Experiment

It has been found that pupils with low levels of self-confidence in reading do better when reading to an animal. A psychologist was asked to investigate whether using a dog in the class could increase reading accuracy thereby improving confidence in the skill. She measured the cortisol levels in the saliva of ten children after they had been reading in front of their peers and then again the following day after reading to a dog. Cortisol is released when an individual interprets a situation as being stressful. The results are shown in *Table 1* below:

*Table 1: Summary table of raw data, mean and standard deviation*

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| --- | --- |
| **Participant (f=female, m=male**) | **Level of cortisol in saliva samples after reading (nmol/L)** |
| **Reading to peers** | **Reading****to a dog** |
| 1f | 13 | 20 |
| 2f | 40 | 6 |
| 3f | 12 | 1 |
| 4f | 3 | 9 |
| 5f | 15 | 0 |
| 6f | 7 | 13 |
| 1m | 22 | 4 |
| 2m | 19 | 3 |
| 3m | 11 | 2 |
| 4m | 8 | 2 |

(WJEC Unit 4 SAMs)

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