

Assignment 3 – Spaced vs Massed Practice Assignment

For this week's assignment, you will be conducting an experiment to test Kornell and Bjork's (2008) concept of spaced versus massed practice.

Kornell and Bjork (2008) describe the spacing effect as the finding that items studied once and then recalled after a delay tend to be retained more effectively in long-term memory than items studied repeatedly in one uninterrupted session, a strategy known as massed practice. Although spacing promotes more durable long-term retention, massing can help individuals notice similarities or patterns across repeated presentations which are often forgotten when learning is spread out over time. In this assignment, you will compare memory performance across these two learning conditions by having participants study and later recall two separate lists of words.

Begin by recruiting four to six individuals to participate in your experiment. You should tell them that they are taking part in a psychology experiment for a course, but do not reveal the full purpose of the study until their participation is complete. All participants will study two word lists, but the method of study will differ for each one. List 1 will be studied using spaced practice: participants should study the list for one minute per day across three consecutive days. At least two days after the final study session, ask participants to recall and write down as many words from List 1 as they can remember. Once this portion is complete, you will move on to List 2, which will be studied using massed practice. Participants should study List 2 for three minutes on a single day only. After a minimum of two days, ask participants to recall and write down as many words from the second list as they can. Throughout the experiment, make sure that you record the number of correctly recalled words for each participant in both the spaced-practice and massed-practice conditions. All participants must complete both conditions, and the order should remain the same for everyone: spaced practice first, followed by massed practice.

After completing the study, you will write a structured paper summarizing your experiment and findings. Your paper should include four sections. In the Introduction, briefly describe the spacing effect and the concept of massed practice, drawing on Kornell and Bjork (2008), and clearly state the purpose of your replication along with your hypothesis regarding whether spaced practice or massed practice will result in better recall in your sample. In the Methods section, describe who your participants were, how many took part, the exact procedure you followed for both learning conditions, and the timing of study and recall sessions. In the Results section, summarize your findings by reporting the number of words recalled in each condition. You may present these results in a simple table. In the Discussion section, interpret your results by reflecting on whether they align with Kornell and Bjork's original findings and explaining why your results turned out the way they did.

Your final submission should be clear, coherent, and written according to the structure outlined above. Results that replicate the original finding are valuable, but results that do not replicate are equally meaningful if you provide thoughtful interpretation and analysis.

Please turn your assignment on LMS by 11:59 PM on 29th November. The submission should be 3–4 pages, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 pt with standard margins.

Word List 1 (Spaced Practice – 17 words):

apple, water, paper, school, house, light, bottle, window, garden, chair, river, friend, morning,
candle, flower, cloud, bread

Word List 2 (Massed Practice – 17 words):

table, music, street, coffee, pillow, ocean, picture, mountain, clock, blanket, butter, orange, rain,
family, tree, pencil, mirror