

The Sussex-Waterloo Scale of Hypnotisability (SWASH): script and response booklet.

The Sussex-Waterloo Scale of Hypnotisability is a 10-item adaptation of the 12-item Waterloo-Stanford Group C Scale of Hypnotic Suggestibility (WSGC; Bowers, 1993; 1998).

The scale can be administered with groups of up to fifty participants in a lecture theatre setting. Each participant should be provided with a pen or pencil and a copy of the response booklet. Suggestion 8 (Negative Visual Hallucination) requires the presentation of a picture of three coloured balls (slides are available at <https://osf.io/wujk8/>).

The induction and suggestions script and the response booklet presented here are adapted from Bowers (1998).

References

- Bowers, K. S. (1993). The Waterloo-Stanford Group C (WSGC) scale of hypnotic susceptibility: Normative and comparative data. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 41(1), 35-46.
- Bowers, K. S. (1998). The Waterloo-Stanford group scale of hypnotic susceptibility, form C: Manual and response booklet. *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*, 46(3), 250-268.

Script

Preliminary Instructions.

In a few minutes I am going to administer a standard procedure for measuring hypnotic ability. At the end of the standard procedure you will be asked to report on your experience in the Response Booklet which has been given to you. Place the booklet you have been given and your pencil or pen on the surface in front of you.

Now I think we can begin.

Induction

(1). Now, please seat yourself comfortably and rest your hands in your lap. That's right. Now close your eyes and just focus on my voice. I am about to help you to relax, and meanwhile I will give you some instructions that will help you to gradually enter a state of hypnosis. You can become hypnotized if you are willing to do what I tell you to, and if you concentrate on what I say. You have already shown your willingness by coming here today, and so I am assuming that your presence here means that you want to experience all that you can. Hypnosis is perfectly normal and natural, and follows from the conditions of attention and suggestion we will be using together. What is important here today is your willingness to go along with the ideas I suggest and to let happen whatever is about to happen. Nothing will be done to embarrass you. Pay close attention to my words, and let happen whatever you feel is going to take place. Just let yourself go. Pay close attention to what I tell you to think about; if your mind wanders, that will be okay; just bring your thoughts back to my words, and you can easily experience more of what it's like to be hypnotized.

(2) Now take it easy and just let yourself relax. Whatever you experience is all right. Just let yourself experience whatever happens and keep focusing on my words.

(3) You will find that you can relax completely, but at the same time sit up comfortably in your chair with little effort. You will be able to shift your position to make yourself comfortable as needed without it disturbing you. For now, just relax more and more. As you think of relaxing, your muscles will actually begin to relax. Starting with your right foot, relax the muscles of your right leg..... Now the muscles of your left leg..... Just relax all over. Relax your right hand... your forearm... upper arm... and shoulder.... That's right.... Now your left hand.... and forearm.... and upper arm.... and shoulder.... Relax your neck, and chest.... more and more relaxed.... completely relaxed.... completely relaxed.

(4) As you become relaxed, your body will feel deeply at ease.... comfortably heavy. You will begin to have this pleasant feeling of heaviness and comfort in your legs and feet.... in your hands and arms.... throughout your body.... as though you were settling deep into the chair. Your body feels comfortable and heavy.... Your eyelids feel heavy too, heavy and tired. You are beginning to feel very relaxed and comfortable. You are breathing freely and deeply, freely and deeply. You are becoming more and more deeply and comfortably relaxed.

(5) You now feel very relaxed, but you are going to become even more relaxed. You feel pleasantly, deeply relaxed and very comfortable as you continue to hear my voice. Just let your thoughts dwell on what I'm saying. Soon you will be deeply hypnotized, but you will have no trouble hearing me. You will remain deeply hypnotized until I tell you to awaken later on. Soon I shall begin to count from one to twenty. As I count, you will feel yourself going down further and further into a deeply relaxed, a deeply hypnotized state... but you will be able to do all sorts of things I ask you to do without waking up... One... you are going to become more deeply relaxed and hypnotized.... Two... down, down deeper, and deeper... Three... Four... more and more deeply hypnotized.... Five... Six... Seven... you are sinking deeper and deeper into hypnosis. Nothing will disturb you... Just let your thoughts focus on my voice and those things I tell you to think of. You are finding it easy just to listen to the things I tell you. Eight... Nine, Ten... halfway there... always deeper... Eleven... Twelve... Thirteen... Fourteen... Fifteen... although deeply hypnotized you can hear me clearly. You will always hear me distinctly no matter how deeply hypnotized you become. Sixteen... Seventeen... Eighteen... deeply hypnotized. Nothing will disturb you. You are going to experience many things that I will tell you to experience... Nineteen... Twenty. Deeply hypnotized now! You will remain hypnotized until I tell you otherwise. You will wish to remain relaxed and hypnotized and to have the experiences I describe to you.

(6) Even though you are deeply relaxed and hypnotized, I want you to realize that you will be able to write, to move, and even to open your eyes if I ask you to do so, and still remain just as hypnotized and comfortable as you are now. It will not disturb you at all to open your eyes, move about, and write things. You will remain hypnotized until I tell you otherwise... All right, then....

1. Hand Lowering.

Now hold your right hand out at shoulder height, with the palm of your hand facing up. Your right hand straight out in front of you, the palm up. There, that's right.... Attend carefully to this hand, how it feels, what's going on in it. Notice whether or not it's a little numb, or tingling; the slight effort it takes to keep from bending your wrist; any breeze blowing on it. Pay close attention to your hand now. Imagine that you are holding something heavy in your hand... maybe a heavy bowling ball - something heavy. Shape your fingers around as though you were holding this heavy object that you imagine is in your hand. That's it.... Now the hand and arm feel heavy, as if the weight were pressing down...and as it feels heavier and heavier the hand and arm begin to move down... as if forced down... moving... moving... down... down... more and more down... heavier... heavier... the arm is getting more and more tired and strained... down... slowly but surely... down, down... more and more down, the weight is so great, the hand is so heavy... You feel the weight more and more... the arm is too heavy to hold back... it goes down, down... more and more down...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's good... now let your hand go back to its original resting position, and relax. You probably experienced much more heaviness and tiredness in your arm than you would have if you had not concentrated on it and had not imagined something trying to force it down. Now just relax... Your hand and arm are now as they were, not feeling tired or strained.... All right, just relax.

2. Moving Hands Together.

Now extend your arms ahead of you, with palms facing each other, hands about a foot apart. Hold your hands about a foot apart, palms facing each other. I want you to think about a force acting on your hands to pull them together, as though one hand were attracting the other. You are thinking of your hands being pulled together, and they begin to move together... coming together... coming together... moving together... closer together... more and more towards each other... more and more...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. You notice how closely thought and movement are related. Now place your hands back in their resting position and relax.... your hands back in their resting position and relax.

3. Mosquito Hallucination.

You have been listening to me very carefully, paying close attention. You may not have noticed a mosquito that has been buzzing, singing, as mosquitoes do ... Listen to it now ... hear its high pitched buzzing as it flies around your right hand... It is landing on your hand ... perhaps it tickles a little bit ... It flies away again ... you hear its high pitched buzz ... It's back on your hand tickling ... it might bite you ... you don't like this mosquito ... you'd like to get rid of it ... Go ahead, brush it off ... get rid of it if it bothers you...

(Allow ten seconds.)

It's gone ... you are no longer bothered ... the mosquito has disappeared. Now relax, relax completely.

4. Taste Hallucination.

5.

I want you to think of something sweet in your mouth. Imagine that you have something sweet-tasting in your mouth, like a little sugar ... and as you think about this sweet taste you can actually begin to experience the sweet taste ... It may at first be faint, but it will grow ... and grow ... Now you begin to notice a sweet taste in your mouth... The sweet taste is increasing... sweeter... and sweeter... It will get stronger. It often takes a few moments for such a taste to reach its full strength... It is now getting stronger... stronger...

(Allow ten seconds.)

All right. Now notice that something is happening to that taste. It is changing. You are now beginning to notice a sour taste in your mouth... an acid taste, as if you had some lemon in your mouth, or a little vinegar... the taste in your mouth is getting more and more sour... more acid... more and more sour...

(Allow ten seconds.)

All right. Now the sour taste is going away, and your mouth feels just as it did before I mentioned any taste at all. Your mouth is normal now. There, it's quite normal now, and you just continue to relax... more and more relaxed.

6. Arm Rigidity.

Please hold your right arm straight out in front of you, and fingers straight out, too... That's right... Right arm, straight out. Think of your arm becoming stiffer and stiffer ... stiff ... very stiff ... as you think of its becoming stiff you will feel it become stiff ... more stiff and rigid, as though your arm were in a splint so the elbow cannot bend ... stiff ... held stiff, so that it cannot bend. A tightly splinted arm cannot bend ... Your arm feels stiff as if tightly splinted ... Test how stiff and rigid it is ... Try to bend it ... try ...

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. You will have an opportunity to experience many things. You probably noticed how your arm became stiffer as you thought of it as stiff, and how much effort it took to

bend it. Your arm is no longer at all stiff. Place it back in position, and relax.

7. Arm Immobilization (Left Hand).

Now your left hand and arm should be in your lap. You are very relaxed and comfortable, with a feeling of heaviness throughout your body. I want you now to think about your left arm and hand. Pay close attention to them. They feel numb and heavy, very heavy. How heavy your left hand feels ... Even as you think about how heavy your left hand is, it grows heavier and heavier ... Your hand is getting heavier ... heavier and heavier ... Your hand is getting heavier, very heavy, as though it were being pressed against your lap. You might like to find out a little later how heavy your hand is ... it seems much too heavy to move ... but in spite of being so heavy, maybe you can move it a little; but maybe it is too heavy even for that ... Why don't you see how heavy it is ... Just try to lift your hand up, just try.

(Allow ten seconds.)

That's fine. You see how it was harder to lift than usual because of the relaxed state you are in. Now place your hand back in its resting position and relax. Your hand and arm now feel normal again. They are no longer heavy. Just relax, relax all over.

8. Music Hallucination.

In a few moments, a recording of 'Happy Birthday to You' will be played for you. When the recording starts the volume will be turned way down and you will probably not be able to hear it, or you will hear it very faintly. Then the volume will increase and I want you to let me know when you can hear it satisfactorily by holding up your right hand. When you can hear the music satisfactorily, hold up your right hand. Okay? Here we go ... The recording of 'Happy Birthday to You' has been turned on. This is Level One. (wait five seconds.) Now it is being turned up a little. This is Level Two. Hold your hand up if you can hear it now. (wait five seconds.) And now louder. This is Level Three. (wait five seconds.) And now the loudest setting. This is Level Four. Hold your hand up if you can hear the music now. (wait five seconds.) Now the music has been turned off. There now, there is no longer any music. You can return your hand to its resting position and relax. Now ... just sit back and enjoy being hypnotized.

9. Negative Visual Hallucination.

Just relax and become even more deeply hypnotized as you continue to breathe comfortably and effortlessly. As you sit comfortably in your chair with your eyes closed, I am going to display a picture of two balls. The two coloured balls will be shown on the screen in front of you so that you will be able to see them clearly. In a moment I am going to ask you to open your eyes. You will see just two balls on the screen... just two balls...

(Display slide of three coloured balls.)

Okay, now is the time to open your eyes, and to look at the screen. See the two balls

there. Please make a mental note of the color of the balls that you see. Remember the color of the balls that you see so that you can report them later. Okay, now close your eyes and continue to relax ... (Remove the slide from the screen). Now I would like you to turn over the booklet in front of you and write down the color of the balls that you saw on the back of the booklet. Just write down the color of the balls ...

When you have written down the color of the balls, I want you to place the pen you've been writing with on the surface in front of you and to turn over your booklet and place it back on the surface in front of you. Once you have done this you may let your arms go back to their original resting position and relax completely.

(Wait for all participants to put down their pens and turn over their booklets.)

Okay, you've done very well. Just keep your eyes closed and relax ... deeply and comfortably. That's right, just relax completely.

8&9. Posthypnotic Suggestion (Doodle) and Amnesia.

Stay completely relaxed and pay close attention to what I'm going to tell you next. In a moment I shall begin counting backwards from twenty to one. You will awaken gradually, but for most of the count you will remain in the pleasant, relaxed state that you are now in. By the time I reach "five" you will open your eyes, but you will not be fully awake. When I get to "one", you will be fully alert, in your normal state of wakefulness. You probably will have the impression that you have slept, because you will have difficulty in remembering all the things I have told you and all the things you did or felt, since you closed your eyes. In fact, you will find it so much of an effort to recall any of these things that you will have no wish to do so. It will be much easier simply to forget everything until I tell you that you can remember. You will remember nothing of what you did or felt from the time that you closed your eyes until I say to you: "Now you can remember everything!" You will not remember anything you did until then. After you open your eyes you will feel fine. I shall now count backwards from twenty, and at "five", not sooner, you will open your eyes but not be fully awake until I say "one". At "one" you will be awake ... A little later I will tell you to turn to page two of your response booklet. When you turn to page two, you will draw a small tree in the upper right hand corner. You will draw a small tree but forget that I told you to do so, just as you will forget the other things, until I tell you, "Now you can remember everything". Ready, now: 20... 19... 18... 17... 16... 15... 14... 13... 12... 11... 10, halfway... 9... 8... 7... 6... five... 4... 3... 2... 1. Wake up! Wide awake! Any remaining drowsiness which you may feel will quickly pass.

Testing.

Now turn to page two of your response booklet (wait ten seconds.) Please write down now, briefly, a list of the things that happened since the hypnotic induction began. Do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, in writing your reply. I will let you know when the time is up.

(Wait two minutes.)

Listen carefully to my words. Now you can remember everything. Please turn now to the next page of the response booklet. On this page write down a list of anything else that you now remember that you did not remember previously. Please do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, on this section. Again, I will let you know when the time is up.

(Wait two minutes.)

Now please turn to the next page of your response booklet. Please do not turn back to earlier pages. You will find listed on the following pages, the specific events that were suggested to you during the hypnosis session. Please read the instructions on page 4 and then answer the questions in the remainder of the booklet. Work right through to the end and let me know if you have any questions.

(When all subjects have completed the response booklet, make sure you have their attention before continuing.)

You may recall that during the session today, you were asked to hold up your hand when you heard a recording of 'Happy Birthday to You' In fact, no recording was played -- there was no music in the room. Also, near the end of the session, you were told that when you opened your eyes, you would see two balls on the screen. Actually, there were three balls in the picture.

The purpose of these two items was not to deceive you. We know from past research that the perception of persons who are highly responsive to hypnosis will sometimes be altered to coincide with suggestions that do not accurately reflect the stimuli presented. Our intention with respect to the two suggestions just mentioned was to assess your responsiveness to suggestions that involve such perceptual alterations.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL THE EXAMINER
SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS YOU TO DO SO.**

Please supply the information requested below in block capitals:

Name_____ Age____ Sex_____

Degree _____

Year of study_____

E-mail address_____

Today's Date_____ Time_____

Have you ever been hypnotized before? Yes ___ No ___

If so, please cite the circumstances and describe your experiences. Please be brief:

**DO NOT OPEN THIS BOOKLET UNTIL YOU ARE
SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.**

Please write down now, briefly, in your own words, a list of the things that happened since the hypnotic induction began. Do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, in writing your reply.

Please DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE until the examiner specifically instructs you to do so.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN TO PAGE 2

On this page write down a list of anything else that you now remember that you did not remember previously. Please do not go into detail. Spend two minutes, no longer, in writing out your reply.

Please DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE until the examiner specifically instructs you to do so.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN TO EARLIER PAGES

ITEM SCORING SECTION

Listed below in chronological order are the specific happenings which were suggested to you during the standard hypnotic procedure. We wish you to estimate whether or not you objectively responded to these nine suggestions, that is, whether an onlooker would have observed that you did or did not make certain definite responses by certain specific criteria. You will also be asked to provide a subjective rating for each suggestion, that is, how strongly you experienced the effects of the suggestion.

It is understood that your estimates may in some cases not be as accurate as you might wish them to be and that you might even have to guess. But we want you to make whatever you feel to be your best estimate regardless.

Beneath a description of most of the suggestions are two sets of responses, labeled A and B which will be used to report your objective rating. Please circle either A or B for these questions, whichever you judge to be the more accurate. Please answer every question. Failure to give a definite answer to every question may lead to disqualification of your record. For a few of the suggestions, a special scale has been devised. Select the response that is the best estimate of your experience. Your subjective rating for each suggestion can be reported by circling a number on a scale from 0 to 5. Instructions for interpreting the subjective experience scale will be given for each suggestion.

0. HYPNOTIC INDUCTION

We began the session with a hypnotic induction in which you were told you entering a state of hypnosis.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, to what degree did you enter a hypnotic state, where 0 means your general state of consciousness was just the same as normal, 1 means you were slightly hypnotized and 5 means you entered very deep hypnosis?

Circle one:

Normal State	0	1	2	3	4	5	Deep hypnosis
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1. HAND LOWERING (RIGHT HAND)

You were told to extend your right arm straight out and feel it becoming heavy as though a weight were pulling the hand and arm down.

OBJECTIVE RATING: Would you estimate that an onlooker would have observed that your hand lowered at least six inches (before the time you were told to let your hand down deliberately)?

- Circle one:
- A. My hand had lowered at least six inches by then.
 - B. My hand had lowered less than six inches by then.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you feel your hand becoming heavy, where 0 means you felt your arm was no more heavy than normal and 5 means you felt your arm becoming as heavy as if you had a heavy object in your hand, pulling it down?

Circle one:

Normal heaviness	0	1	2	3	4	5	Very heavy
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2. MOVING HANDS TOGETHER

You were next told to hold your hands out in front of you about a foot apart and then told to imagine a force pulling your hands together.

OBJECTIVE RATING: Would you estimate that an onlooker would have observed that your hands were not over six inches apart (before you were told to return your hands to their resting position)?

- Circle one:
- A. My hands were less than six inches apart by then.
 - B. My hands were more than six inches apart by then.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you feel a force between your hands, where 0 means you felt no force at all and 5 means you felt a force so strong it was as if your hands were real magnets?

Circle one:

No force	0	1	2	3	4	5	Strong force
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3. EXPERIENCING OF MOSQUITO

You were next told to become aware of the buzzing of a mosquito which was said to become annoying, and then you were told to brush it off.

OBJECTIVE RATING: Would you estimate that an onlooker would have observed you make any grimacing, any movement, any outward acknowledgement of an effect (regardless of what it was like subjectively)?

- Circle one:
- A. I did make some outward acknowledgement.
 - B. I did not make any outward acknowledgement.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you feel the sensation of a mosquito being there, in either sound or touch, where 0 means you felt no sensation and 5 means you felt by any means as if there actually was a mosquito there?

Circle one:

No mosquito	0	1	2	3	4	5	Like a real mosquito
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4. TASTE EXPERIENCE

You were next told that you would have a sweet taste in your mouth, and then you were told that you would have a sour taste in your mouth.

OBJECTIVE RATING: How strong was the sweet taste in your mouth?

Circle one: none vague weak strong

Did you make any facial movements, such as lip movements or grimacing, that an onlooker would have observed?

Circle one: YES NO

How strong was the sour taste in your mouth?

Circle one: none vague weak strong

Did you make any facial movements, such as lip movements or grimacing that an onlooker would have observed?

Circle one: YES NO

SUBJECTIVE RATING a: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you taste a sour taste in your mouth, where 0 means you felt no taste at all and 5 means you felt a strong taste?

Circle one:

No taste	0	1	2	3	4	5	Strong taste
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SUBJECTIVE RATING b: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you taste a sweet taste in your mouth, where 0 means you felt no taste at all and 5 means you felt a strong taste?

Circle one:

No taste	0	1	2	3	4	5	Strong taste
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5. ARM RIGIDITY (RIGHT)

You were next told to extend your right arm straight out, then to notice it becoming stiff, and then told to try to bend it.

OBJECTIVE RATING: Would you estimate that an onlooker would have observed that there was less than two inches of arm bending (before you were told to stop trying)?

Circle one: A. My arm was bent less than two inches by then.

 B. My arm was bent at least two inches by then.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how stiff did your arm feel, where 0 means no more stiffness than normal and 5 means you could feel a stiffness so compelling no amount of effort would overcome it?

Circle one:

Normal stiffness	0	1	2	3	4	5	Very stiff
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6. ARM IMMOBILIZATION (LEFT ARM)

You were next told how heavy your left hand and arm felt and then told to try to lift your hand up.

OBJECTIVE RATING: Would you estimate that an onlooker would have observed that you did not lift your hand and arm up at least one inch (before you were told to stop trying)?

- Circle one: A. I did not lift my hand and arm one inch by then.
 B. I did lift my hand and arm at least one inch by then.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how strongly did you feel a heaviness in your hand, where 0 means you felt no heaviness at all and 5 means your hand felt so heavy it was as if a very heavy object was actually pressing it down?

Circle one:

Normal heaviness	0	1	2	3	4	5	Very heavy
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7. MUSIC HALLUCINATION

Next you were asked to hold your right hand up when you could satisfactorily hear the recording of Happy Birthday to You.

OBJECTIVE RATING:

- Circle one: A. I raised my right hand.
 B. I did not raise my right hand.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, report how clearly you heard the music, where 0 means you did not hear any music at all and 5 means you heard it so clearly it was as though it was coming from the best sound system.

Circle one:

No music	0	1	2	3	4	5	Clearly heard music
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8. NEGATIVE VISUAL HALLUCINATION

You were next told to open your eyes and look at a picture of two coloured balls. You then recorded the colour of the balls on the back of this booklet.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how invisible was a third ball, where 0 means you saw three balls clearly, and 5 means you only saw two balls, and any number in between means you had some difficulty in seeing a third ball?

Circle one:

Saw three balls	0	1	2	3	4	5	Saw two balls
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9. AMNESIA

You were then told that you would not be able to remember anything you did during the hypnosis session until you were told “now you can remember anything”.

SUBJECTIVE RATING: On a scale from 0 to 5, how hard was it to remember events before you were told “now you can remember everything”, where 0 means you could remember events as easily as normal and 5 means you found it so difficult to remember it was as if there was an actual blank in your memory?

Circle one:

Normal memory	0	1	2	3	4	5	Blank memory
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10. POSTHYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

You were told that you would draw a small tree in the upper right hand corner of your response booklet, but that you would forget that you were told to do so.

SUBJECTIVE RATING a:

On a scale from 0 to 5, report how strong an urge you felt to draw a tree, where 0 means you had no urge whatsoever and 5 means you had a clear urge to draw a tree.

Circle one:

No urge	0	1	2	3	4	5	Clear urge
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SUBJECTIVE RATING b: On a scale from 0 to 5, report how clearly you remembered being given the instruction to draw a tree while you were drawing the tree in your booklet, where 0 means you were able at that time to remember the instruction normally and 5 means you had no memory of the instruction at that time.

Circle one:

Normal memory	0	1	2	3	4	5	No memory
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