

Encoding Specificity

When to use: When teaching about encoding specificity.

Purpose: To demonstrate the nature of encoding specificity, and specifically, transfer appropriate processing.

Materials: Cue-Target (example) word list to read
Test sheet for students with scoring

Directions: Tell the students that they will hear a series of phrase-word pairs. The phrase is designed to clarify the subsequent word. Read each Phrase-word pair slowly. Then handout the test sheets to the students. Have the students fill out the test sheet and score the results.

Time: 10-15 minutes

Notes: Take your time handing out the test sheets. A little delay is a good thing!

In the scoring section:

- 1 = Same Cue (study -> test)
- 2 = Meaning-Preserved Cue
- 3 = Meaning-Shifted Cue

From previous research (Thieman, 1984), the mean words recalled

- 1 = 11.04
- 2 = 9.88
- 3 = 3.88

Source: Thieman, T. J. (1984). A classroom demonstration of encoding specificity. *Teaching of Psychology*, 11(2), 101-102.

Cue – Target (example) Word List

(read to the students, slowly)

1. A day of the week Thursday
2. A government leader king
3. A type of bird cardinal
4. A famous psychologist Thorndike
5. A menu item wine
6. A personality trait charm
7. A vegetable cabbage
8. Associated with heat stove
9. A round object ball
10. Found in the jungle leopard
11. A crime stealing
12. A baseball position pitcher
13. Associated with cold north
14. Song accompaniment banjo
15. Taken to a birthday party present
16. A girl's name Susan
17. A type of footgear boots
18. A man-made structure bridge
19. A weapon cannon
20. A sweet food banana
21. An indication of possession mine
22. A large city Tokyo
23. A sign of happiness smile
24. A student pupil
25. A long word notwithstanding
26. Has four wheels Chevrolet
27. A part of a bird bill
28. A member of the family grandfather
29. A favorite time of the year winter
30. A part of a word letter
31. A tool wrench
32. Part of a holiday motel
33. A type of sports equipment racket
34. Part of a building chimney
35. Made of leather saddle
36. A tropical plant palm
37. A synonym for big colossal
38. Associated with lunch noon
39. Part of the intestine colon

Test List & Scoring

Directions: For each cue on the left, indicate a word from the previously read list that is related. Some of the cues are the same as the cues you heard previously, some are related but different.

	Cue	Associated Example	Type (used in scoring only)
1.	A musical instrument	_____	2
2.	A grammatical tense	_____	3
3.	Associated with cold	_____	1
4.	Associated with coal	_____	3
5.	A fruit	_____	2
6.	A weapon	_____	1
7.	A member of royalty	_____	2
8.	A day of the week	_____	1
9.	A clergyman	_____	3
10.	A synonym for big	_____	1
11.	A punctuation mark	_____	3
12.	A time of day	_____	2
13.	A member of the family	_____	1
14.	A form of communication	_____	3
15.	A season	_____	2
16.	A kitchen appliance	_____	2
17.	A social event	_____	3
18.	A vegetable	_____	1
19.	Part of the hand	_____	3
20.	Associated with horse	_____	2
21.	Part of a building	_____	1
22.	A famous psychologist	_____	1
23.	A small trinket	_____	3
24.	An alcoholic beverage	_____	2
25.	A long word	_____	1
26.	A monthly reminder	_____	3
27.	A type of car	_____	2
28.	A type of noise	_____	3
29.	A vacation rest stop	_____	2
30.	A tool	_____	1
31.	A type of assault	_____	2
32.	An article of pottery	_____	3
33.	Found in the jungle	_____	1
34.	Found in the eye	_____	3
35.	A facial expression	_____	2
36.	A large city	_____	1
37.	A girl's name	_____	1
38.	A card game	_____	3
39.	Needed in snow	_____	2

Scoring: Count the number of words recalled of each type: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

Test List & Scoring

Directions: For each cue on the left, indicate a word from the previously read list that is related. Some of the cues are the same as the cues you heard previously, some are related but different.

	Cue	Associated Example	Type (used in scoring only)
1.	A musical instrument	banjo	2
2.	A grammatical tense	present	3
3.	Associated with cold	north	1
4.	Associated with coal	mine	3
5.	A fruit	banana	2
6.	A weapon	cannon	1
7.	A member of royalty	king	2
8.	A day of the week	Thursday	1
9.	A clergyman	cardinal	3
10.	A synonym for big	colossal	1
11.	A punctuation mark	colon	3
12.	A time of day	noon	2
13.	A member of the family	grandfather	1
14.	A form of communication	letter	3
15.	A season	winter	2
16.	A kitchen appliance	stove	2
17.	A social event	ball	3
18.	A vegetable	cabbage	1
19.	Part of the hand	palm	3
20.	Associated with horse	saddle	2
21.	Part of a building	chimney	1
22.	A famous psychologist	Thorndike	1
23.	A small trinket	charm	3
24.	An alcoholic beverage	wine	2
25.	A long word	notwithstanding	1
26.	A monthly reminder	bill	3
27.	A type of car	Chevrolet	2
28.	A type of noise	racket	3
29.	A vacation rest stop	motel	2
30.	A tool	wrench	1
31.	A form of corruption	stealing	2
32.	An article of pottery	pitcher	3
33.	Found in the jungle	leopard	1
34.	Found in the eye	pupil	3
35.	A facial expression	smile	2
36.	A large city	Tokyo	1
37.	A girl's name	Susan	1
38.	A card game	bridge	3
39.	Needed in snow	boots	2