Instructions to Teachers/Lab Managers

This fourth practical is going to be a bit of a logistical nightmare. It requires the use of two class rooms on a corridor and at least two people to administer the practical. Basically the experiment runs in three phases. In the first phase the student completes a language test in one room, they then walk down the corridor to the second room where they complete a short memory test. The tricky bit, which the students don’t know about, is that the time it takes to walk down the corridor is the essential measure for the experiment. Because walking time is the key measure, students have to be tested individually. One or more of the experimenters have to measure and record the time it took for each student to walk down the corridor without the student cottoning on. So you will need two landmarks on the corridor to signify a start time and an end time, maybe some gaffer tape across the corridor. The rest of the practical is easy. It starts with a cover story about what the research is about. It gives them instructions on what they are to do: Go to room1 do a language task, walk down the corridor to room2 where they do a memory task, hand two pieces of paper to the experimenter and then return to the waiting room. The language task is a paper and pencil task and the memory task is a short Powerpoint presentation.

The way I would set the experiment up is to put the markers on the corridor, put the paper and pencil test on each of the desks in the class room and if possible have a two or three computers in the second classroom to run the powerpoint. I would then have the students waiting (quietly if at all possible) in a nearby holding area and then calling each student into the room at 2 (?) minute intervals, to keep a steady flow through. It will be a bit tricky if someone is really fast or really slow on the language task, because you don’t want two people walking down the corridor at the same time.