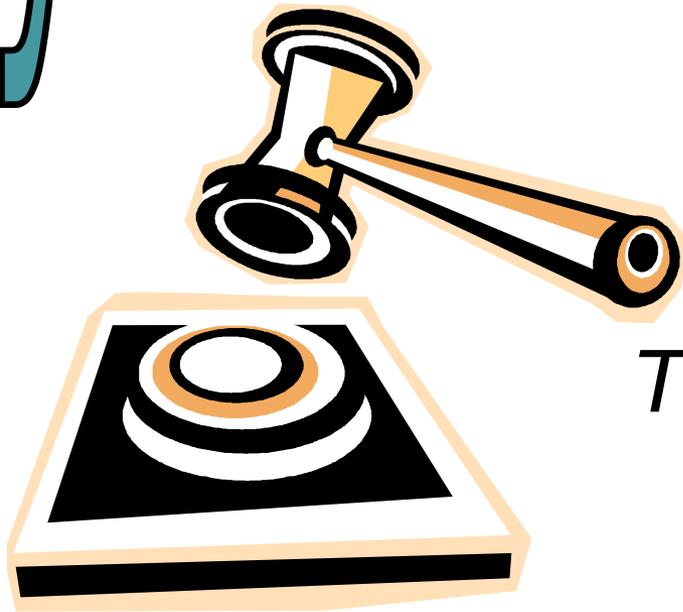


Eyewitness Basics



*Pros & Cons of
Testimonial Evidence*

What is testimonial evidence?

Testimonial evidence includes oral or written statements given to police as well as testimony in court by people who witnessed an event.

Eyewitness accounts can be a useful tool in helping investigators with analyzing a crime scene, but are not viewed to be highly reliable. In addition, eyewitness identifications (right or wrong) can have a big influence on the outcome of an investigation or trial.

People are likely to view the same scene in different ways depending on their positions, line of sight, familiarity with the area, and other factors that can interfere with a person's ability to remember details.

The Bunny Effect
CBS News Video



Memory Challenge

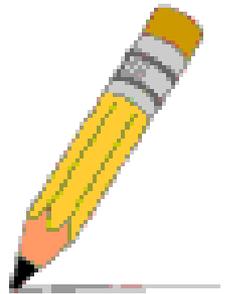
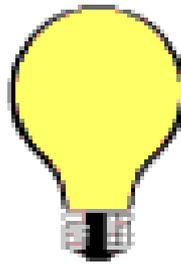
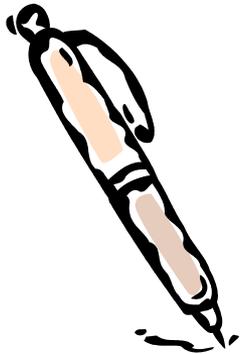
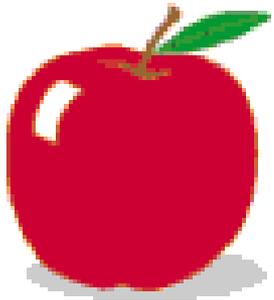
Directions:

You will have 30 seconds to view the next screen.

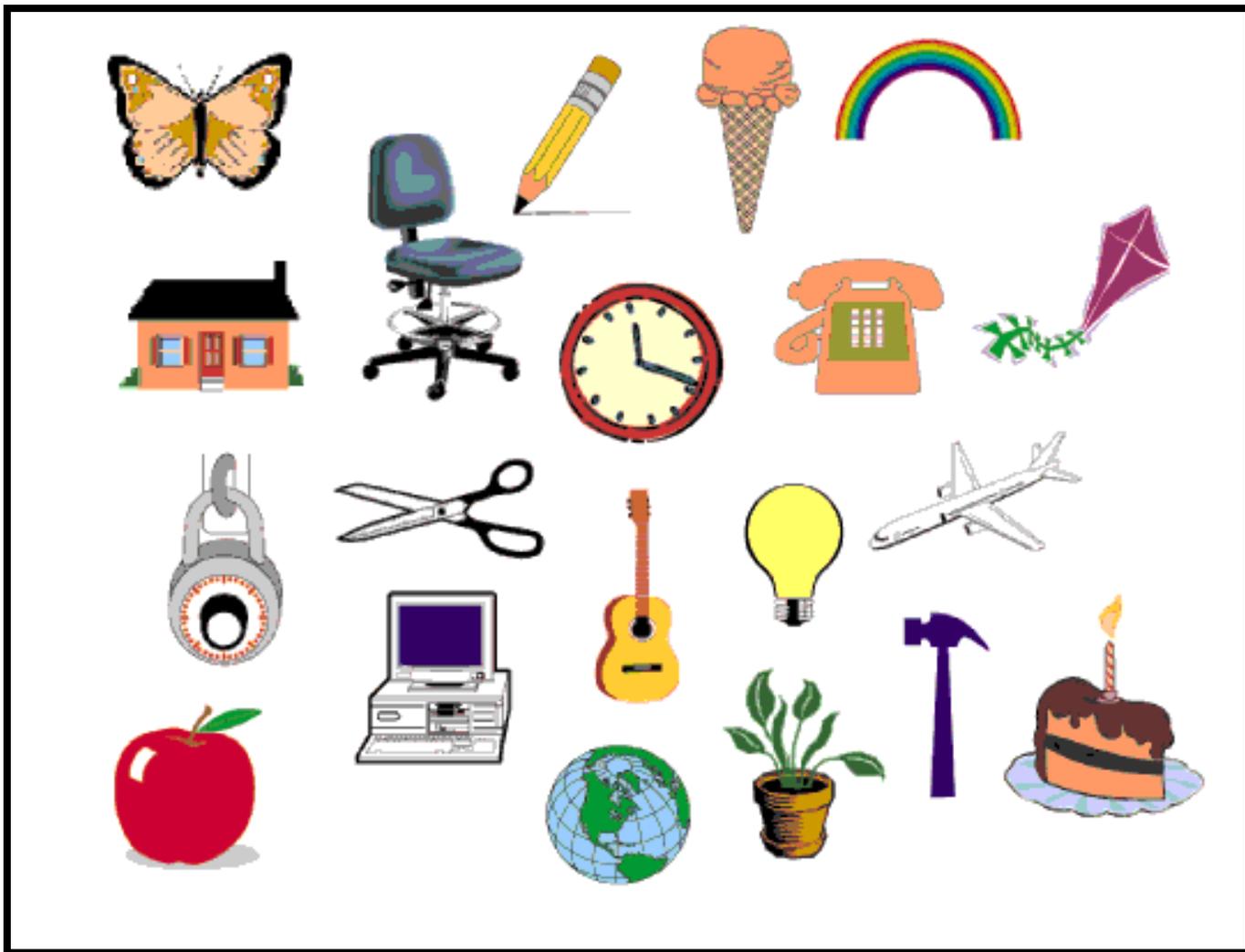
Try to memorize all 20 items you see!

You are NOT allowed to write anything down

You CANNOT talk to anyone else.

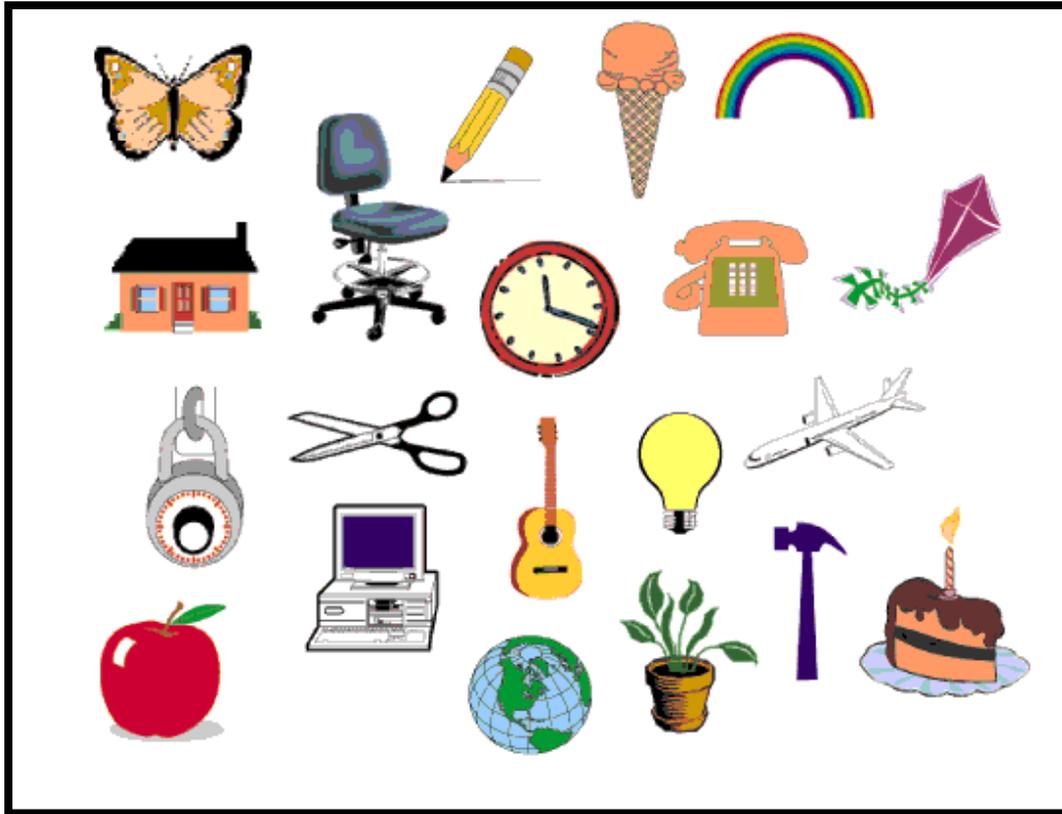


Items to remember ...



What do you remember?

You have 2 minutes to list as many of the items as you can!



How did you do?

All 20 – Awesome

15-19 – Great

10-14 – Pretty swell

5-9 – Could be better

4 or Less – Wake up

Did you know?

According to The Innocence Project (2008) "Eyewitness misidentification is the single greatest cause of wrongful convictions nationwide, playing a role in more than 75% of convictions overturned through DNA testing." Still, the criminal justice system profoundly relies on eyewitness identification and testimony for investigating and prosecuting crimes (Wells & Olson, 2003).

What factors affect a person's memory and their ability to identify a suspect?

Witness Factors

- Age may play a role in the accuracy of an eyewitness' statement or identification of a suspect. Studies have shown that when a lineup contains the actual culprit, both young children and elderly perform well, but when the lineup does not contain the culprit there is a higher rate of mistaken identifications.
- The race of the witness may also play a role. The Cross Race Effect (CRE) is a phenomenon in which people are better at recognizing faces of their own race rather than those of other races.
- The use of drugs can alter a person's ability to recall the events of a crime even after they are no longer under the influence.
- A person's memory of an event can be influenced by other witnesses, investigators, and/or the media. Investigators use open-ended questioning and follow procedures for conducting line-ups to limit their influence on a witness' memory of an event or identification of a suspect.

Crime Scene & Suspect Factors

- A crime that is extremely traumatic for an eyewitness may affect his/her recall of the event. For example, a witness confronted with a weapon tends to focus on the weapon rather than the perpetrator's face.
- Someone who is able to focus on a perpetrator's face for a minute or longer will tend to have a more accurate memory than someone who saw the person for only a few seconds.
- Studies have shown that faces that are either highly attractive, highly unattractive, or distinctive are more likely to be accurately recognized. Simple disguises, such as hats or sunglasses, can interfere with accurate eyewitness identification. However, body piercings and tattoos increases the likelihood of an accurate identification.
- The time of day in which the crime occurred as well as a person's view of the scene may affect what a he/she is able to see. In addition, a person who is familiar with the area in which the crime took place, may have a better recall of the positions of the victims or suspects.

Crime Scene Challenge

- Now that your eyes and brain are warmed up, let's test your observation skills a bit more.
- You will have 2 minutes to study the photograph of a crime scene on the next slide.
- Try to pay attention to details as you will be asked 10 questions about the crime scene!
- You are not allowed to write anything down until after the time is up.
- Ready?



Deadline
TODAY 😊



BRIAN CASTILLO



Answer each question below.

1. What color coffee mug was in the picture? Blue Red **Yellow**
2. When was the deadline? Yesterday **Today** Tomorrow
3. What time was on the clock on the wall? 10:40 **11:05** 1:55
4. How many sticky notes were on the whiteboard? Four **Six** Eight
5. Which of the following was NOT in the picture? **Stapler** Trash Can Printer
6. What was the name on the plaque on the desk? Bill **Brian** Carl
7. What color was the victim's shirt? Black **Blue** Red
8. How many plants were in the picture? None One **Two**
9. What was the color of the marker in the desk drawer? Red Blue **Green**
10. Where was the book in the picture? **On a box** In the trash can Under the body

Facial Composites

Investigators work with sketch artists and eyewitnesses to create **facial composites**, or sketches of a person's face. Today many police departments are using facial reconstruction software to help them with this task.

The composite may be used **internally** to assist officers in identifying the suspect or used **externally** through local media (radio, TV, and newspaper) to solicit leads from citizens.



FACES – A software program that offers many options to help you recreate a person's facial features.

You will have a chance to try to create a facial composite. You will need to pay close attention to the following features:

The shape of the face

The shape of the jaw

The shape of the eyes

The shape of the nose

The width of the neck

The shape & protrusion of the ears

The presence of facial piercing

The presence of facial hair, its color, & location

The presence of facial markings, such as scars or tattoos

Forehead or other facial lines

The presence of eyeglasses or sunglasses

The length, color, & texture of the person's hair



Let's give it a try!