

Paige Lessig  
*Through the Eyes of Creativity*

The purpose of the experiment was to test the impact of different subliminal messages on creativity. I hypothesized that if you expose subjects to different subliminal stimuli (word and image), then the image will impact them more than the word because visual images stimulate more regions of the brain.

I researched creativity tests, subliminal messages, and the brain. I created a writing test to test my hypothesis and two films with subliminal messages. One film had the word “eye” and the other had an image of an eye. Both films were presented as a blank white screen. However, buried in the white were messages being projected so quickly that the viewer could not consciously see them. After each film, the subjects wrote for one minute with a five-minute break between films. The subjects watched the films in random order. I then analyzed the writing for creativity.

The tests confirmed my hypothesis. The subject’s word choice showed a measurable difference. After being exposed to the image, subjects wrote twice as many adjectives (93-47), used more nouns (171-139), and were more likely to write about abstract and imaginative topics (13/20 vs. 7/20). Surprisingly, the subjects exposed to the word used more verbs (93-62). The experiment showed that different subliminal messages impact writing in different ways. The image caused subjects to be more descriptive and abstract. The word caused subjects to write with verbs and about daily activities and concerns. This knowledge can help teachers presenting educational material and writers with writer’s block.