



California Science Center
CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2001 PROJECT SUMMARY

Your Name (List all student names if multiple authors.) Nicole K. Fenton	Science Fair Use Only
Project Title (Limit: 120 characters. Those beyond 120 will be ignored. See pg. 9) Does Age Affect Degree of Compliance in an Unsupervised Environment?	J0299
Preferred Category (See page 5 for descriptions.) 2 - Behavioral Sciences	Division <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Junior (6-8) <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (9-12)
Abstract (Include Objective, Methods, Results, Conclusion. See samples on page 14.) Use no attachments. Only text inside these boxes will be used for category assignment or given to your judges.	
<p>Objective: The objective was to determine if students in grades fourth through eighth were instructed to follow directions given by an eighth grader in an unsupervised environment, would they comply?</p> <p>Materials and Methods: Subjects were taken by the experimenter into an unsupervised room. They were given oral and written directions to sit silently and remain so until further instructions. They were left in the room "alone" for five minutes. The experimenter secretly hid in a closet to observe whether or not the subjects complied. After five minutes, the subjects were given a written survey (decoy survey). A total of seventy-five students from grades four through eight were tested (15 in each grade level).</p> <p>Results: The percent of those who stayed silent and seated as directed (by grade level) were: 86% of the fourth graders remained silent and seated, 40% of the fifth graders, 26% of the sixth graders, 13% of the seventh graders, and only 6% of the eighth graders (one student).</p> <p>Conclusions: The experimenter was the same age as the eighth grade subjects and so was probably perceived as a peer and not as an authority figure by these subjects. The results supported the hypothesis that the youngest subjects would be most compliant and the oldest students would be least compliant. Each successive grade level was only about half as compliant as the grade level before it!</p>	
Summary Statement (In one sentence, state what your project is about.) The goal of this experiment was to discover, if students in grades fourth through eighth were instructed to follow directions given by an eighth grader in an unsupervised environment, would they comply?	
Help Received in Doing Project (e.g. Mother helped type report; Neighbor helped wire board; Used lab equipment at university X under the supervision of Dr. Y; Participant in NSF Young Scholars Program) See Display Regulation #8 on page 4. Science teacher supervised project.	