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| **Materials:**   * 10 colored, common female mice * 2 cages * 2 water bottles * 2 food dishes * 2 exercise wheels * common mouse food * paper shaving bedding * exercise ball * maze with interchangeable parts * tape and CD player * tape recorder * sound clips (rap music, punk music, R-rated movie soundtrack, sounds of gunshots, fighting sounds, screams, swearing) The tape includes the following clips: "Stan" from Eminem�s album the Marshall Mathers LP, "Shake Your�" by rapper Mystikal (obtained from the Internet), "One of Those Days" by Limp Bizkit, "Beautiful People" by rocker Marilyn Manson, excerpt from a fight scene in the Matrix, screams and evil laughter from "Scary Sounds", The Way I Am (from the radio) by Eminem, and sound clips from boxing taken off of Fox Networks. * edible reward (cheese) * stopwatch   **Procedure**  The key to an effective experiment is making sure that all variables are accounted for and constant if need be. When taking on this particular experiment, partially due to the fact that live animals were involved, we had to be very thorough in both planning our experiment, as well as ensuring that only one dependent variable existed: the sounds of violent media. By following this procedure, we hope to have produced accurate data and created a plan that others could repeat:  1) **Pet Care:** The first important step of this project is to research how to care for mice and what type of mouse to use. By looking on the Internet and asking the employees of a pet store, we concluded that using all female specimens would be the best, mainly because they are less aggressive towards each other and less odorous. By using females, one does not have to run the risk of reproduction and lessens the chances of cannibalism. We also decided to purchase common, colored mice. These are not terribly costly and are less inbred than feeder or hopper mice. Also, there will be no discrepancy about the identities of each mouse since they have different color coat markings.  2) **Obtaining Materials:** The next step we took was gathering all of our materials. We called around different pet stores and found the least expensive equipment. While some pet stores offered common mice for up to seven dollars apiece, we found that PetCo® offers them for roughly two dollars each. We purchased 10 mice, five for the control group and five to be tested with the dependent variable. We bought all the mice from the same place so that they would have a similar background and would be of the same age. Unfortunately, later in our experiment, five of the mice became ill. We later bought five more mice (one of which died also), and although they are younger, they are evenly split among the control and variable groups. We also bought all needed supplies listed in the materials section of the web site. Each group has the exact same products. In addition, we continued to purchase the same brand of food throughout the experiment so that would not be a variable.  3) **Grouping and Living Conditions:** The mice were originally grouped five for the control and five for the variable group in the exact same surroundings. The temperature was roughly 65 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit, and they were kept in the exact same spot in the house throughout the experiment. They each were provided with the same amount of food and water and were fed every morning to every other morning between 7:00 and 7:30 a.m. Unfortunately, when four of our specimens died as a result of an unknown virus, the mice had to be split unevenly in their cages. The four new mice were in one cage, while the original mice were grouped in factions of two and three. Because three mice died in the control group and two died in the variable group, they had to be left separated in that manner. The new mice could not be introduced into the other mice�s cages because they would fight (mice establish ranking and when the ranking is disturbed by the introduction of a new member, the leader of the mice becomes aggressive). Dealing with these circumstances, we decided to take two of the new mice from each group, two of the mice left in the variable group, and one of the old mice of the control group and make them one group. This way the ages of the mice and the conditions they live in (whether it is with one mouse or two) would be uniform in the control and variable groups even though mice from the two groups would be living together in the same cages. The most important objective in conducting this experiment is to make sure that there are no differences between the control and variable groups, so that unknown variables could affect the results.  4) **Violent Media:** The next step in our experiment was to make the violent sound tapes. Because violent media surrounds us, it was not difficult to obtain sound clips. Using the definition of violence in the American Heritage Dictionary, we found sounds that are deemed "violent." In addition, we only used sounds that are recognized by society as inappropriate for the younger population. All sounds come from R-rated movies, CDs with parental advisory stickers, and television with "viewer discretion advised." A complete listing of all sounds is available in the materials list. We simply recorded a series of sound clips onto an audiotape for six minutes. We made sure the mice were exposed to more than one artist and type of violent media.  5) **Testing Our Hypothesis:** Our actual test was rather simple. We did a series of 30 trials every day over a 5-week period between 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. For the first week (5 trials), one person in our group ran each mouse through the maze. Times were measured using a regular stop-watch. In the maze, we marked a line for the beginning and for the end so that we would know the exact spot to put each mouse and the exact spot to stop the clock when the mouse arrived at that place. At the end of the maze, we placed alternately their regular food or a slice of cheese and left the top of the maze open at the finish line. The mice seemed more enthusiastic about getting out through the top of the maze (their obvious incentive to move through the maze) than their edible treat. It is important that the mice have an incentive to run through the maze in order to test their memories. After running the mice through the maze without any sound clips playing to either group, we began the important data-collecting part of our experiment. For the next 25 trials, we ran each mouse through the maze. Half were exposed to no sounds and the other half each listened to the violent sounds audiotape while running through the maze. The decibel level of the tape player was kept constant at a medium level, and the location of the player was kept constant as well. After 15 trials, the maze was rearranged.  6) **Analyzing Data:** After all the trials occurred, we analyzed our data, and this information is located in the data and conclusion sections of our website. It is important that the mice are compared to themselves because they, like humans, are individuals with different characteristics. We also conducted an ANOVA statistical test to discern if there is enough of a difference in the mice�s times that the changes are not left up to chance alone.    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