



## Reading for fluency



### Psychology: the science of the mind

Psychology is the science of the mind. The human mind is the most complex machine on Earth. It is the source of all thought and behaviour.

### How do psychologists study the mind?

How can we study something as complex and mysterious as the mind? We cannot see someone thinking. Nor can we observe their emotions, or memories, or perceptions and dreams. So how do psychologists go about studying the mind?

Psychologists adopt a similar approach to scientists in other fields. Nuclear physicists interested in the structure of atoms cannot observe protons, electrons and neutrons directly. Instead, they predict how these elements should behave and devise experiments to confirm or refute their expectations.

### Human behaviour: the raw data of psychology

In a similar way, psychologists use human behaviour as a clue to the workings of the mind. Although we cannot observe the mind directly, everything we do, think, feel and say is determined by the functioning of the mind. So psychologists take human behaviour as the raw data for testing their theories about how the mind works.

(Adapted from the BBC website.)

The passage above uses some words that might be difficult to read. Many of them came originally from the Greek language. **If you have to read a passage such as this out loud, it's a good idea to:**

- **Underline difficult words.**
- **Look up difficult words in a dictionary** or ask someone how to pronounce them.
- **Practise saying the difficult words** - first on their own; then within the sentence and the paragraph.
- **Read the whole text to a partner**, when you feel confident enough. Aim to read with expression. This type of reading is called '**partnered reading**' and is useful for developing fluency in reading.