

# The stroop effect

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The Stroop Effect " The idea of linking color and behavior is reasonable enough. Anyone who has ever felt blue, seen red, blacked out, or turned green knows we're prone to make emotional associations with different shades."- Winifred Gallagher Problem Question (or project title): The Stroop Effect - If you are slower in the word identification process time, reading comprehension will be more difficult for you. Can we trick the brain? The Stroop Effect is an important process that focuses on attention, which is a mental activity that surveys selected areas of your surroundings. One specific type of attention is selective attention, which is when people are instructed to respond selectively to certain kinds of information while ignoring other information Information is processed by specific areas of the brain. One area processes words we read by identifying the letters. The act of reading sends a message to the brain that is difficult to suppress. Another area of the brain processes color, sound, etc. If we read a word that is colored, the brain is processing messages from 2 different areas at the same time, which can cause confusion. Hypothesis: Listening to the TV or music may improve your response/comprehension by creating " selective attention blocks" to outside interference. Reference: This task was first performed by J. R. Stroop in 1935. He found that reading off the words in the first task took a shorter amount of time than saying out loud the color of the words in the second task. It is much harder to name the color of the words than to simply say the sound of the intended word. This is because the brain is being confused; a concept known as interference is taking place. These words and their colors are being seen and processed, but the brain must make a choice when examining these two features. Perhaps the feature that you believe to be the most important, according to experience, is the one you are more

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likely to perform more quickly on. Stroop also found that older adults perform much worse than young adults, which is contrary to most cognitive tasks. Since publishing this effect in 1935 for the first time in the English language, the Stroop Effect has ventured to become one of the most quoted and recognized experimental psychology works ever. There are two noteworthy explanations that have been given for the Stroop Effect: 1. The Parallel Distributed Processing Approach- is when two pathways (reading the word and naming the color) are simultaneously activated. This interference causes conflict and a decision must be made, resulting in a performance. 2. The fact that we have more practice (experience) in reading words than in naming colors- reading words is an automatic process that is involuntary whereas naming the color is less automatic. For example, think about the last time you were driving and you were able to prevent yourself from reading a sign posted on the highway. You probably can't remember a specific time because reading is an automatic process that is virtually impossible to inhibit. For a number of years, the Stroop Effect has been helpful in testing people with mental disorders. Also, the Emotional Stroop Task was created, which instructs people to name the ink colors of printed words like " hairy" or " slither". It has been found that people with various phobias are much slower when working with anxiety related words. The Stroop Effect has played a large and significant role in lives as a whole, not just in the eye of psychology. The Stroop Effect has been tested and researched for years and it continues to show as a huge contributor in the complex world that is cognitive psychology. Research: 1. Use flash cards - time word identifications 2. Use same words, now colored, - time identification 3. Have short paragraph read with colored and non-colored

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words — time reading and comprehension 4. When doing testing turn on and then off “ noise” to see the difference 5. ( Have similar paragraph read — with “ noise” as selective attention block — time reading and comprehension) I might do this