up the form and point to the line*)

When you have written your name hold the form up in the air and we will collect it in.

Okay, we're nearly ready to start on the activities. On some of the activities you may find that you finish before others. If this happens please sit quietly and wait for everyone else to finish. Please put your pens down, fold your arms and stay silent – that way we'll know you've finished. It's extra important that you don't start talking because this may distract children who are still working.

Suffolk reading scale

The UK national reading test (Suffolk Reading Scale) contains 70 multi-choice questions with 5 potential answers. Children have 20 minutes to work through the items.

Everybody open your folders and take out the activity that looks like this (*hold up Suffolk*). Put it on your table.

In this activity there are lots of sentences each of which has a blank in it like these ones (*point to practice questions*). What you have to do is to look at each of the five words below the sentence and choose the word which best fits into the sentence. Sometimes more than one word will fit into the sentence. Decide which one fits best. When you've decided which word best fits into the sentence you should draw a circle around that word. You must not write it down on the line, just circle it.

Any words circled by mistake should be crossed out and a circle put around the correct choice.

Okay, we'll go through the practice questions together.

(Read out each of the sentences, then each of the words, then ask the children to put their hands up if they know the answer. Ask one of the children to tell the class the correct answer).

(after practices)

The booklet contains items that are similar to the ones you have just done and you must work on them on your own. You may find some items more difficult than others, but you should try to work out each one you come to. If you are not sure which is the right answer, circle the one that you think fits best. Only miss out a sentence if you really cannot do it and have a go at the next one.

You will have 20 minutes for this activity, this should be plenty of time for you to try your best.

There are 8 pages in this booklet I want you to work through every page until you get to the end. Make sure you cover your work as you go.

Are there any questions?

Ready, steady go.

(Set stop watch to 20 minutes)

(Warn the children when they have 10 minutes, 5 minutes and 1 minute left)

(After 15 minutes) I know they are getting a bit harder towards the back but just try your best.

(after 20 minutes)

Okay, everybody stop writing now. Hold your booklet up and we will collect it in.

Procedure

Written permission was obtained from the education authorities and from the parents to allow their children to participate in the study. The children were informed of the limits of confidentiality, as well as the voluntary nature of their participation. Informed assent from the children was thus obtained. On the day of testing, the assessment administrators introduced themselves according to the RANCH-SA script, which avoided the word 'noise,' so not to influence participants' perceptions of the study, and the project was introduced as an environmental study. They were trained in advance on standard assessment protocol and how to administer the actual tests. The measurements were group-administered in the classrooms in the morning between 8am and 10am. The pre-test measures were administered in Wave 1 before relocation of the airport and post-test measurements took place in Wave 2 and in Wave 3. Analyses presented in this paper are therefore of the 2009, 2010 and 2011 cohorts. Each testing procedure began with practice items to ensure that participants understood what was required in the assessment. Completed tests were placed in a coded envelop straight after the assessment was completed. The children were offered chips and juices for participation in the study.