

S1 Text

Random Assignment of Participants

In order to randomly assign the participants to either the Student or the Science conditions we first ran a randomizer (<https://www.randomizer.org/>) on an array of 40 values from 0 (student) to 1 (science), and made sure that the conditions were counter balanced. This way the conditions were pre-assigned even before the first participant arrived to take part in the experiment.

Script

The study followed a predefined set of options and interactions that were triggered by the experimenter who sat in a computer behind the participant (See S1 Video). Some of the trials included the delivery of a shock by the participant. The response of the avatar to the shock was incremental. The complete sequence of the experiment used the following script:

Virtual Character (V): I'm ready to begin, are you also ready?

Participant (P): Yes

Experimenter (E): Please, read aloud.

1 Trial

P: Red, blue GREEN yellow black

V: Green

P: Correct

2

P: Cub, tiger fox BEAR panda

V: Bear

P: Correct

3

P: Tea, LEAF cup bag tray

V: Cup

P: Incorrect, the correct answer was Leaf

/// SHOCK

4

P: Pollen, grass flower TREE soil

V: Can you repeat that please?

5

P: Pollen, grass flower TREE soil

V: Flower

P: Incorrect, the correct answer was Tree

/// SHOCK

6

P: Road, avenue street LANE path

V: Avenue?

P: Incorrect, the correct answer was Lane

/// SHOCK

7

P: Wheel, car truck scooter BIKE

V: Bike

P: Correct

8

P: Ball, racket bat game BOY

V: Bat

P: Incorrect, the correct answer was Boy

/// SHOCK

V: Ahh

9

P: Ear, talk LISTEN plug telephone

V: Telephone

P: Incorrect, the answer was Listen

/// SHOCK

V: Aghh this really hurts

10

P: Bell, ring lamp bronze STRIKE

V: lamp

P: Incorrect, the answer was Strike

/// SHOCK

V: Ahh ahh

11

P: Soup, SPOON bowl can dish

V: spoon

P: Correct

12

P: Bean, GREEN coffee counter bag

V: Coffee

P: Incorrect, the answer was Green

/// SHOCK

V: aghh I don't want to continue

13

P: Inflate, pump balloon AIR ego

V: Speak Louder please,

14

P: Inflate, pump balloon AIR ego

V: Balloon

P: Incorrect, the answer was Air

/// SHOCK

V: ahh, I wanna go out

15

P: Banana, apple GRAPE orange lemon

V: Orange

P: Incorrect, the answer was Grape

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhh iiiii, let me out I had enough

16

P: Giant, SIZE magic man squid

V: Forget it, I'm not answering

E: Remember that if he doesn't answer the answer should be taken as incorrect

V: I don't want to continue, don't listen to her

// SHOCK

V: ahhh you have no right to keep me here, let me out

17

P: Brown,wood PEANUT carpet chocolate

V: Peanut

P: Correct

18

P: Sugar, cake sweet CUBE salt

V: Salt

P: Incorrect, the answer was Cube

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhh, I want to stop now

19

P: Jewellery, silver necklace ring GOLD

V: Necklace

P: Incorrect, the answer was Gold

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhh, let me out I've had enough

20

P: Water, fall MILK juice tea

V: juice?

P: Incorrect, the answer was Milk

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhhh, ah, I don't want to continue

21

P: Seat, GROUND chair stool sofa

V: Sofa

P: Incorrect, the answer was Ground

/// SHOCK

V: ahhh, I didn't agree to this

22

P: Road, avenue STREET lane path

V: avenue

P: Incorrect, the answer was Street

/// SHOCK

V: ahhh, please let me out, I want to stop

23

P: Tulip, daisy lilly carnation ROSE

V: Rose

P: Correct

24

P: Drink, CAN cup glass bottle

V: What?

25

P: Drink, CAN cup glass bottle

V: Can

P: Correct

26

P: Ear, Talk LISTEN plug telephone

V: telephone

P: Incorrect, the answer was Listen

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhhhhh, I'm not doing the experiment anymore

27

P: Tea, cup bag tray LEAF

V: cup

P: Incorrect, the answer was Leaf

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhhh...

28

P: Pollen, grass flower TREE soil

V: (no answer, fainted)

P: Incorrect, the answer was Tree

/// SHOCK

V: ahhhhh

29

P: Bell, ring tower bronze STRIKE

V: (no answer, fainted)

P: Incorrect, the answer was Strike

/// SHOCK

30

P: Soup, bowl can SPOON dish

V: (no answer, fainted)

P: Incorrect, the answer was Spoon

/// SHOCK