**Alexa Skill -- Staying Sharp --- Alpha testing**

<https://platform.alphahq.com/56e3503488f98a0003000002/258/#1544820985683>

* 4 out of 5 respondents preferred working with **Words** over numbers
* 4 out of 5 respondents said the level of difficulty was ‘**Just right**’
* 4 out of 5 respondents reported they **would use this Alexa skill**
* What’s working: adapts to user needs (goes up or down a level based on user performance)
* Areas of opportunity:clarify instructions, ask user to repeat answer if not audible on first try, add more complexity to numbers game, add a variety of “good job” responses

**Session 0973 - Age: 60, Gender: Female, HHI: Over 100K -** secretary to the director.

**Q11. Now, we will be interacting with the Alexa device. Begin with by saying ‘Work with Words”.**

A: Well, I kind of lost something there. I know I was supposed to repeat after hearing all the words. I was supposed to do something besides just saying the word I recognized. But I lost what that part was. It wasn't very clear. I wasn't sure what to do after they had said the six words. I got a little lost there. Then too I also was focusing so hard on remembering the words, I probably just missed whatever she said after that.

**Q13. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

A: “I found it fun to learn something new. To feel that my memory is still there, intact and everything.”

**Q15. Was there anything you felt to be missing within that experience?**

A: Of course, I'm assuming that it will be, as you climb up the levels, it will become harder or whatever because that will be a little too easy after a while. I'm assuming that it progresses.

**16. How clear or unclear were the instructions the Alexa device provided for that skill? (Very clear, somewhat clear, not clear) Why?**

A: Somewhat clear. Because the instructions, when I originally heard them, I was a little bit confused. After I heard it the second time I heard what was being said. It's a timing thing. Most people -- when you tell someone to say yes or no -- they're ready to say yes right away or whatever their answer is going to be. It's just the timing there. Maybe for some people, it's fine, but I was already jumping in when they were saying yes to word or numbers. I was already saying “words.”

**18. What was your overall reaction to that experience?**

A: I'm wondering, what was the problem? Well, basically… Did I not hear the instructions correctly? Or is the system malfunctioning? Or what? Well, it made me laugh. That was fun. I had more fun with Numbers than I did with the words. I was disappointed again with the performance and the scoring, but nothing I could fault with Alexa. It was my performance. I was confused to when I should say something. After Alexa gave me the numbers, should I immediately respond with the numbers are? That's what I did with the first set of numbers and I messed it up somehow. Or was I supposed to wait and say the numbers out loud then say the numbers are? I was a little confused about that. I like the fact that when I made an error as we progressed, they decreased the level. Let's decrease this by going from six numbers to fix numbers. That is what they should have done so I was happy with that.

**19. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

A: Well, I just like the fact that I was memorizing the numbers. When I made the mistake and it did go back a level and I got that correct, I felt good. It, of course, ended there, so that made me feel better. Yes. Well I mean of course the system shouldn't move forward if you're having a problem memorizing six numbers. It shouldn't go up to seven numbers, it should go back to five. Which is what it did which, to me, is the correct thing. I like that. It kept it at a fun level instead of me thinking I got six wrong. Why are you moving it up to seven?

**25. How valuable did you find both of those experience? (Very valuable, somewhat valuable, not valuable)**

A: I think very valuable. I truly think, and really when I realized it said AARP, I thought this is really good because this is something that someone my age or older needs. I see a lot of value in keeping your memory sharp. When I heard that, I thought oh wow this is good. AARP is good anyways. I'm a member. I thought this is something they're behind. I like that. Memory is an issue as we age. Just helping you get that memory. Keeping it sharp or getting there. Helping you get there or if you're already there. I just found value in that.

**26. Would you use this Alexa skill on your own? Why or why not?**

I will. I know I will. I'm thinking right now about going to the AARP website and using it. I would use it because I do think there's value in it and I want to stay sharp for a couple more decades anyway. It's something I didn't know about and I'm truly interested in it. I'm definitely going to go on the website and see what it's about here because I think it's great.

**Session 0966 - Age: 51, Gender: Female, HHI: 50K - 74K -** inside sales repat equipment rail company

**10. What expectations do you have for an Alexa skill that tests your memory?  (i.e. what would you expect that experience to entail?)**

Probably the trivia and quizzes and stuff like that. Just stuff to keep you sharp and focused.

**12. What was your overall reaction to that experience?**

It was fun. Had to think. I had to write what they missed.

**13. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

That it makes you think and you have to try to remember and like I said, as you get older, you start to have issues with it.

**18. What was your overall reaction to that experience with NUMBERS?**

I like the words better. It was just...seems more like a game and less like school.

**19. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

Again it's just making you think. Same reason. Not mindless, you gotta use your mind to figure out what you're going to say.

**26. Would you use this Alexa skill on your own? Why or why not?**

Yes I would, again it's playing little trivia games and things to keep you occupied and keep you busy, keep you going. Moderator: [Any other reasons?] - It was fun.

**27. Which experience did you prefer, testing with words or testing with numbers? Why?**

Testing with words. I don't know. It just clicked more in my mind, having words than just number sequence.

**Session 1025 - Age: 57, Gender: Female, HHI: 75K - 99K -** I'm a Title Insurance Officer.

**13. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

It tested my memory, kept my memory in tune and it was fairly easy.

It was very pleasant, it was not hard at all. I see it actually understood me. And it gave you more to try and remember.

**16. How clear or unclear were the instructions the Alexa device provided for that skill? (Very clear, somewhat clear, not clear) Why?**

Somewhat clear - I don't know if I could just not hear it on the speaker phone but the way she said "answer the word is" was not very clear. She said that the first time around, I didn't hear it before she instructed me to say it. It should have been something like 'please phrase your answer like this'.

**18. What was your overall reaction to that experience?**

It was okay, she didn't let me finish the one answer. I don't know if I was playing too slow but usually, if I go fast, she doesn't understand it anyways so I learned to go slow when I talk to Alexa. I think the second one I had correct so again, I don't know if she misunderstood me or what.

**19. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

That it was shorter than the words, that she didn't read back like the words, none of it were original, it would be a quicker game than the words game but other than that, nothing.

**20. What did you dislike most about that experience, and why?**

That she didn't understand me, that she cut me off on the last one and that's it.

**27. Which experience did you prefer, testing with words or testing with numbers? Why?**

Testing with Words - because it was more memory-extensive I guess. You had to remember more things and pull the one word out of the ten or twelve that you have where the 'Numbers' where just repeating the numbers that they gave you.

**Session 0992 - Age: 60, Gender: Male, HHI: Over 100K –** Architect

**12. What was your overall reaction to that experience?**

A: I like the hint or the suggestion to visualize words. I think that it helped in actually playing the game and so it was easier to remember that way. I like the increasing in difficulty.

**14. What did you dislike most about that experience, and why?**

The voice recognition when I thought I was speaking clearly and it was not registering.  That was a little frustrating

**26. Would you use this Alexa skill on your own? Why or why not?**

I will. I know I will. I'm thinking right now about going to the AARP website and using it. I would use it because I do think there's value in it and I want to stay sharp for a couple more decades anyway.

**15. Was there anything you felt to be missing within that experience?**

A: Even though the increased in the levels of difficulty, they all were similar so it would be good to have each one a little more varied from previous one … to maintain interest and it probably would do a better job of testing in my opinion and if not also selling.

**16. How clear or unclear were the instructions the Alexa device provided for that skill? (Very clear, somewhat clear, not clear) Why?**

Somewhat clear. Well as ...I didn't understand...maybe the suggestion would be if ...if one playing the game did not say key phrase to register the answer, then maybe Alexa should repeat the instruction in a different tone or inflection. Like when I said earlier, I couldn't understand what it was that the key word that I was supposed to use before saying my answer, then every time I heard it, it sounded the same, it was said in the same way so if I didn't understand it the first time, chances are I probably still wouldn't understand it the second time and maybe the third. So if Alexa varied it, in the instructions, after the first time the person got it wrong, then offer the instructions again using different words or different phrasing. I think that would improve it.

**18. What was your overall reaction to your experience testing with your memory with Numbers?**

So I intentionally got whatever one to appear with the message was and it just said what the correct number was, the next time I said the right thing but it didn't understand so it tend to resist. So I like that in that sense that even if you got it right and Alexa didn't understand it correctly, you still got the validation that you got it correctly. So game wise, it was fine. It still got some kinks to work out in the recognition of my voice. I would have to try different things to know what inflection and all of that seem to work the best.

**19. What did you like most about that experience (Numbers), and why?**

Having an added level of difficulty on successful completion because it works for you, it will stretch and challenge you to do the next step.

**21. Was there anything you felt to be missing within that experience, with Numbers?**

Well the answer is yes. It needed something else more than just repeating number. Maybe grouping numbers, like it said, maybe its a 52 and a 395 as opposed to a 5-2-3-9-5. You know, vary it up a little bit.

**25. How valuable did you find both of those experience? (Very valuable, somewhat valuable, not valuable)**

Somewhat valuable. Because it tested finite information rather than concept and I think testing concept or comprehension for that type of thing would be more valuable

**26. Would you use this Alexa skill on your own? Why or why not?**

Yeah given the comments I made and if they were incorporated it would be of value. I would use it on my own to keep me sharp. Correct. Just the moving ahead and advancing in the difficulty quicker. And that's the main one I think and not going back. But keeping on the same level when a mistake is made and you didn't get 100%, given a chance we'll say for the 100 before going to a higher level but never going back.

**27. Which experience did you prefer, testing with words or testing with numbers? Why?**

Testing with words. Because it helped me to visualize and I just felt like it I was using more of my brain. I found that testing with numbers was easier so it wasn't really challenging.

**28. Do you have any comments about this topic, or anything we discussed today?**

Is this a feature that is currently on Alexa?

**Session 1039 - Age: 52, Gender: Female, HHI: Over 100K --** BARISTA

**7. Have you ever used Alexa to play games? If yes, what kind of games? If no, why not?**I just didn't know you could play games with it. I tend to not play games. I tend to do surveys and stuff that pay money if I want to pass the time

**10. What expectations do you have for an Alexa skill that tests your memory?  (i.e. what would you expect that experience to entail?)**

I would maybe have to think it would ask me questions about dates in history or who's the chief justice of the Supreme Court. Things like that.

**13. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

I guess for maybe a senior is it's something that could test their skills and quick thinking. So that's probably the most for people that are using them that need that kind of testing.

**15. Was there anything you felt to be missing within that experience?**

Maybe more positive feedback. So if you were using that for someone older or even someone younger... Like I could see this application being used for the school to put in words like Spanish. If a child is learning a foreign language to actually teach a lesson.I Anytime anyone plays some sort of game, especially if it's a learning skill, you expect to hear good job. I know Alexa doesn't have much emotion, but maybe something like that with it.

**16. How clear or unclear were the instructions the Alexa device provided for that skill? (Very clear, somewhat clear, not clear) Why?**

I think somewhat clear because the first time I did it with you I did it incorrectly and I had to have you clarify it because I must have missed it the first time. I think that's the thing too with Alexa that you have to remember to do things different with how it's programmed versus the natural way we speak.

**18. What was your overall reaction to that experience?**

It's definitely nothing I would use or do. It doesn't seem interesting to me. It was okay. It just seemed kooky because she wasn't understanding everything.

**19. What did you like most about that experience, and why?**

It just showed me, I guess, that there's definitely other things you can use Alexa for other than just the standard things. Other applications I guess for it.

**20. What did you dislike most about that experience, and why?**

It's just not very intuitive yet.

**21. Was there anything you felt to be missing within that experience?**

Really, just as I said, the intuitiveness. I think the data's there. If someone really wanted to use it and play the games, they would get frustrated just because of the program. Not the questions it's asking, but how it's asking.

**26. Would you use this Alexa skill on your own? Why or why not?**

I would not. Because, to me, it's just not entertaining I guess. I just don't have a need for it and it's a little clunky.