
Eyewitness Topics and Statements

Topic	Statement
1. Stress	Very high levels of stress impair the accuracy of eyewitness testimony.
2. Weapon focus	The presence of a weapon impairs an eyewitness's ability to accurately identify the perpetrator's face.
3. Showups	The use of a one-person showup instead of a full lineup increases the risk of misidentification.
4. Lineup fairness	The more members of a lineup resemble the suspect, the higher is the likelihood that identification of the suspect is accurate.
5. Lineup instructions	Police instructions can affect an eyewitness's willingness to make an identification.
6. Exposure time	The less time an eyewitness has to observe an event, the less well he or she will remember it.
7. Forgetting curve	The rate of memory loss for an event is greatest right after the event and then levels off over time.
8. Accuracy-confidence	An eyewitness's confidence is not a good predictor of his or her identification accuracy.
9. Postevent information	Eyewitness testimony about an event often reflects not only what they actually saw but information they obtained later on.
10. Color perception	Judgments of color made under monochromatic light (e.g., an orange streetlight) are highly unreliable.
11. Wording of questions	An eyewitness's testimony about an event can be affected by how the questions put to that witness are worded.
12. Unconscious transference	Eyewitnesses sometimes identify as a culprit someone they have seen in another situation or context.
13. Trained observers	Police officers and other trained observers are no more accurate as eyewitnesses than is the average person.
14. Hypnotic accuracy	Hypnosis increases the accuracy of an eyewitness's reported memory.
15. Hypnotic suggestibility	Hypnosis increases suggestibility to leading and misleading questions.
16. Attitudes and expectations	An eyewitness's perception and memory for an event may be affected by his or her attitudes and expectations.
17. Event violence	Eyewitnesses have more difficulty remembering violent than nonviolent events.
18. Cross-race bias	Eyewitnesses are more accurate when identifying members of their own race than members of other races.
19. Confidence malleability	An eyewitness's confidence can be influenced by factors that are unrelated to identification accuracy.
20. Alcoholic intoxication	Alcoholic intoxication impairs an eyewitness's later ability to recall persons and events.
21. Mugshot-induced bias	Exposure to mug shots of a suspect increases the likelihood that the witness will later choose that suspect in a lineup.
22. Long-term repression	Traumatic experiences can be repressed for many years and then recovered.
23. False childhood memories	Memories people recover from their own childhood are often false or distorted in some way.
24. Discriminability	It is possible to reliably differentiate between true and false memories.
25. Child witness accuracy	Young children are less accurate as witnesses than are adults.
26. Child suggestibility	Young children are more vulnerable than adults to interviewer suggestion, peer pressures, and other social influences.
27. Description-matched lineup	The more that members of a lineup resemble a witness's description of the culprit, the more accurate an identification of the suspect is likely to be.
28. Presentation format	Witnesses are more likely to misidentify someone by making a relative judgment when presented with a simultaneous (as opposed to sequential) lineup.
29. Elderly witnesses	Elderly eyewitnesses are less accurate than are younger adults.
30. Identification speed	The more quickly a witness makes an identification upon seeing the lineup, the more accurate he or she is likely to be.
