



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2013 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Anika M. Hayes	Project Number J0706
Project Title Words vs. Shapes: What Does a Child See First?	
Abstract Objectives/Goals My objective is to determine what a child sees first, a word or a shape and if age affects this. Methods/Materials Consent forms were gathered from 51 children. Six flash cards, each with one word and one shape, a research notebook and a chart to record my results. I tested one child at a time. I explained to each child that I would show one card and they would tell me what they saw first. I would then record the data and repeat for the remaining 5 cards. Results The children ages 5-8 yrs. old saw the shapes more frequently than the words. As the children's ages increased to 10 years old, the results showed that words were seen more frequently than shapes. At age 11, the children saw the shapes more frequently than words. The results showed my hypothesis was correct however, not for the reasons I originally thought. Conclusions/Discussion I found through my research that our brains process the word and shape at the same time so there could be many reasons why the child said they saw the shape or word first. I came up with three main theories to explain my results. One theory is the placement of the word and shape on the card. The second theory is the child's reading level. The third theory is what activity the child had been previously engaged in before the test. If the child had been previously doing an activity that used the left brain, they may have first seen the word because the left brain deals with logic. If the child had been doing an activity using the right brain, they may first seen the shape because the right brain deals with creativity.	
Summary Statement My project is about what a child sees first, a word or a shape and how age affects this.	
Help Received My mother helped type the report and cut out my graphs. A student intern helped me understand and interpret my results.	