

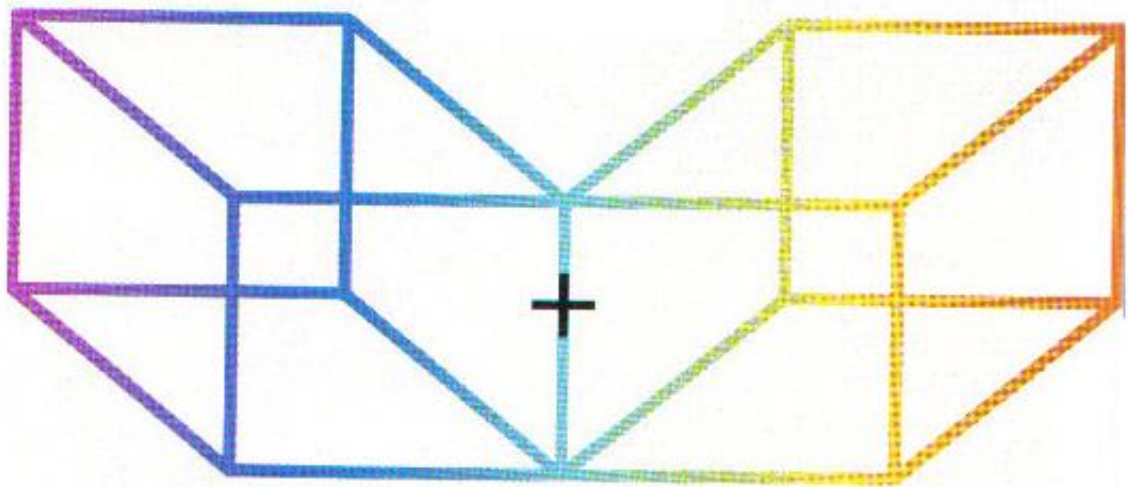
# Psychology

## Introductory Activities 2016

Work in pairs or threes to experience, guess the answer or try out each of the activities below (6 activities, one per page):

### Activity 1: Moving Cubes

This figure can be viewed in different ways, depending on how your brain interprets it. Stare at the plus sign and the cubes will either appear to shoot out towards you or cave in away from you. Can you get one cube to shift away while the other shifts towards you? (I couldn't!)



## **Activity 2: Frontal lobe size**

Estimate the percentage of the brain making up the frontal lobe in a dog, a human and a chimpanzee.

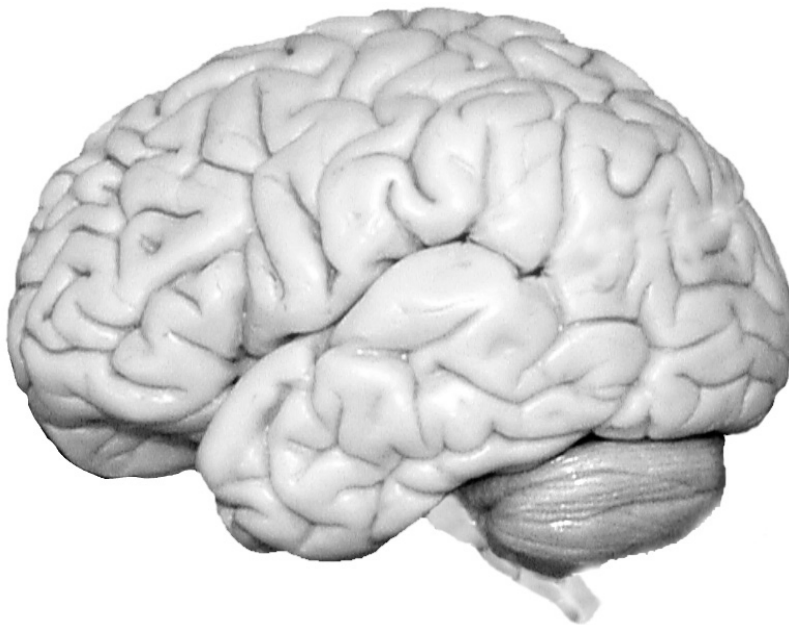
(The frontal lobe allows us to plan, think, remember, make decisions on how to act, control our social behaviour, etc.)



### **Activity 3:**

**The human cortex**, the outer layer of the brain, controls high-level thought, like the thinking you are doing as you read this. If it were untwisted and spread out, it would be the size of

- (a) a man's handkerchief
- (b) a large bath towel
- (c) a sheet
- (d) the quadrangle



## Activity 4:

**Agnosia**, also known as mind-blindness, is a condition that results from brain injury, in which people cannot recognise objects by sight. They can look at it, draw it and describe it; but they cannot identify the object as a shoe, a flower or a pencil. Yet if they **feel** it, they can name the object at once. One form of this condition is facial agnosia. What do you think might happen with this condition?



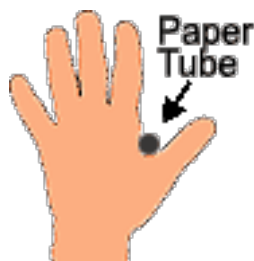
A person with visual agnosia would not be able to say what this is just by looking at it.

## Activity 5: An illusion

From

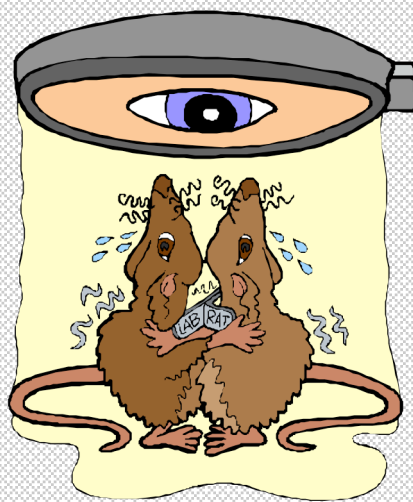
[faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chvision.html](http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chvision.html)

You may be able to see through your own hand with this simple illusion. Roll up a piece of notebook paper into a tube. The diameter of the tube should be about 1.2cm. Hold up your left hand in front of you. Hold the tube next to the bottom of your left "pointer" finger. Look through the tube with your RIGHT eye AND keep your left eye open too. What you should see is a hole in your left hand! Why do you think this happens?



## Activity 6: Be a student rat.

Animals can be taught quite complex sequences of behaviour through **shaping** (reinforcing responses as they become closer and closer to the desired one). Choose one in your pair to be the experimenter and one to be the rat. The experimenter must choose a behaviour he or she wishes the student rat to do, such as patting himself on the head or bowing to the experimenter. Use clapping as the reinforcer and clap whenever the student rat does something close to the required behaviour. See how long it takes for the rat to reach the desired response.



Irreverent psychology students in the behaviourist past used to refer to psychology as “Rats and Stats”.