

Research Assistant Protocol – Perceptual Categorization Experiment (Sean)

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Pre-Participant Setup (Complete Before Each Session)

Equipment and Experiment Check

- Ensure computer is powered on and functioning, with stable internet connection
Passwords are located in Box > GRID Psy 390 > Psy Students > Getting Started > Gen Info
- Double-check IRB Number: **IRB-00000328**
- Navigate to experiment:
Click on experiment icon: [turtles_exp](#)
 - **Enter the participant number and the computer number into the dialogue box. Then press OK.**

Participant Interaction Protocol

1. Upon participant arrival:

"Hello, my name is [NAME] and I'll be your experimenter today. Thank you for participating in our research study. Please have a seat at one of the computers turned on."

"Today you'll be completing a computer-based task that will take a maximum of 1 hour to complete. You'll use the keyboard and trackpad to respond to what you see on the screen. The instructions for the task will appear on the computer; please read them carefully as your responses are important to us. Once you finish, please let me know, and you can go. I'll be here if you have any questions."

2. During the Experiment

- Remain quietly available but avoid hovering
- Only intervene if participant appears confused or if technical issues arise
- Do not provide hints about responses or performance
- **NOTE:** The participant may ask you questions after reading through the experimental instructions. Here is some general information about the study to help you answer any potential questions:
 - On each trial, the participant will see a simple stimulus, which we call a "turtle".



- The turtles vary on two components: the angle of their head (yellow wedge) and the size of their shell (green half-circle).

- The subject is to categorize each turtle as being in Species F or Species J, and in later trials they will also make a judgment as to whether this turtle is smaller or larger than the average turtle.
- In the first part of the experiment, participants will be provided feedback to some of their decisions, as to whether their choice was correct.
- In the second part of the experiment, participants will not receive feedback when they make categorizations.
 - There will also be some trials where participants are asked to make size judgments again.
- Do not tell them anything else about the experiment - what makes something a good category member, etc.

3. Post-Experiment

Once a participant has completed the task:

Ask the participant if they have any questions about the research. If they do, answer them to the best of your ability, but DO NOT away the purpose of the study in front of other participants. If there are any questions you cannot answer, no worries! Tell them to contact Sean at spconway@purdue.edu

If anything happens that you want to make note of for Sean (participant expresses confusion, etc.) put it in the notes column for that participant.

Thank the participant for their participation and tell them that their SONA credit will be assigned by the end of the day.

If a participant has not completed the task within the 1 hour time limit:

If the participant is still in the experiment at the 1 hour mark, please let them know this and tell them that they are under no obligation to stay. If they choose to leave, that is fine. However, if their staying goes over your availability hours or is taking up a computer that another participant (or lab) needs, politely ask them to leave.

4. Final Steps

- Process SONA credit allocation
- Note any technical issues or unusual occurrences

Troubleshooting

If experiment doesn't load:

- Try clicking the icon again. Note that sometimes it may take 10-20 seconds for the experiment to load.
- Turn computer off, wait ten seconds, turn computer back on; try again

- Contact **Sean** if problem persists across multiple/all computers, as the study itself could be experiencing an issue

If you need to end the experiment early:

- Press the windows key
- Find the “terminal” bar on the bottom of the screen, right click, and quit the program.

If participant seems confused:

- Encourage them to read instructions again
- Remind them to work at their own pace

If participant doesn't complete study:

- Make note of it on participant runsheet.

If major technical malfunction occurs:

- Apologize to participant
- Contact **Sean**
- Reschedule if necessary; if participant is willing to reschedule, provide one extra SONA credit to them when they participate during the reschedule and comment in SONA. If not, provide the regular SONA credit for the experiment with an apology.