



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2003 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Matthew W. Alexander	Project Number J0302
Project Title I Think I Can, I Think I Can't	
Objectives/Goals The object of this study is to determine the effect of positive self-talk versus negative self-talk on the percentage of free throws made by subjects. The hypothesis is that positive self-talk and negative self-talk used prior to shooting free throws will result in a greater number of free throws made when positive self-talk is used.	
Abstract Methods/Materials Methods: 77 male and female subjects, ages 9 to adult were studied. Subjects were students from Saint Martin of Tours School, players from park league basketball teams at Barrington Recreation Center, and random basketball players found at pick-up games at Barrington Park, University High School, and Westwood Park. Each subject was informed that the object of the experiment was to make as many free throws as possible. Each subject was asked to shoot a free throw after repeating one of eight negative or positive statements as instructed. 616 free throws were observed and recorded. Materials: Clipboard, Tally chart, Pen, Basketball, Basketball court, Cooler with Gatorade, water, and candy bars.	
Results Results showed that free throw percentage was higher following negative self-talk statements (41%), as compared to positive self-talk statements (37%).	
Conclusions/Discussion This experiment did not support the hypothesis. The prediction that there would be a greater number of free throws made when subjects used positive self-talk statements as compared to when they used negative self-talk statements did not prove to be true. The hypothesis may not have been supported due to a flaw in the experiment. The instructions given to the subjects at the beginning of testing to "make as many free throws as possible" may have influenced the performance of subjects.	
Summary Statement The effect of positive and negative self-talk on free throw performance	
Help Received no	