

Keyword Eye-Contact Activity (The Marshmallow Experiment)

Activity: Learn Content + Make Eye Contact

A study published in 1972, known as The Marshmallow Experiment, was designed to determine whether the ability to delay gratification might be a predictor of future life success. In the experiment, children ages 4 to 6 were placed in a room with a marshmallow. Then the researcher offered a deal to the child. The researcher told the child that he was going to leave the room and that if the child did not eat the marshmallow while he was away, they would be rewarded with a second marshmallow. So, the choice was simple: one treat now or two treats later. The researcher left the room for 15 minutes. A small number of the 600 children ate the marshmallow immediately and one-third delayed gratification long enough to receive the second marshmallow. Follow-up studies conducted years later found that the children who were able to delay gratification were significantly more competent and received higher SAT scores than their peers, meaning that this characteristic likely remains with a person for life.

Activity part 1: Write up to 4 keywords (plus additional symbols or pictures, if desired) for each sentence. Pick words that will help you recall the content.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Activity Part 2: Fold the paper or cover the paragraph so you can see only your keywords. Then, tell a partner the content, looking down at one line of keywords at a time (don't talk while looking at words) before looking up into your partner's eyes while talking. **Rule: Talk to people, not to paper.** Practicing alone? Use a mirror or a photo of a face as your partner.