

Cambridge AS & A Level · Psychology 9990 · Notes

Ethics

AS

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What you need to know

Ethics comes up on almost every Paper 2, and in Paper 1 questions about the core studies. By the end of this topic you should be able to:

1. **Describe the ethical guidelines for research with people:** minimising harm (and maximising benefit), valid consent including informed consent, the right to withdraw, lack of deception, confidentiality, privacy and debriefing.
2. **Describe the ethical guidelines for research with animals:** minimising harm (and maximising benefit), replacement, species, numbers, and procedures, which covers pain, suffering and distress; housing; and reward, deprivation and aversive stimuli.
3. **Evaluate studies against the guidelines:** say which guidelines a core study (or any study) kept or broke, with evidence from the study.
4. **Apply the guidelines to a new study:** spot which guideline a scenario raises, explain why, and suggest a practical way for the researcher to follow it.

Understand it

Why psychologists have ethical guidelines

Research can upset, embarrass, mislead or hurt the people and animals who take part. The guidelines are rules that protect participants while still letting useful research happen. Every study weighs **costs** (distress, discomfort, lost time) against **benefits** (what we learn, how it could help people). A study is ethical when the risks are as small as they can be and are worth the benefit.

People and animals have **different** lists of guidelines. Animals can't agree to take part, ask to stop or be told the truth afterwards, so consent, withdrawal, deception and debriefing don't apply to them. Their guidelines are about suffering, the species used, how many are used and how they are kept.

Guidelines for human participants

Minimising harm (and maximising benefit), often called **protection from harm**. Participants should leave a study in no worse a state than they arrived, physically or psychologically. Psychological harm includes stress, fear, embarrassment, guilt and lowered self-esteem (for example, feeling stupid after scoring badly on a test). The researcher reduces the risk (screening out people with a health condition, keeping a frightening task short), stops if someone becomes upset, and makes the study as useful as possible so that any risk is worthwhile.

Valid consent, including informed consent. **Consent** means agreeing to take part. **Informed** consent means agreeing **after** being told enough about the study (what will happen, how long it takes, any risks) to make a real choice. It is usually given by signing a form after a briefing. Consent is only **valid** if the person can understand what they are agreeing to and is free to say no:

- **Children** (under 16) can't give valid consent alone, because they may not fully understand what the study involves. A **parent or guardian** gives consent, and the child is also asked, in words and activities a child understands ("Would you like to come and do some puzzles with me?").
- Other people who may not fully understand (some very old people, people with some mental health conditions) need extra care, often with consent from a carer too.
- Where telling people the aim would spoil the study, a researcher can ask a similar group whether they would agree to the procedure; if they would, it is assumed the real participants would too (**presumptive consent**).

Right to withdraw. Participants can leave the study at any time, without giving a reason and without losing anything (they keep any payment). They can also ask for their data to be removed afterwards. They must be **told** about this right at the start, in a way they understand. Children should be watched for signs that they want to stop (crying, going quiet, looking away, walking off).

Lack of deception. Participants should not be lied to or misled about the aim or the procedure. Deception means they can't give informed consent, because they don't know what they are agreeing to. Sometimes some deception is needed (see below), and then the study must have a full debrief.

Confidentiality. Participants' personal information and results are kept secret: they are not named in reports (numbers, codes or initials instead), details that could identify them are left out, and data is stored securely and seen only by the researchers. "Keeping things confidential" earns nothing: say **what** is kept secret and **how**.

Privacy. Participants should not be studied in situations, or asked about parts of their life, that they would expect to be private (their home, a changing room, their health, relationships or money) without agreeing to it. Observing people in a public place where they would expect to be seen by strangers is usually acceptable.

Confidentiality and privacy are different: **privacy** is about what the researcher **finds out or watches**; **confidentiality** is about **who else** gets to know it.

Debriefing. At the **end** of the study, participants are told the real aim, told about any deception and why it was used, given their results if they want them, reminded they can withdraw their data, and reassured (for example, that most people scored the same, or that nobody was really hurt). The aim is to return them to the state they arrived in. A debrief happens **after** the study; telling people about the study before it starts is a briefing, which is part of consent.

When is deception needed?

If participants knew the real aim, they might change their behaviour to fit it (**demand characteristics**), for example trying extra hard in the condition they think should do better. That would lower validity. So researchers sometimes give a **cover story** (a false or incomplete aim), add **filler questions** so the real questions are hidden among them, or don't mention a later test. In Andrade's doodling study, participants were not told that their memory for the names would be tested; had they known, they would have tried to memorise the names, so the test would not show how well doodling helped them pay attention.

Deception must be as mild as possible, must not cause distress, and must be followed by a debrief. Questions often pair the two sides: why the deception was **useful** (demand characteristics, linked to the study) and why it was **unethical** (no informed consent, possible distress).

Which guidelines matter at each stage of a study

	Before the study	During the study	After the study
People	Valid (informed) consent No deception	Minimising harm Right to withdraw Privacy	Debriefing Confidentiality Withdrawing data
Animals	Replacement Species Numbers	Pain, suffering and distress Reward, deprivation and aversive stimuli	Housing between sessions
Throughout: minimising harm (and maximising benefit)			

Guidelines for animals

Guideline	What it means	How a researcher follows it
Minimising harm (and maximising benefit)	Animals should suffer as little as possible, and only for research that is worth it	Avoid painful or frightening procedures; check the benefit justifies any cost
Replacement	Use alternatives to live animals in the laboratory where possible	Videos from earlier studies, computer models, watching animals undisturbed in the wild, or human participants
Species	Choose the species least likely to suffer that can still answer the question	A species with a simpler nervous system (mice rather than chimpanzees); not an endangered species; one suited to the task and setting

Guideline	What it means	How a researcher follows it
Numbers	Use the smallest number of animals that will still give valid, reliable results	Good design and a pilot study, so no more animals are used than needed
Pain, suffering and distress	Avoid causing pain, fear or stress	Anaesthetic during an operation, pain relief (analgesia) afterwards, and euthanasia (killing humanely) if an animal is suffering and can't recover
Housing	The place animals live, when not being tested, must meet their needs	Enough space; food and water; the right temperature and light; companions for social species (and space alone for solitary ones); no overcrowding; nesting material and places to hide
Reward, deprivation and aversive stimuli	Use rewards rather than punishment; don't starve or frighten animals to make them perform	Treats or favourite food as rewards; only mild, short deprivation; avoid shocks, loud noise or other unpleasant stimuli

Some older papers call the species guideline "**species and strain**". A **strain** is a genetically similar group within a species (a particular breed of laboratory mouse). It has nothing to do with stress or "strain" on the animal.

Housing is about a **safe and healthy** place for that species, not a copy of the wild. And "replacement" means not using live animals at all where possible: swapping one animal for another, or one species for a less sensitive one, comes under other guidelines (pain and distress, or species).

Ethics of research methods and settings

Some methods raise particular issues:

- **Case studies:** the researcher gets to know one person well, so they may find it hard to **withdraw** (they don't want to let the researcher down); questions in depth can go into private areas (**privacy**) and bring up upsetting memories (**harm**); and the details reported (an unusual ability, a job, a town) can make the person **identifiable (confidentiality)**.
- **Covert and participant observations:** people don't know they are being studied, so they can't consent or withdraw, and may be watched doing private things. If the observer pretends to be someone else, that is **deception**.
- **Correlations:** the researcher measures variables that already exist instead of changing them, so nobody is put into a harmful condition (you can study how sleep relates to mood without depriving anyone of sleep).
- **Laboratory experiments** make consent and debriefing easy to arrange, but the procedure may be stressful or the task embarrassing.
- **Children** in research: they may be upset more easily and find it harder to say no, so they need parental consent, child-friendly explanations and close watching for signs of distress.

Ethics in the core studies

Core study	Kept	Broken or a risk
Milgram	Debrief: participants met the unharmed "learner" afterwards and were reassured; they were told the money was theirs whatever happened	Deception (told it was a study of punishment and learning; the shocks were fake); right to withdraw made hard by the prods; severe stress, including nervous laughter, sweating and seizures
Piliavin et al.	Confidentiality: no names were taken	No consent (passengers didn't know there was a study); deception (a staged collapse); no debrief; hard to withdraw from a moving train; possible distress
Bandura et al.		No details of consent; some children watched an adult attack a doll, and all were then frustrated by being taken away from attractive toys, so the study risked leaving them more violent, or injured by the play
Dement and Kleitman	Confidentiality: only their initials were published	Sleep was disturbed many times a night
Saavedra and Silverman	Informed consent from the boy and his mother; he was not named	His distress rose during exposure to buttons
Hölzel et al.	Informed consent; the right to withdraw (two men did withdraw because the MRI scan was uncomfortable)	Discomfort in the scanner
Andrade		Deception: a surprise memory test
Hassett et al.	Housing: the monkeys stayed in their own social groups and were given the toys where they lived	
Fagen et al.	Numbers (only 5 elephants); rewards, not punishment; food and water were never held back between sessions	

Key facts and formulas

There is no formula list in the 9990 exam. "Learn it" means you must remember it.

Fact	Status
Human guidelines: minimising harm (and maximising benefit), valid consent including informed consent, right to withdraw, lack of deception, confidentiality, privacy, debriefing	Learn it

Fact	Status
Animal guidelines: minimising harm (and maximising benefit), replacement, species, numbers, and procedures (pain, suffering and distress; housing; reward, deprivation and aversive stimuli)	Learn it
Informed consent: agreeing to take part after being told enough about the study to make a real choice; parents also consent for children under 16	Learn it
Right to withdraw: participants can leave at any time, without a reason or penalty, and can have their data removed	Learn it
Confidentiality: participants' identities and data are kept secret (codes or initials, secure storage). Privacy: not studying what people would expect to keep private	Learn it
Debriefing: after the study, tell participants the real aim and any deception, and return them to how they were	Learn it
Deception is sometimes used to avoid demand characteristics; it must be followed by a debrief	Learn it
Replacement: use alternatives to live animals (videos, computer models, wild observation). Species: use the species that suffers least but still fits the aim. Numbers: use as few animals as give valid results	Learn it
Housing: space, food and water, temperature, light, companions for social species, no overcrowding	Learn it
Human guidelines (consent, withdrawal, deception, debriefing, psychological harm) earn no marks for animal studies	Learn it

How to do it

We have tagged 70 questions on this topic, from Papers 1 and 2, from 2021 to March 2026. 52 of them have an ethics task; 14 of those have parts of more than one type (two have three), so the counts add up to 68. The other 18 have no ethics task (type 9): 13 are design questions that say not to describe ethics, and 5 were tagged but have no ethics part.

Question type	Questions
Identify and explain the guideline a new (human) scenario raises or breaks	14
Explain how a guideline was followed or broken in a named core study	13
Suggest a practical way to make a study ethical	11
Describe or explain a named animal guideline	8
Apply animal guidelines to a new animal study	8
Outline or describe a named human guideline	7
Explain why deception was needed	4

Question type	Questions
Ethical strength or weakness of a research method or setting	3
No ethics task to answer	18

1. Identify and explain the guideline a new (human) scenario raises or breaks (14 questions)

Usually 2 marks a part: 1 for the guideline, 1 for a detail from the stem.

1. **Find the problem in the stem:** someone is upset, misled, watched without knowing, identifiable, a child, or unable to leave.
2. **Name the guideline** with its full name: "protection from psychological harm", "informed consent", "right to withdraw", "confidentiality", "privacy", "deception".
3. **Link it:** say what in **this** study raises it ("he may become upset when recalling the death of his brother"; "the shoppers don't know they are in a study, so they can't choose to leave it").

Variations you will meet:

- **Two parts that must use different guidelines.** Choose two that fit each measure. For example, recording people's voices without telling them (consent or deception) and asking about their debts (privacy or psychological harm).
- **Why both a child and a parent must consent:** consent means understanding the study and agreeing to it; children are too young to understand fully, so a parent's consent is also needed, and the child should still be asked.
- **Why a guideline is hard to follow** in a covert observation: people don't know they are being studied, so they can't be told they may withdraw; give a different reason for privacy (what they were doing was personal) than for withdrawal.
- **"Do not refer to X":** pick another guideline that fits; X earns nothing.
- **An ethical reason it is hard to study a group** (very old people, children, people who are unwell): they may become distressed or tired, or may not fully understand what they are agreeing to.

2. Explain how a guideline was followed or broken in a named core study (13 questions)

1. **State the guideline** (and what it means, in a few words, if the question asks you to explain).
2. **Give the evidence from the study:** a generic answer ("the names were not published") gets 1 mark; a detail only that study has ("only the participants' initials were published") gets 2.
3. For "why was consent important in this study", say what could have happened **to these participants** (the children might copy the violence they saw and stay more violent afterwards, or get injured during the play; their parents may not have wanted their children taught to hit).

Use the core study table in "Understand it". Some questions name studies that are no longer on the syllabus: the method is the same, so link the guideline to whatever the stem tells you.

3. Suggest a practical way to make a study ethical (11 questions)

1. **Say what the researcher would do** (1 mark): ask for consent, tell them they can stop, debrief them, use codes instead of names.
2. **Make it fit this study and these participants** (the second mark): for children, give the actual child-friendly words linked to the task. "You can stop doing the puzzles and go back to your class whenever you want" scores 2; "tell them they can leave" scores 1.

Variations you will meet:

- **Consent from children:** show or tell them what they will do in a game-like way ("Would you like to help me with a drawing game?"), then ask if they agree; get the parent's written consent too.
- **How to tell a child wants to withdraw:** crying, looking upset, refusing to carry on, walking away.
- **How to overcome a problem** you have been given: write the **solution** (debrief, reassure, offer support, remove names), not which guideline was broken (June 2021 report).
- **A debrief linked to the study:** explain the real aim and reassure them about their performance ("most people only recalled a few words").
- **Make your suggestion ethical:** anything you suggest (a measure, a task, an application) must not upset, embarrass or mislead people.

4. Describe or explain a named animal guideline (8 questions)

Short (2–3 marks): what the guideline says (1), plus why or how (1), plus an example.

6 marks: "Describe [guideline X] and [guideline Y] in relation to animals, using any examples."

1. Up to 4 marks a guideline for what it says and further detail (why it matters, how it is followed).
2. Up to 2 marks a guideline for examples, from core studies, other studies or your own.
3. Both guidelines, with examples, or the most you can get is 4.

Model points: numbers: use the fewest animals that still give valid results (1), so fewer animals are exposed to any harm (1), helped by a pilot study and a good design (1); Fagen et al. used only 5 elephants (1).

Replacement: use alternatives to animals where possible (1), such as videos from earlier studies or computer models (1); brain scanning of people, as in Hölzel et al., can now answer questions that once needed animals (1).

Answer **only** the guidelines named. Writing about housing when asked about numbers, or about consent for animals, earns nothing (November 2022 report).

5. Apply animal guidelines to a new animal study (8 questions)

1. **Name an animal guideline** (never a human one).
2. **Link it to a detail of the stem:** the task (narrow tunnels → a small species), the setting (animals meeting each other → a social species), what might cause distress (noise, other animals, handling).

Variations you will meet:

- **Ethical reinforcement:** food, water or a treat as a reward, with no more than mild deprivation; never shocks or punishment.
- **Why a suggestion is more ethical:** a species with a less complex brain is likely to suffer less (species, distress); videos of animals in the wild avoid using animals in a laboratory (replacement), and animals filmed in their natural home, with nobody handling them, feel less stress than animals kept in cages.
- **Housing for a given animal:** food and water, space, temperature, light, companions; for fish, clean water at the right temperature, plants or rocks to hide behind, a big enough tank.
- **Why comfort matters:** ethically, discomfort causes pain and distress (not "psychological harm", which is a human guideline); methodologically, a scared or sleep-deprived animal acts differently from usual, so the study no longer measures its real behaviour (lower validity).
- **The size of the species:** a big animal needs a huge space to live in (housing); it could injure the researchers, so their safety must be planned; no cage or small testing box will hold it, so it has to be tested where it lives; and moving or controlling it takes far more effort and people. Don't say the size stopped the animals doing the task (March 2026 report).

6. Outline or describe a named human guideline (7 questions)

Short (1–2 marks): a definition that doesn't just repeat the name, plus a detail. "Consent" alone is agreeing to take part; **informed** consent adds being told enough about the study first. If the answer only describes consent when asked for informed consent, it scores 0.

6 marks: "Describe [X] and [Y], using any examples." Same rules as type 4: up to 4 marks a guideline for what it is and further detail, up to 2 for examples, and the most is 4 without examples.

Model points: **right to withdraw:** participants are told they can leave at any time, without giving a reason (1), and can have their data removed (1); Milgram's prods made leaving hard even though participants had been told they could keep the money (1); in Piliavin et al. passengers didn't know there was a study to leave (1).

Confidentiality: participants are not identifiable in the report (1); codes or initials replace names, data is stored securely and only the researchers see it (1); Dement and Kleitman's participants are known only by their initials (1); Saavedra and Silverman's boy is described only by age, sex and ethnicity, which is not enough to identify him (1).

7. Explain why deception was needed (4 questions)

1. **The general reason** (1): if participants knew the real aim, they might change their behaviour to fit it (**demand characteristics**), which would lower validity.
2. **Link to this study** (1): say what they would have done differently ("they would have tried harder to remember the names because they knew they would be tested").

Use "demand characteristics", not "social desirability" (March 2021 report). If the next part asks why the same deception is unethical: they couldn't give informed consent, and might be upset to find out they were misled; a debrief is the fix.

8. Ethical strength or weakness of a research method or setting (3 questions)

1. **Name the issue (1):** for a case study, difficulty withdrawing, invasion of privacy, a risk to confidentiality, or distress from going into depth.
2. **Explain why it happens with this method (1):** after many sessions the person feels close to the researcher and doesn't want to let them down; nobody can plan every question ahead, so the conversation may wander into personal areas; the rare features that make the case worth studying also make the person easy to recognise; long, detailed questioning can stir up painful events from their past.

For a correlation's ethical advantage, say no variable is manipulated, so nobody is put into a harmful condition, and give an example (comparing how many friends people have with their mood). If a question says "do not use consent", choose another issue.

9. No ethics task to answer (18 questions)

13 of these are the 10-mark "Describe how ... could conduct ..." question and its follow-up parts, which say **do not describe ethical issues or guidelines**. The other 5 were tagged but have no ethics part to answer. Ethics there earns nothing and costs time. Spend it on the features asked for (variables, controls, design, question formats), and pick strengths and weaknesses about validity or reliability, not ethics.

Worked examples

Example 1

Describe the ethical guidelines of "privacy" and "debriefing", using any examples. [6]

Privacy means participants should not be watched or questioned about parts of their life they would expect to keep private, unless they have agreed to it (1). Observing people in a public place, where they expect strangers to see them, is usually acceptable, but watching people at home or asking about their health or relationships without agreement is not (1). For example, a researcher who asks couples to keep diaries of their arguments at home is studying a private part of their lives, so they must agree to it and choose what to write down (1).

Debriefing means telling participants the real aim of the study at the end, including any deception and why it was used (1). It aims to return them to the state they arrived in, for example by reassuring them about how they did, and reminding them they can withdraw their data (1). For example, Milgram's participants met the "learner" afterwards and saw that he had not been hurt (1).

Each guideline has a definition, a detail and an example, so $3 + 3 = 6$ marks, all of them; the definitions don't repeat the guideline's name.

Example 2

Noor is investigating whether people are less patient when they are hungry. She asks students to fill in a questionnaire about their eating habits, which includes some questions about patience. She tells them the study is about diet. Before they start, half of the students are asked to skip lunch.

- (a) Explain why Noor did not tell the students the real aim of her study. [2]
 - (b) Explain two ethical guidelines that Noor's study could break. [4]
 - (c) Suggest how Noor could make her study more ethical after the students have finished. [2]
- (a) If the students knew the study was about patience, they might change their answers to fit the aim (**demand characteristics**) (1). For example, the hungry students might try to seem more patient than they really feel, so the results would not show the real effect of hunger (1).
- (b) **Deception / informed consent** (1): the students were told the study was about diet, so they agreed to something different from the real study and couldn't give informed consent (1).
- Protection from harm** (1): missing lunch could make some students feel unwell or tired, and they may be embarrassed if they later find out they were judged on their patience (1).
- (c) Noor should debrief them (1): tell them the study was really about hunger and patience, explain why she could not say so at the start, give them something to eat, and offer to remove their answers if they wish (1).

Example 3

Dr Larsen plans to study whether mice learn faster when they are rewarded with seeds or with sugar water. Each mouse will learn to push open a small door to reach the reward. The mice will be kept in the laboratory for six weeks.

- (a) Explain how Dr Larsen could follow the guideline of "numbers". [2]
 - (b) Suggest two features of housing that Dr Larsen should provide for the mice. [2]
 - (c) A colleague says Dr Larsen should not use chimpanzees instead of mice. Explain why, using the guideline of "species". [2]
 - (d) A student says Dr Larsen must give the mice the right to withdraw. Explain why the student is wrong, and name a guideline that should be used instead. [2]
- (a) She should use the smallest number of mice that will still give valid, reliable results (1), for example by doing a small pilot study first to check the door task works, so no extra mice go through the six weeks (1).
- (b) Mice are social, so they should be housed with other mice, not alone (1); and the cage needs enough space, food and water, and nesting material at a suitable temperature (1).

(c) Chimpanzees have more complex brains, so they are likely to suffer more distress from six weeks in a laboratory (1); mice can learn a simple door task just as well, so the least sensitive species that fits the aim should be used (1).

(d) The right to withdraw is a guideline for human participants, because mice can't understand a study or ask to stop (1). Instead, she should follow **pain, suffering and distress**: watch for signs of stress and remove a mouse from the task if it is distressed (1).

Common mistakes

- **Using human guidelines for animals.** Consent, the right to withdraw, deception and "psychological harm" score 0 for animal studies (June 2023 and March 2025 reports). Use pain and distress, housing, reward and deprivation, species, numbers or replacement.
- **Misunderstanding animal guidelines.** "Strain" is a genetic group within a species, not stress (June 2022 and November 2022 reports). Replacement is not swapping a distressed animal or species for another (March 2021 report). Housing is a safe, healthy environment, not a copy of the wild (June 2022 report); "lots of space" alone is rarely enough (November 2021 report).
- **Naming a guideline and stopping.** Most marks need a link to the study in the question: what in **this** study raises it (March 2023, June 2023 and November 2021 reports). Repeating the stem is not a link.
- **Defining a guideline with its own name** ("confidentiality is keeping things confidential") or confusing confidentiality with privacy (November 2022 report). Say what is kept secret and how.
- **Writing "protection" or "consent"** when you mean protection from psychological harm or informed consent. Use the full terms (June 2021 and November 2022 reports).
- **Saying which guideline was broken when asked how to fix it** (June 2021 report). Give the solution: debrief, reassure, offer withdrawal, use codes.
- **Thinking a debrief happens before the study** (November 2021 report). Before is a briefing for consent; the debrief comes after.
- **Writing consent for an adult when the participants are children** (November 2021 report). Use words and activities a child understands, and include the parents.
- **"To avoid demand characteristics" with no link** to the study, when explaining why deception was needed (November 2021 and June 2023 reports), or mixing up demand characteristics with social desirability (March 2021 report).
- **Using the same reason twice** when two parts ask for different guidelines, for example "they didn't know they were in a study" for both withdrawal and privacy (June 2023 report).
- **Writing about ethics in the design question** that says not to.

How to get the marks

- **"Outline" or "explain what is meant by" a guideline:** a definition in your own words that doesn't reuse the guideline's name, plus a detail for a second mark.

- **"Explain one ethical problem / guideline ... in this study"**: the guideline by name (1) and what in the stem raises it (1). Generic answers cap at half marks.
- **"Suggest how [the researcher] could ..."**: what they would do (1) and how it fits these participants and this task (1); for children, write the words you would say.
- **"Describe X and Y, using any examples" (6 marks)**: up to 4 marks a guideline for points and up to 2 for examples; cover both and give examples, or the most is 4. No marks for evaluating the guidelines.
- **Two parts that need different guidelines**: check the second guideline really is different, and give it its own reason.
- **Core studies**: learn what each study kept and broke (the table in Understand it), with one specific detail for each.
- **Animal questions**: only animal guidelines, each linked to the animal, the task or the setting.

Quick check

1. Explain the difference between confidentiality and privacy.
2. A researcher studies how 5-year-olds share crayons when drawing pictures together. Write what she could say to the children so that they understand they have the right to withdraw.
3. Instead of raising young songbirds in a laboratory, a researcher tests her theory of how birds learn their songs with a computer model built from recordings made in earlier studies. Which animal guideline is she following? Explain your answer.
4. A researcher interviews one woman in great depth about her life as the only professional deep-sea diver in a small fishing town. Explain one ethical problem with this case study, other than consent.
5. A researcher tells participants that a study is about reading speed, when really it measures how much of the text they remember an hour later. Explain why the deception was useful, and one reason it is unethical.

Answers

1. Privacy is about what the researcher watches or asks about: people should not be studied in situations they expect to be private without agreeing. Confidentiality is about who else finds out: participants' identities and data must be kept secret, for example by using codes instead of names.
2. "You can stop drawing and go back to your classroom any time you want, and that's fine." This is child-friendly and linked to the task, so it would score 2; "you can leave the study" alone would score 1.
3. Replacement: she is using an alternative to live animals (a computer model and existing recordings), so no birds are caught, kept or distressed for her study.
4. Confidentiality: the report would describe the only deep-sea diver in a small town, so anyone who knows the town could work out who she is. (Also accepted: she may find it hard to withdraw after building a relationship with the researcher, or the depth of questioning could bring up upsetting memories.)
5. Useful: if they knew their memory would be tested, they would try to memorise the text while reading (demand characteristics), so the memory scores would not be natural. Unethical: they could not give informed consent because they were not told what the study measured; they must be debriefed afterwards.

Past questions to try

- [9990/22/M/J/25 Q8](#): two measures, each breaking a different ethical guideline.
- [9990/22/O/N/25 Q6](#): confidentiality and protection from harm in a case study.
- [9990/21/O/N/23 Q6](#): describe right to withdraw and confidentiality, using examples.
- [9990/21/O/N/25 Q9](#): reinforcement, species and minimising harm in an animal experiment.