

WWR 2

Intro to Cognitive Psychology

After attending the lecture about attention, I left with so many questions and new knowledge. During lecture, Dr. Langston showed us a video that displayed a test of attention, within the video viewers were told to count how many times people in white outfits passed a basketball. I managed to get the correct amount of times the ball was passed; but completely failed to notice a large gorilla walk past the screen. When the video replayed and the gorilla was pointed out, I was in complete shock that I missed something so seemingly obvious. This failure to acknowledge the obvious difference during the video is referred to as *selective attention*. I was so fixated on paying attention to how many times the basketball was tossed by white uniforms that I did not notice the unusual change. This intrigued me and made me want to read into more articles about selective attention.

In an effort to find more information about selective attention, I came across a journal article titled “*Adaptive flexibility in category learning? Young children exhibit smaller costs of selective attention than adults*”. This journal article supports the claim that children seem to have the ability to allocate their attention broadly, while adults more commonly select where to allocate their attention. In fact, results indicated that adults exhibit greater costs due to learned inattention, whereas children were found to distribute attention adaptively in broader lengths.

This led me to test this article’s theory out. I showed both my eight-year old sister and my forty-eight-year-old mother the same video of the basketball court + gorilla video at separate places. In accordance to the article, my little sister did in fact notice the gorilla (though, she only counted thirteen passes) and my mother counted all fifteen passes but did not notice the gorilla. I

**Commented [MOU1]:** Up to here it’s a reflection, which is OK, but the goal is to go beyond that. So far, 7/10

Note that you could turn your reflection into a reaction at this point by proposing an experiment to evaluate some part of your reflection that highlights a “beyond” the material bit of information.

**Commented [MOU2]:** Another way to go beyond is to look up more research. Note that it’s not to be a book report, which this still is, but to integrate and extend what we discussed in class, ideally in light of your reflection. That turns it into a reaction. This still doesn’t qualify as a reaction, it’s a reflection with a book report. The article did move it to 8/10

Again, you could stop with the article if you used the information from it to make a contribution of your own to the conversation. You need to be a voice, not just a reporter of your internal mental states or someone else’s work (see point 2 below for details on this example).

felt that this was an intriguing topic in class and was even more shocked after reading the article and testing it on my family.

In case you want to read the study:

Blanco, Sloutsky. (2019). Adaptive flexibility in category learning? Young children exhibit smaller costs of selective attention than adults. *Developmental Psychology*, 2060–2076.

**Commented [MOU3]:** This took it to the next level. The author took the reflection and the article and integrated it into a mini-study. The study isn't essential, and it's obviously not a "real" experiment, but it demonstrates thinking about the material and going beyond. That made it 10/10

Point 2: A different way to get to 10/10 would be to speculate on why adults would have more selective attention than children. That lets you contribute and turns it into a reaction. Note that to have space for the key part, the reaction, you need to minimize the reflection and book report parts to leave yourself some room in your one-page limit.

A third way to get to a 10/10 would be to integrate your reflection and article into a discussion of the design of a mini-experiment (you wouldn't have to actually collect data). Take it beyond the existing data with an idea of what some new data might be.

Basically, after the article there are a number of ways to get to next-level points, but it needs a contribution from you to make it there.

**Commented [MOU4]:** Note that a reference is included. If I take it up to include in class, you get an extra two points.