Reimagining Lab & Discussion Sections

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What is the purpose of lab or discussion sections?

**Skills**
- Application of knowledge
- Develop scientific thinking

**Collaboration**
- Smaller groups, more individualized instruction
- Peer learning
Outline

How can we preserve the “active ingredients” for learning in a context where we might not be interacting in real time?

● **Part 1: Lab activities**
  ○ Developing research skills

● **Part 2: Discussion Section**
  ○ Fostering student discussion and collaboration
Common Lab Activities

Working with data

Replicating studies

Designing a new study

https://www.apa.org/research/responsible/data-links
Introductory Psychology Labs

F2F model: 1 hour lab each week

Henrich, et al., 2010; Segall et al., 1966
Data Analysis “Challenge” Activity

Weekly 2-hour lab, lead by TAs

**F2F:** students worked in small groups to complete the assignment, with periodic help from TAs (either whole-class demonstrations or one-on-one help)

**Online:** tried to maintain format using breakout rooms, with mixed success
- Harder to get and give help
- Students wanted more consistent group members
Questions so far?
Outline

How can we preserve the “active ingredients” for learning in a context where we might not be interacting in real time?

- **Part 1: Lab activities**
  - Developing research skills
- **Part 2: Discussion Section**
  - Fostering student discussion and collaboration
Common Discussion Activities

Content review
Open-ended discussion
Group work
Peer review of writing
Research Methods Discussion section

**F2F:** 50 minutes per week, lead by TA
- How to write an APA paper
- Mix of presentation & group activity (e.g. reviewing example papers)
- Credit for attendance (7% w/ 1 drop)

**Online:** pre-recorded mini lectures paired with participation activity in Google forms quiz
- Credit for completion (7% w/ 1 drop)
- Used scheduled time for TA OH
Research Methods Discussion section (continued)

Did students like the online version? YES.

- APA mini lectures were overwhelmingly rated “very useful”
  - 94% of online students vs. 64% of F2F students
- Students felt they learned a lot from the assignments
  - Reported learning “a lot”: 49% online vs. 29% F2F
  - Reported learning “nothing”: 3% online vs. 8% F2F
- Students *liked* the assignments
  - Reported they “liked” or “loved” section: 62% online vs. 44% F2F
  - Reported they “didn’t like” or “hated” section: 5% online vs. 26% F2F
Possibilities for Offline

Three peer review assignments designed to help students grapple with challenging paper writing concepts

Writing → Peer Review → Revision in Final Paper
TA Led Discussion Section for Developmental Psych

- Mechanisms to increase engagement
  - Individual submission of worksheet
  - Multiple modes to engage (respond in chat, raise hand, polls)

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### Video Questions

1. What evidence from Genie's case could be used to support a nativist perspective of language development? What evidence could be used to support an empiricist perspective?

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<tr>
<th>Support for Nativist</th>
<th>Support for Empiricist</th>
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2. Compare and contrast Genie's language development to the language development (and abilities) of young children.

3. In what ways could the actions of the researchers involved in Genie's case be deemed unethical?

4. Overall, do you think that research on Genie was ethical or unethical? Why?
Conclusions and Reflections

STRUCTURE YOUR ACTIVITIES!

Think carefully about what *needs* to be synchronous and what can be done asynchronously.

Build in mechanisms to support students and help answer their questions.

Tips for using Zoom effectively was covered in the Synchronous Storytelling session.
Questions?
Tools/Resources

PsyToolkit: https://www.psytoolkit.org/
APA Data sets: https://www.apa.org/research/responsible/data-links
ELI Review: https://elireview.com/
References

