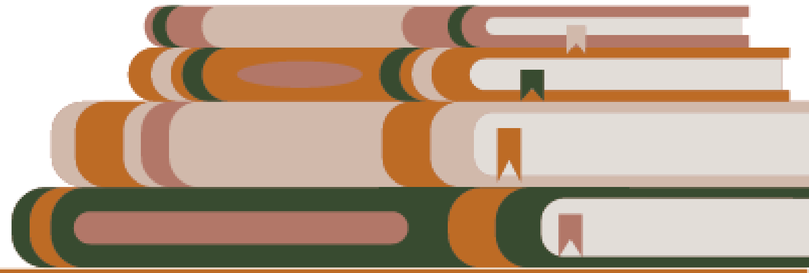
Providing choice enhances reading enjoyment and motivation

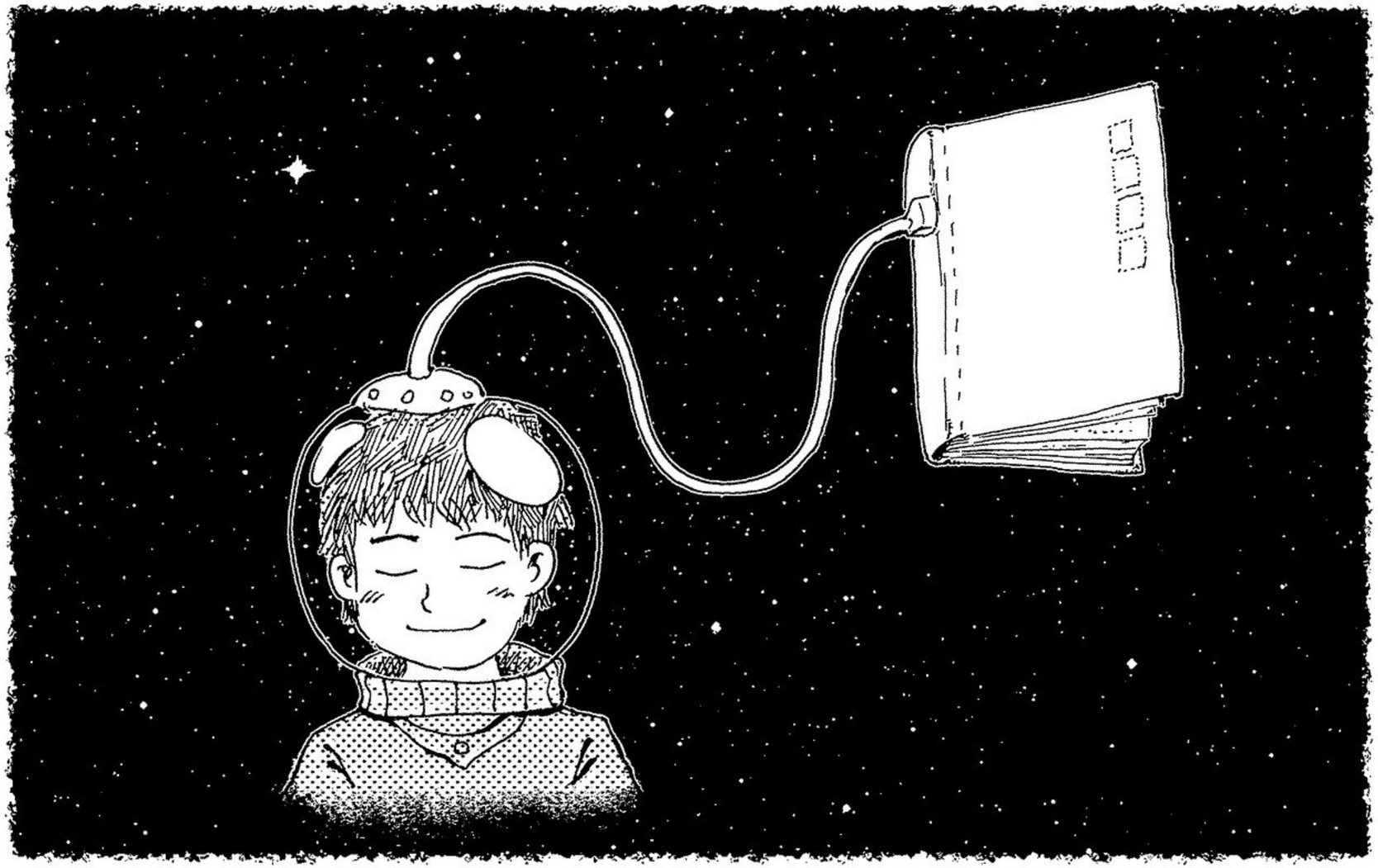
Amrita Bains, Carina Spaulding, Jessie Ricketts, Saloni Krishnan



@amritabrains

Amrita.bains.2020@live.rhul.ac.uk

So why should we motivate people to read?



The first step is to build reading ability

Reading ability => enjoyment

How can we motivate readers?

Choice

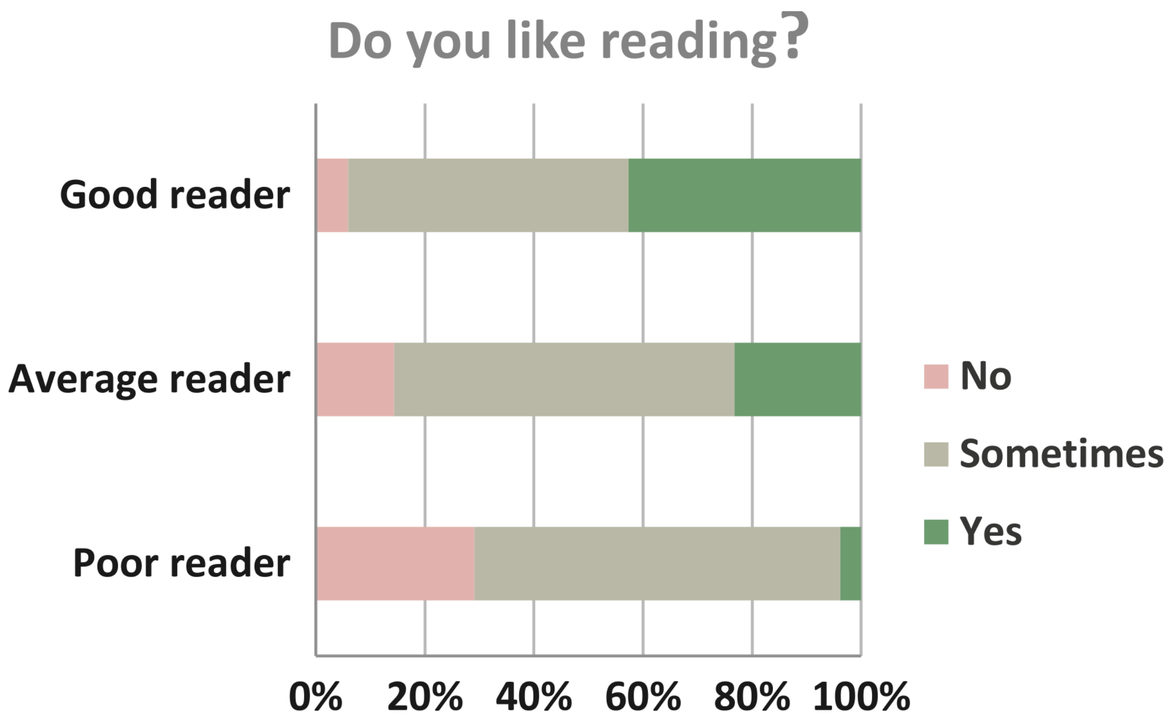
Ready,
Set,
Read!
Presented by The Reading Agency.
Ready, Set, Read! with Youth Sports Trust
The Summer Reading Challenge 2023 will unleash the power of play, sport and physical activity through reading.
YOUTH SPORT TRUST
ACTIVE READERS
READING

Does choice boost reading motivation?

How do we measure motivation for reading?

I enjoy reading.

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] Maybe



Van Bergen et al (2022). *Developmental Science.*

Is there a better way to measure reading motivation?

We can measure the **intrinsic value** of a stimulus by assessing whether people are willing to take on a **cost**.

Experiment 1: Are these measures (willingness to take on a cost) a better metric of motivation?

Experiment 2a: Does providing choice of book boost reading enjoyment and willingness to pay?

Experiment 2b: Does providing choice of genre boost reading enjoyment and willingness to pay?

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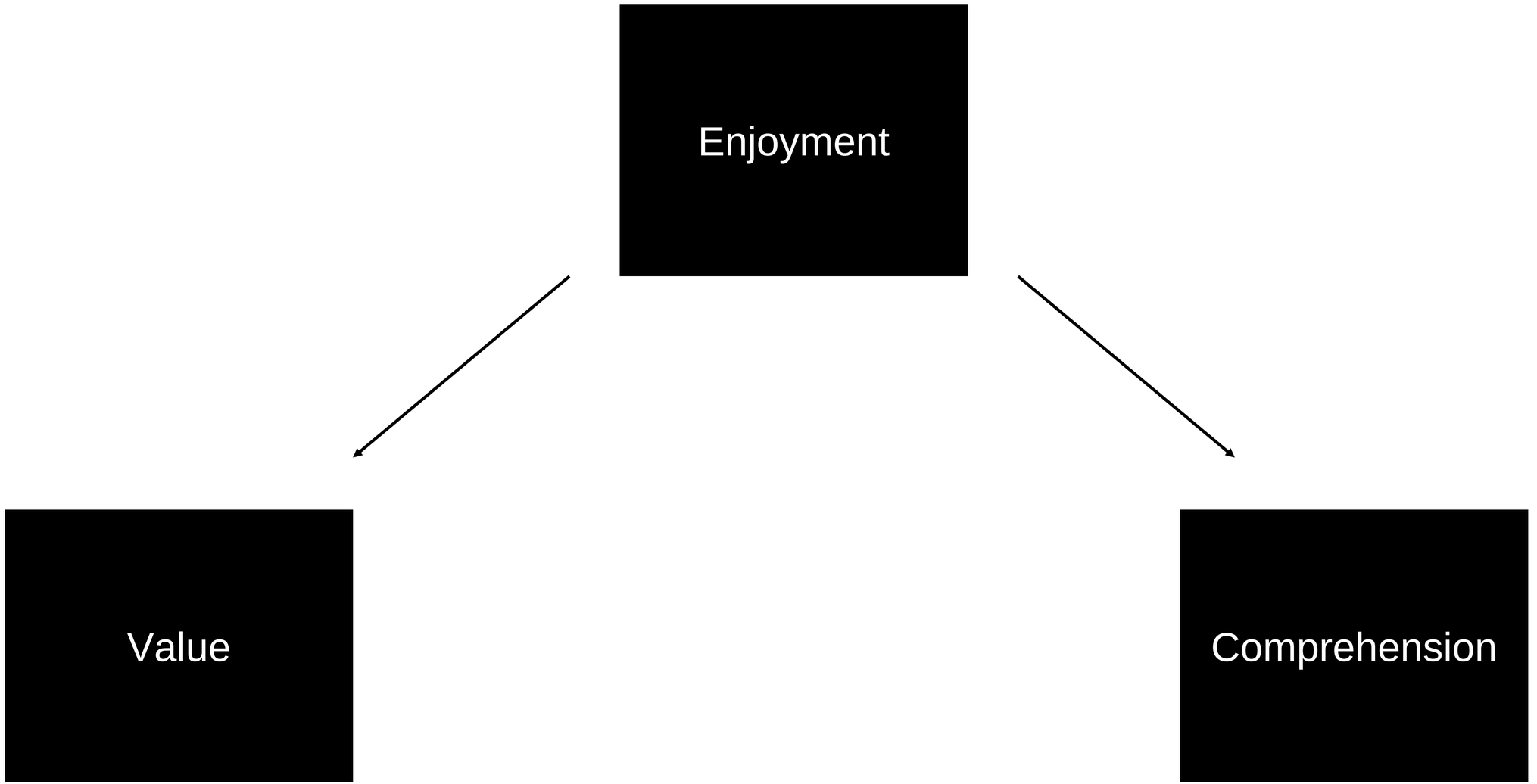
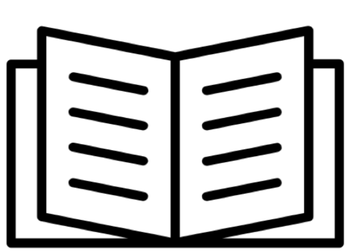
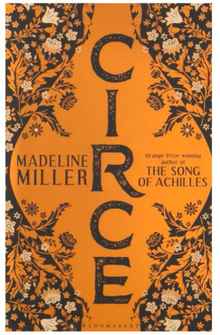

Enjoyment
Value
Comprehension



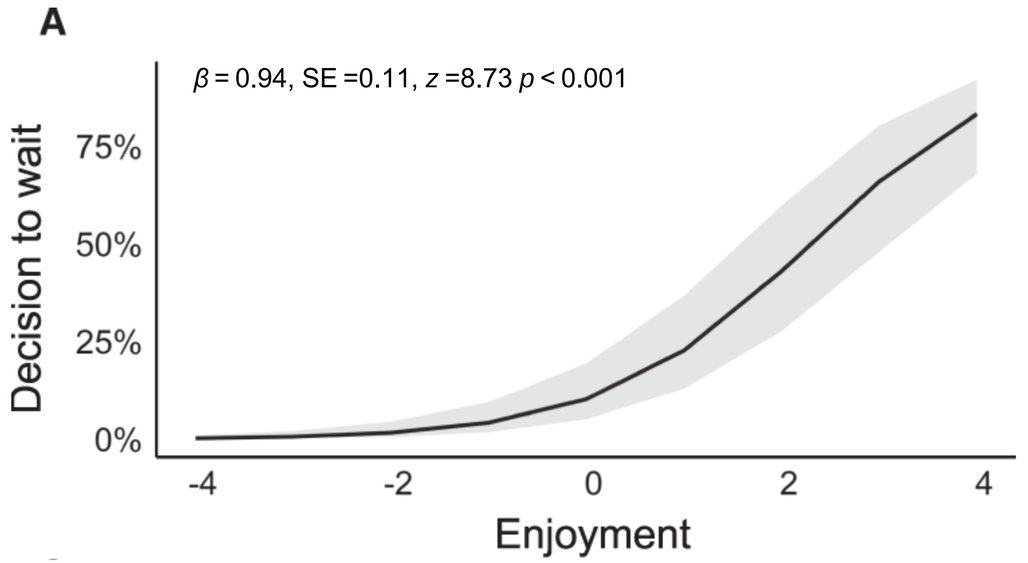
Wait
3-6 seconds



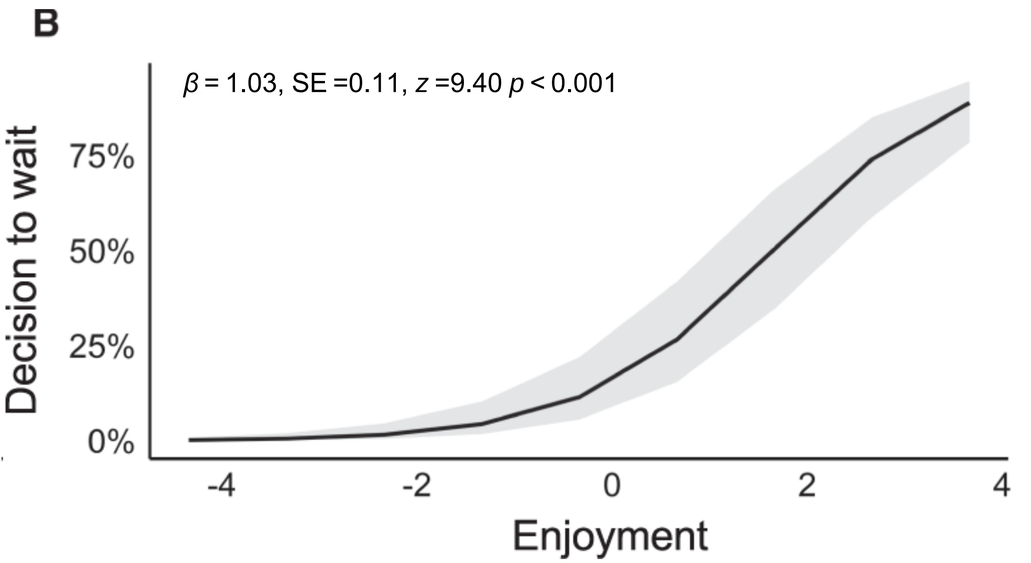
Skip

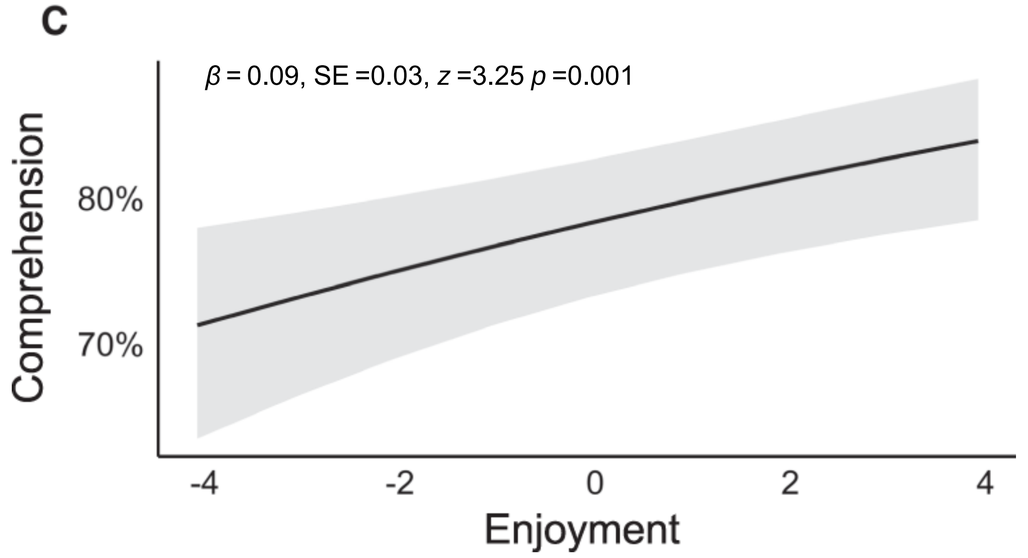
Bains et al. (2023). Using a willingness to wait design to assess how readers value text. *NPJ Science of Learning.* 8, 17. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1038/s41539-023-00160-3

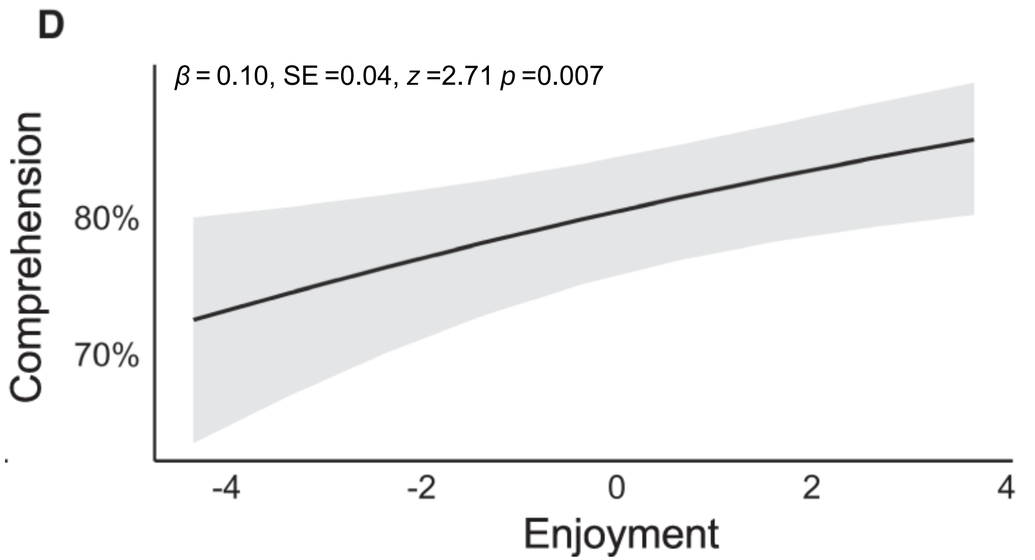
N = 40



N = 40







Bains et al. (2023). Using a willingness to wait design to assess how readers value text. *NPJ Science of Learning.* 8, 17. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1038/s41539-023-00160-3

Using this design we can capture situational changes in enjoyment during reading

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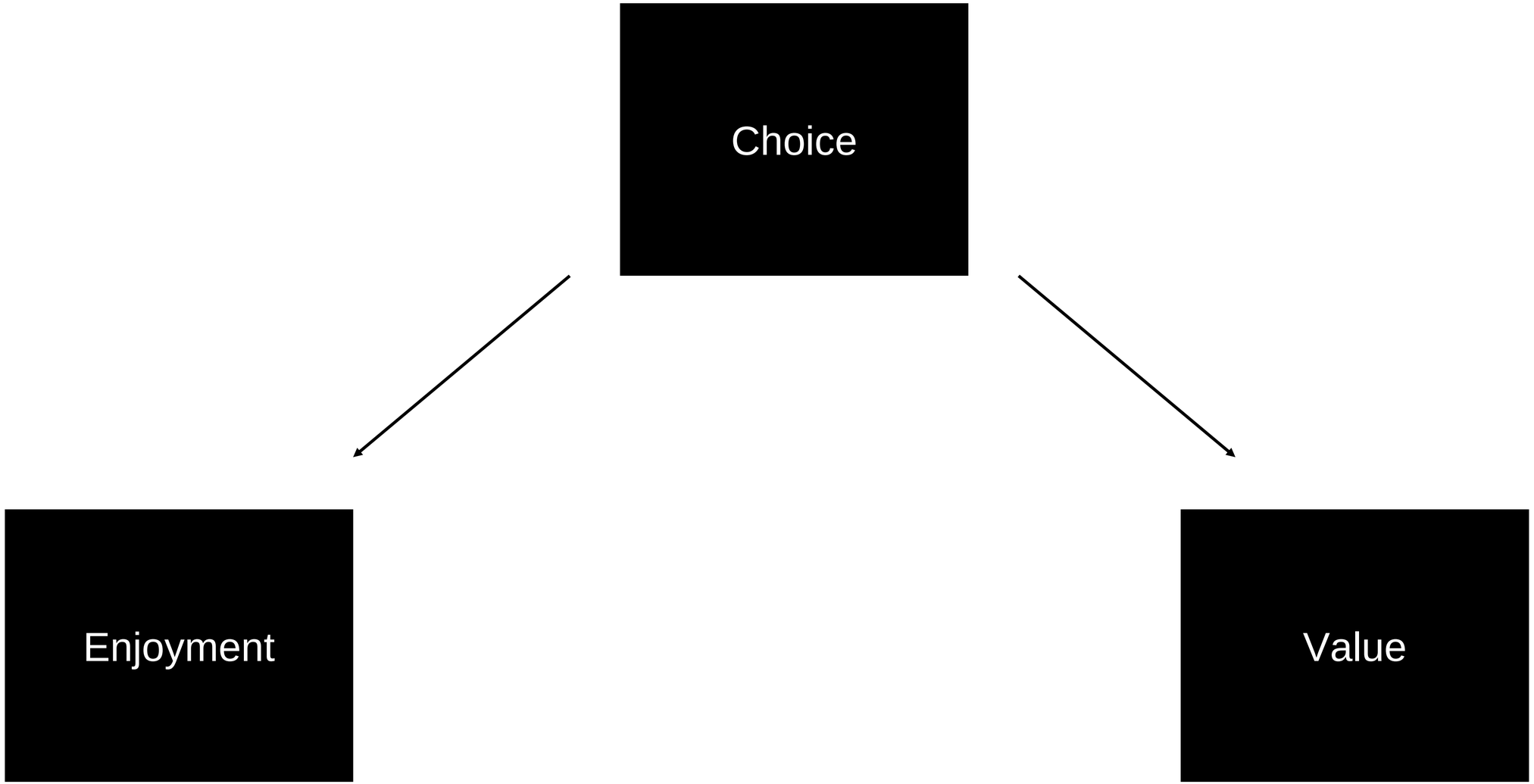

Choice
Enjoyment
Value

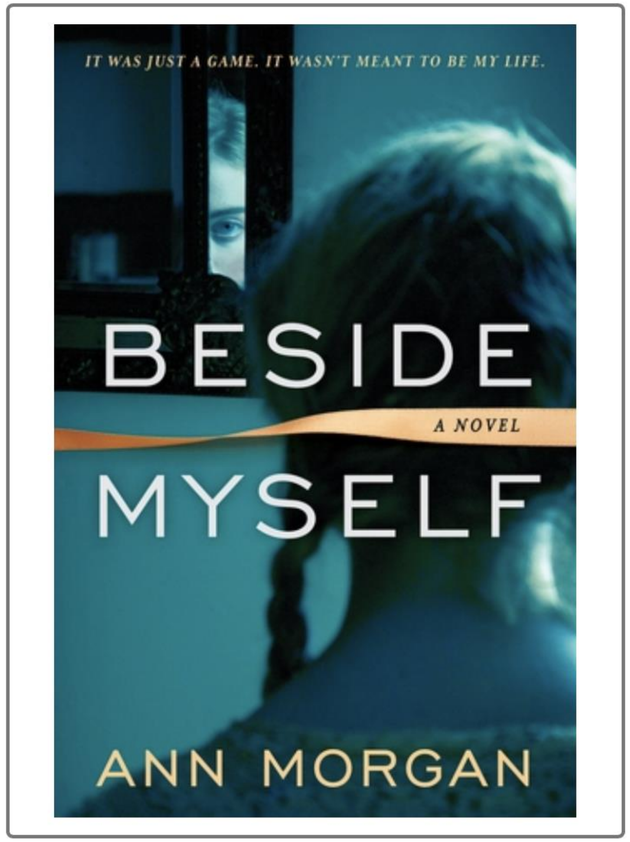
Participants

N= 49 (M_{age} = 20.83 years, 29 females).

English speakers with no known neurodevelopmental, neurological, or language disorders.

Let’s have a walk through of the task…

Peirene
HANNE ØRSTAVIK
The Blue Room


IT WAS JUST A GAME. IT WASN'T MEANT TO BE MY LIFE.
BESIDE
A NOVEL
MYSELF
ANN MORGAN

‘Ellie’ said the phone, ‘it's mother’. And then ‘Look, I haven't got time to play silly buggers. I know it's your number ....’ ‘All right. If that's the way you want it,’ continued the phone. ‘I’m ringing about Helen’. A sigh. ‘Well, there's been an accident and I'm afraid she's in a coma. There. The others thought I should tell you. Left to myself, I probably wouldn't have b-but there we are at least this way you won't hear about it first on the news.’ ... Another pause and then angrily, ‘Don't you have anything to say?’ .... Smudge closed her eyes and took a deep breath. ‘I'm afraid you've got the wrong number,’ she said.

How much did you enjoy this text?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Not very much

Very much

What would you be willing to pay for this book?

£0 £25

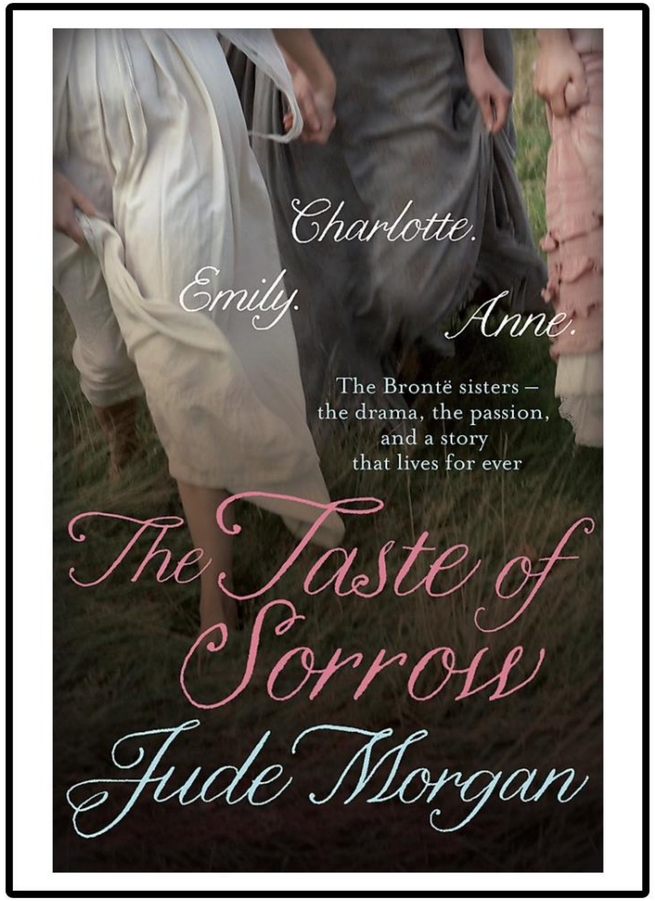
What happened to Helen?

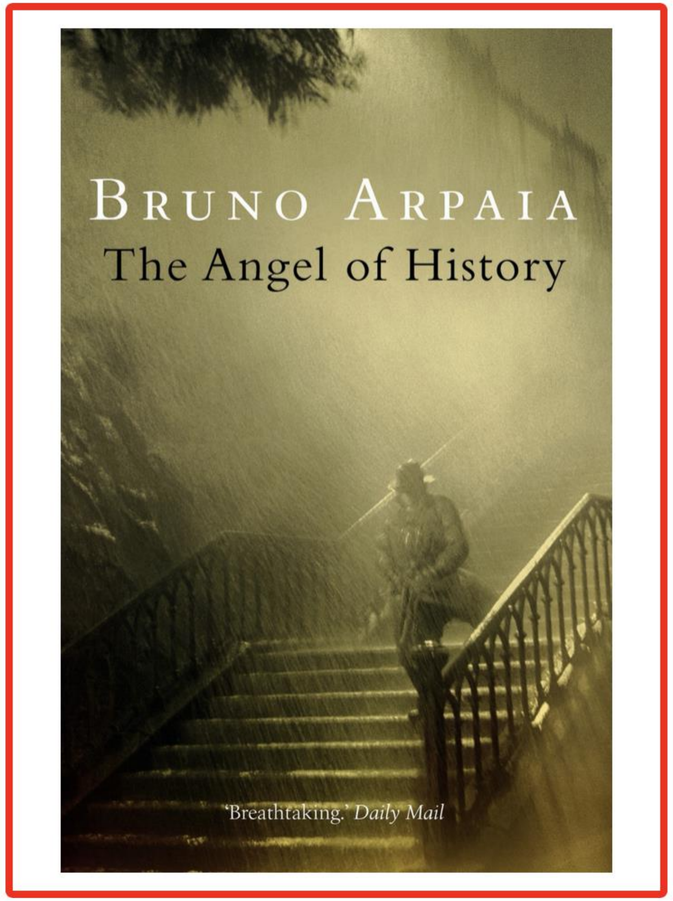
She is in a coma

She broke her arm

She misses Ellie

She’s on the news


Charlotte.
Emily.
Anne.
The Brontë sisters –
the drama, the passion,
and a story
that lives for ever
The Taste of Sorrow
Jude Morgan


BRUNO ARPAIA
The Angel of History
'Breathtaking.' Daily Mail

The moody February light came in through the windows, dripped down the walls, crawled up to the vaulted ceiling, came to stagnate sadly in the big reading room of the library. Benjamin was at his place, immersed in grey light, his hair more rumpled than usual - his only suit growing ever more threadbare. His movements were almost furtive as he read and reread the notes he'd taken in the little notebooks with black covers that he always carried with him.

How much did you enjoy this text?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Not very much

Very much

What would you be willing to pay for this book?

£0 £25

What was Benjamin reading?

An advertisement

A recipe

Notes he’d taken in a notebook

A letter from a friend

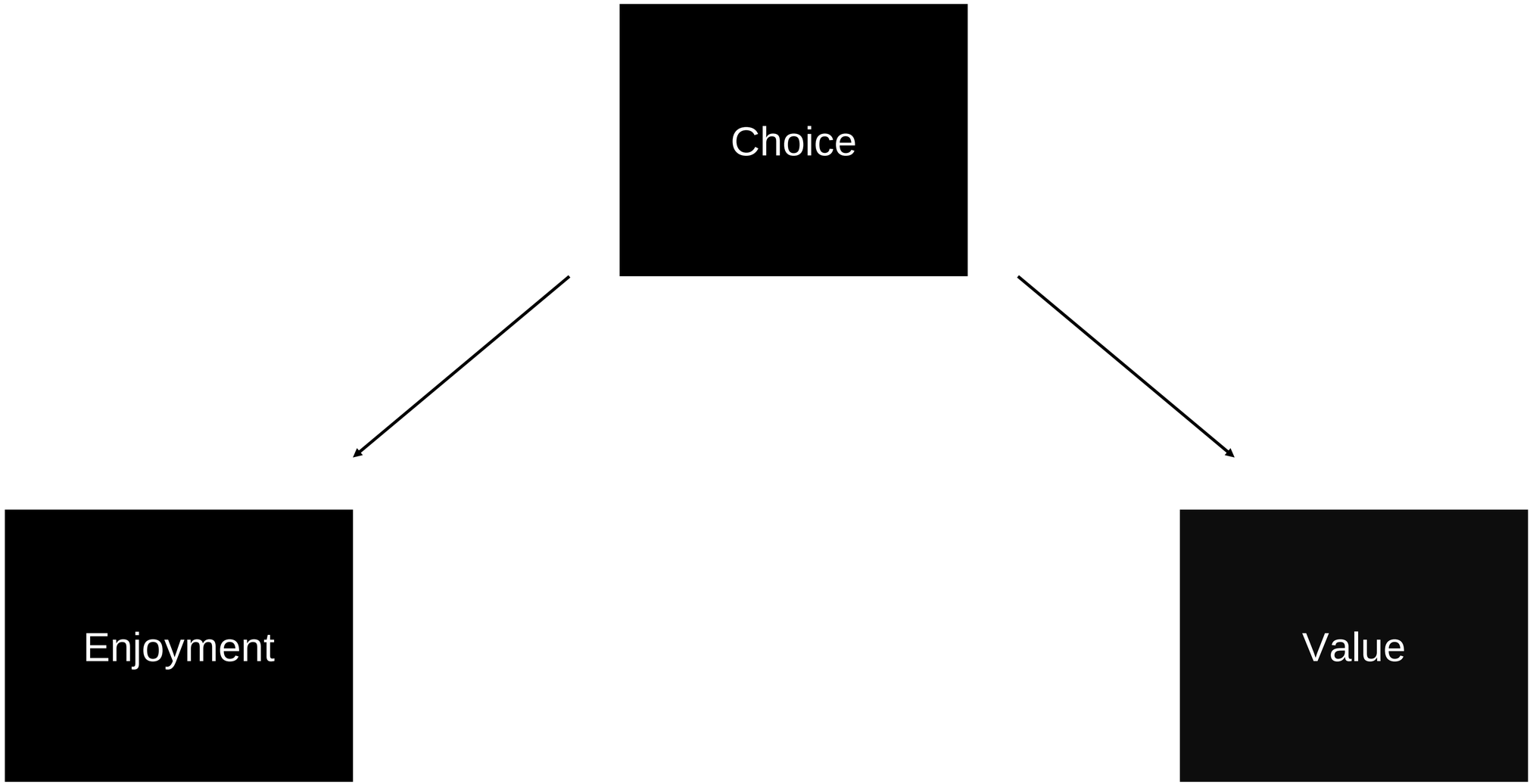
Stimuli

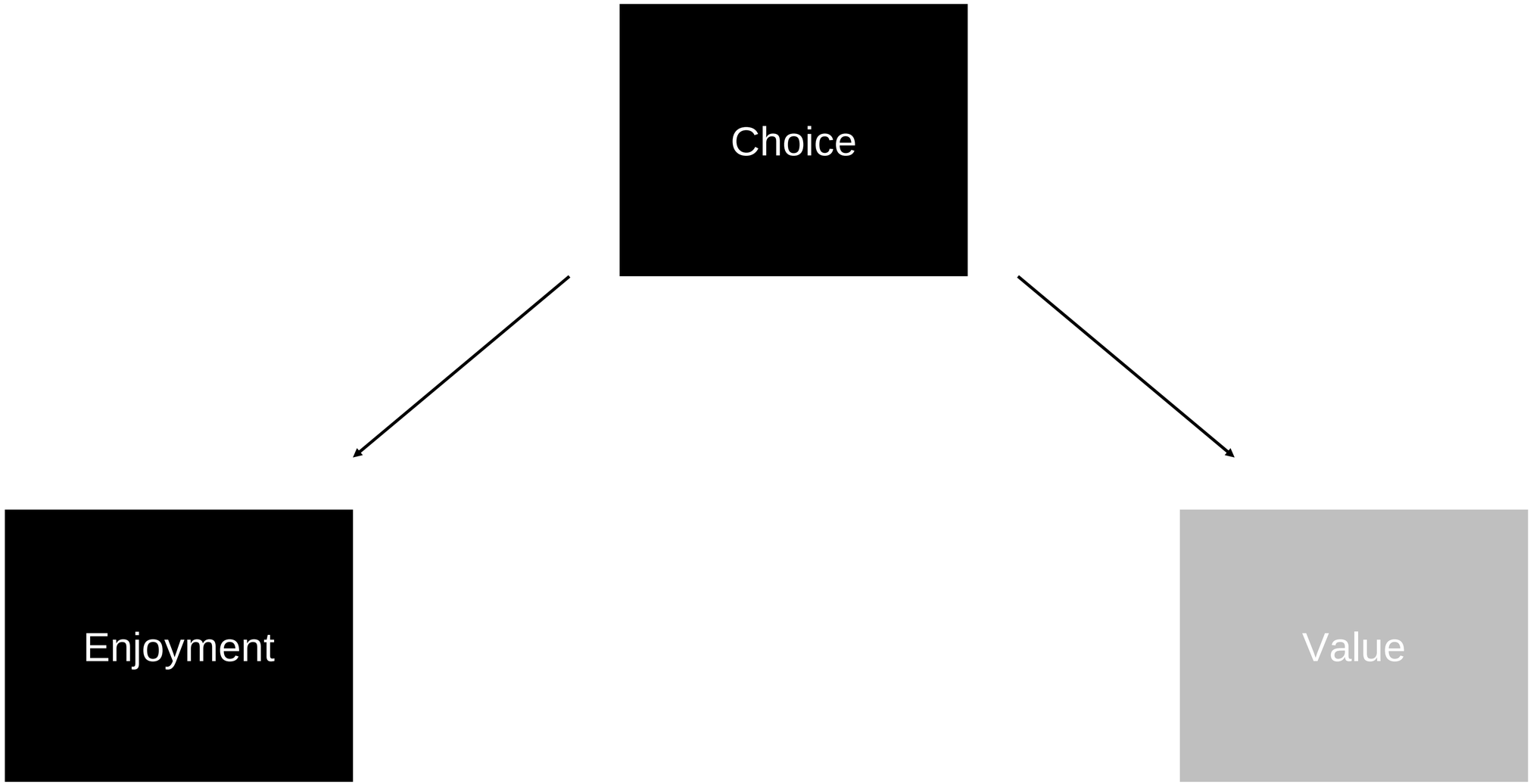
1. Genre

2. Being unfamiliar

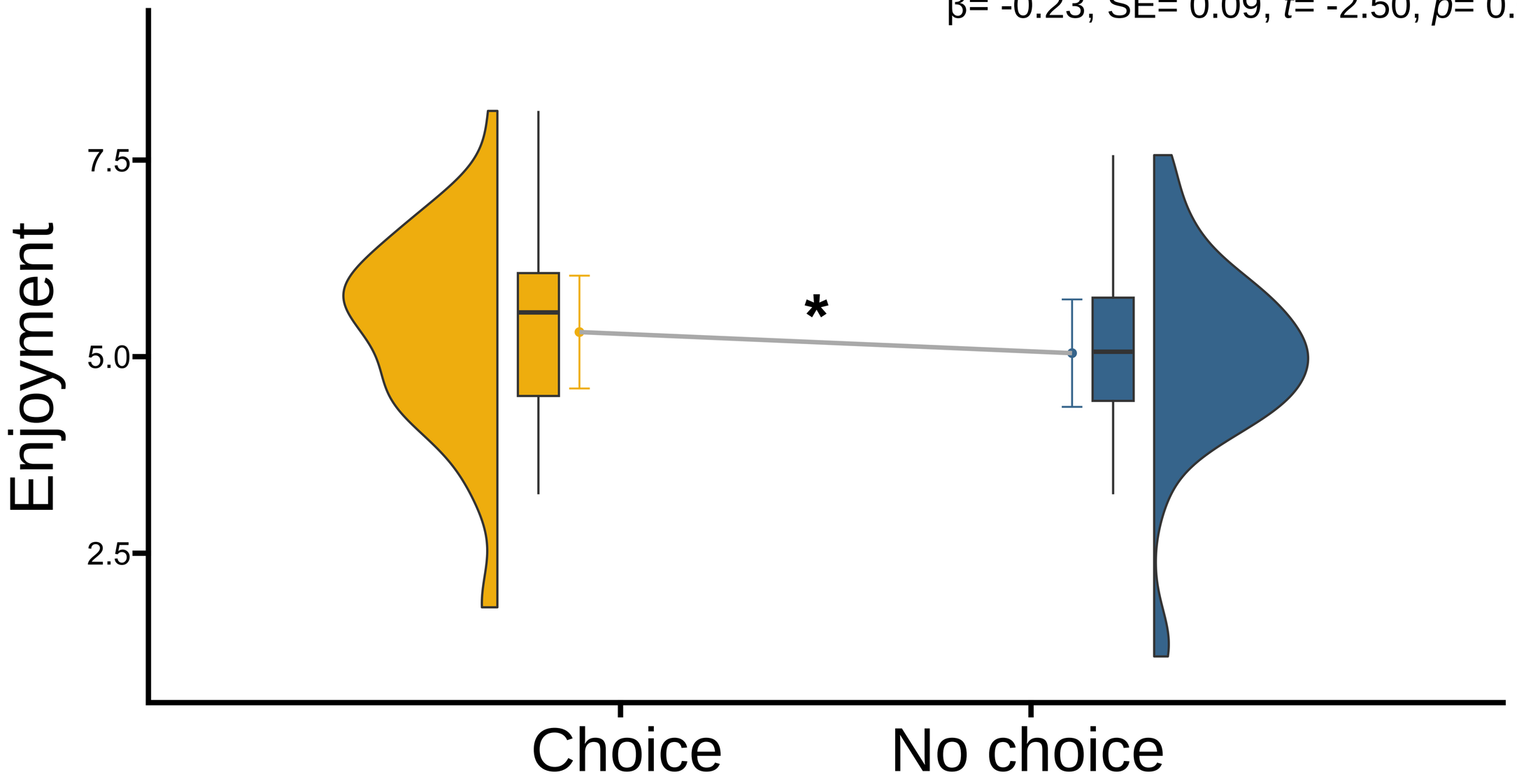
3. Word count (*m* = 85.53, range = 45-119)

4. Flesch Kincaid reading ease (*m* = 78.70, range = 60.9-100)

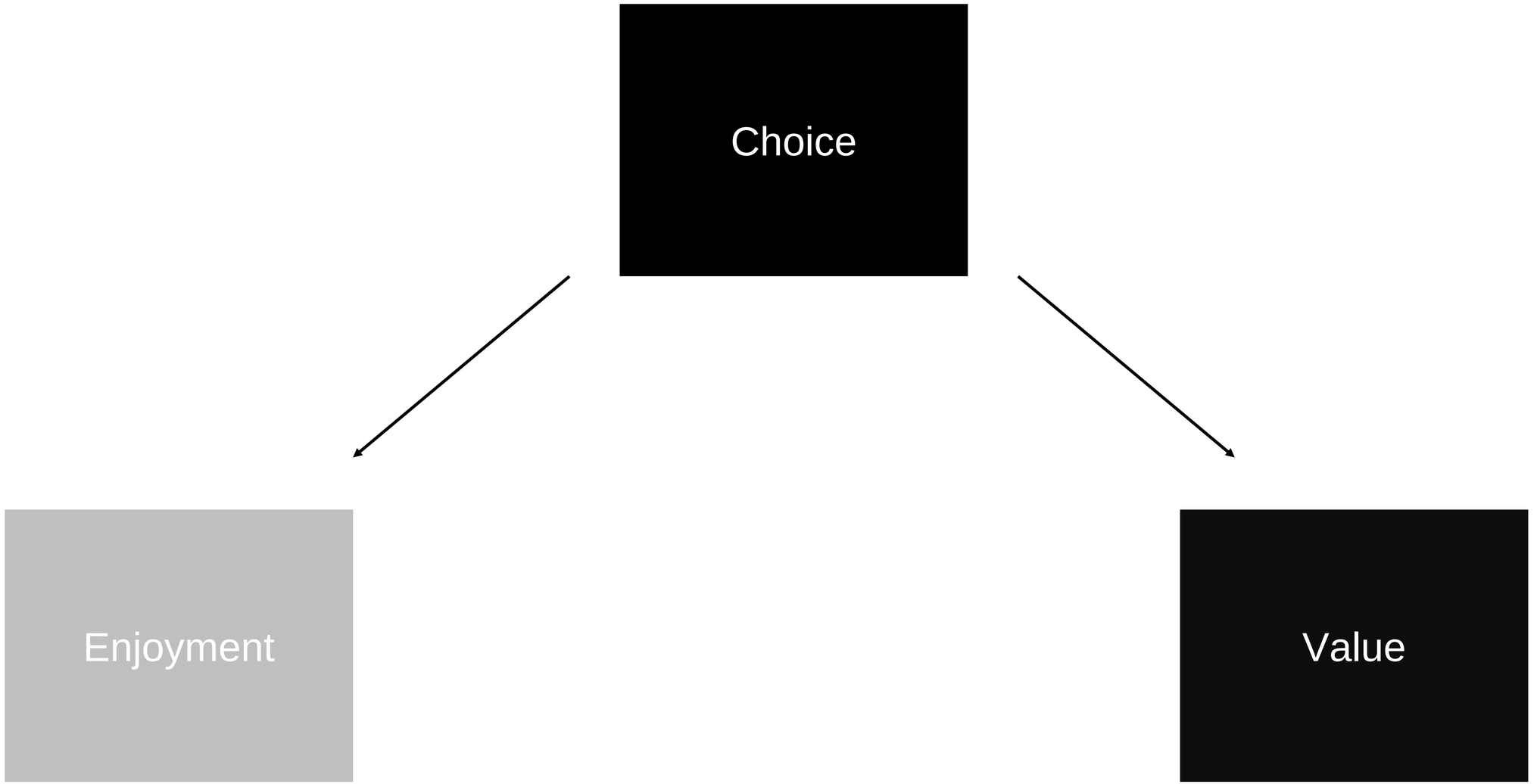

Choice
Enjoyment
Value


Choice
Enjoyment
Value

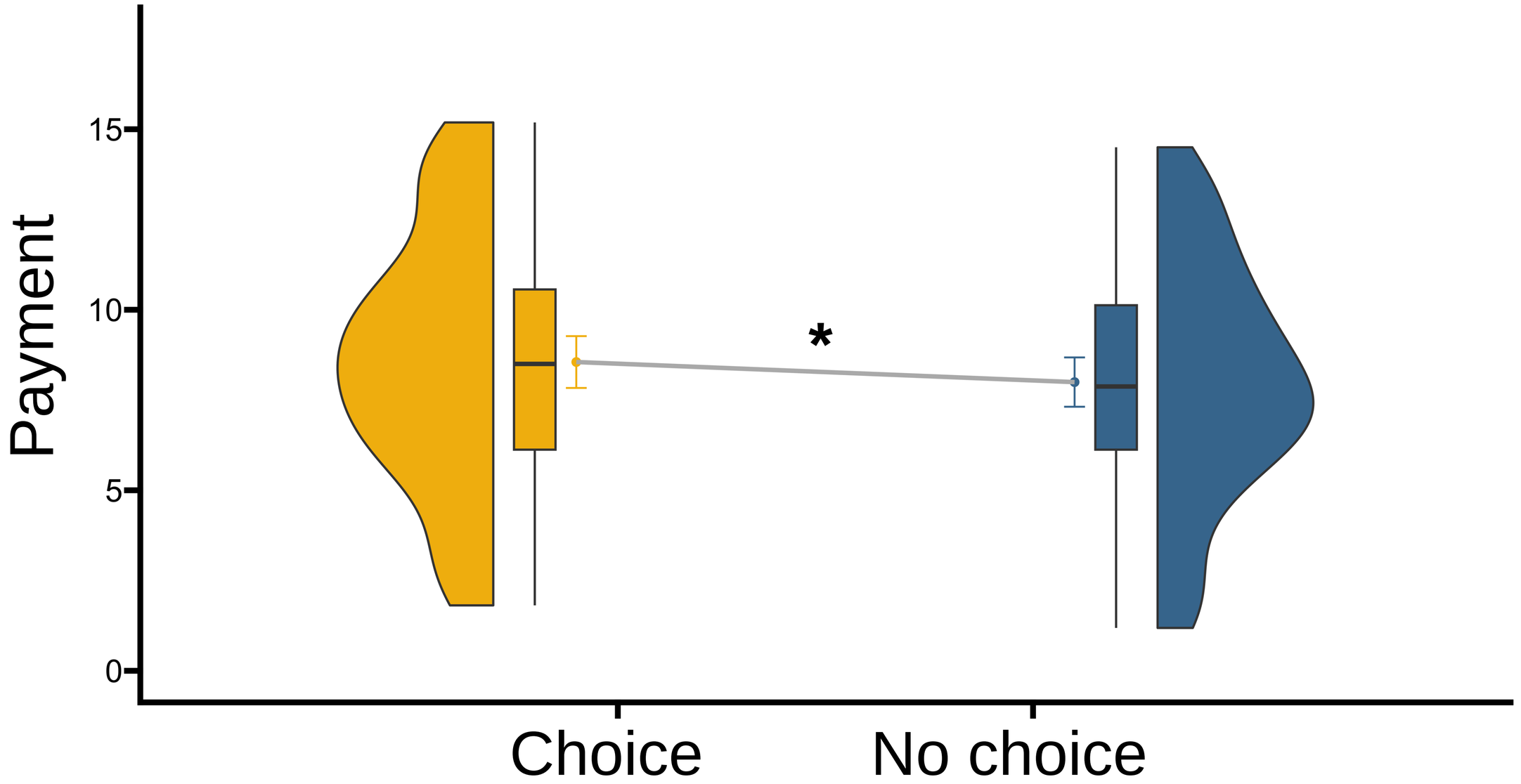
β= -0.23, SE= 0.09, *t*= -2.50, *p*= 0.016



Choice of book boosted reading enjoyment


Choice
Enjoyment
Value

β= -0.51, SE= 0.17, *t*= -3.70, *p*= 0.002



Choice of book boosted willingness to pay

Experiment 1a summary

- Adults enjoyed reading an extract more when they could choose it
- Adults were willing to pay more for a book when they could choose it

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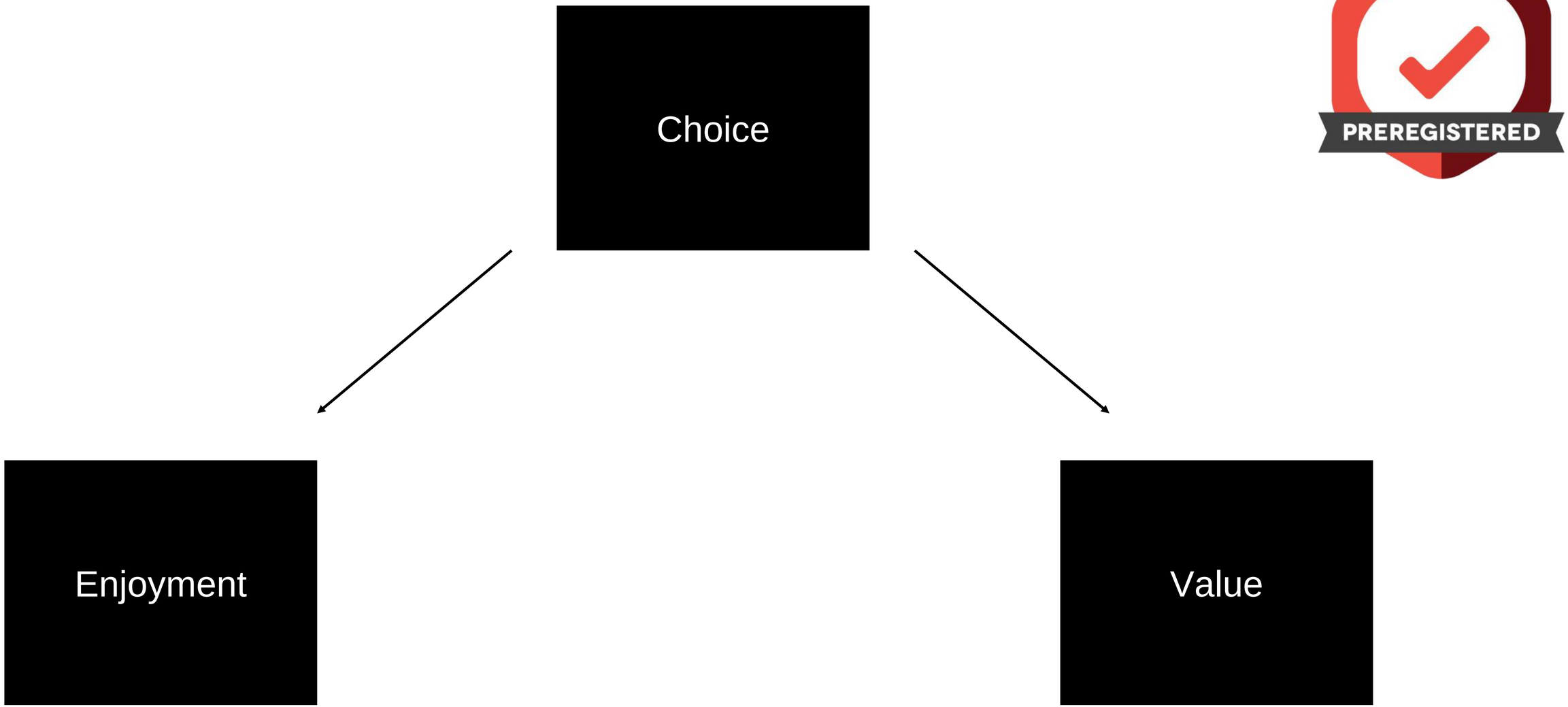
Choice
Enjoyment
Value

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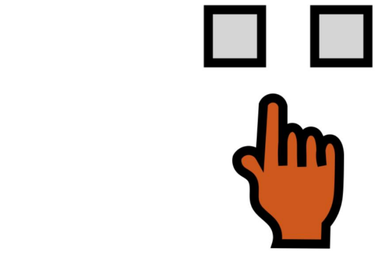
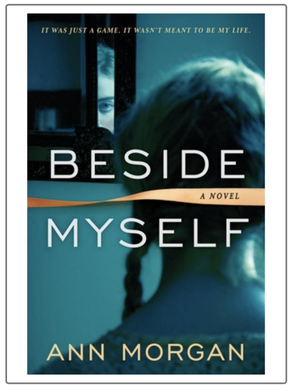
N= 80 (M_{age} = 21.59 years, 38 females).

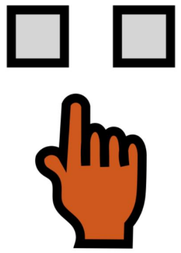
English speakers with no known neurodevelopmental, neurological, or language disorders.

Experiment 1a

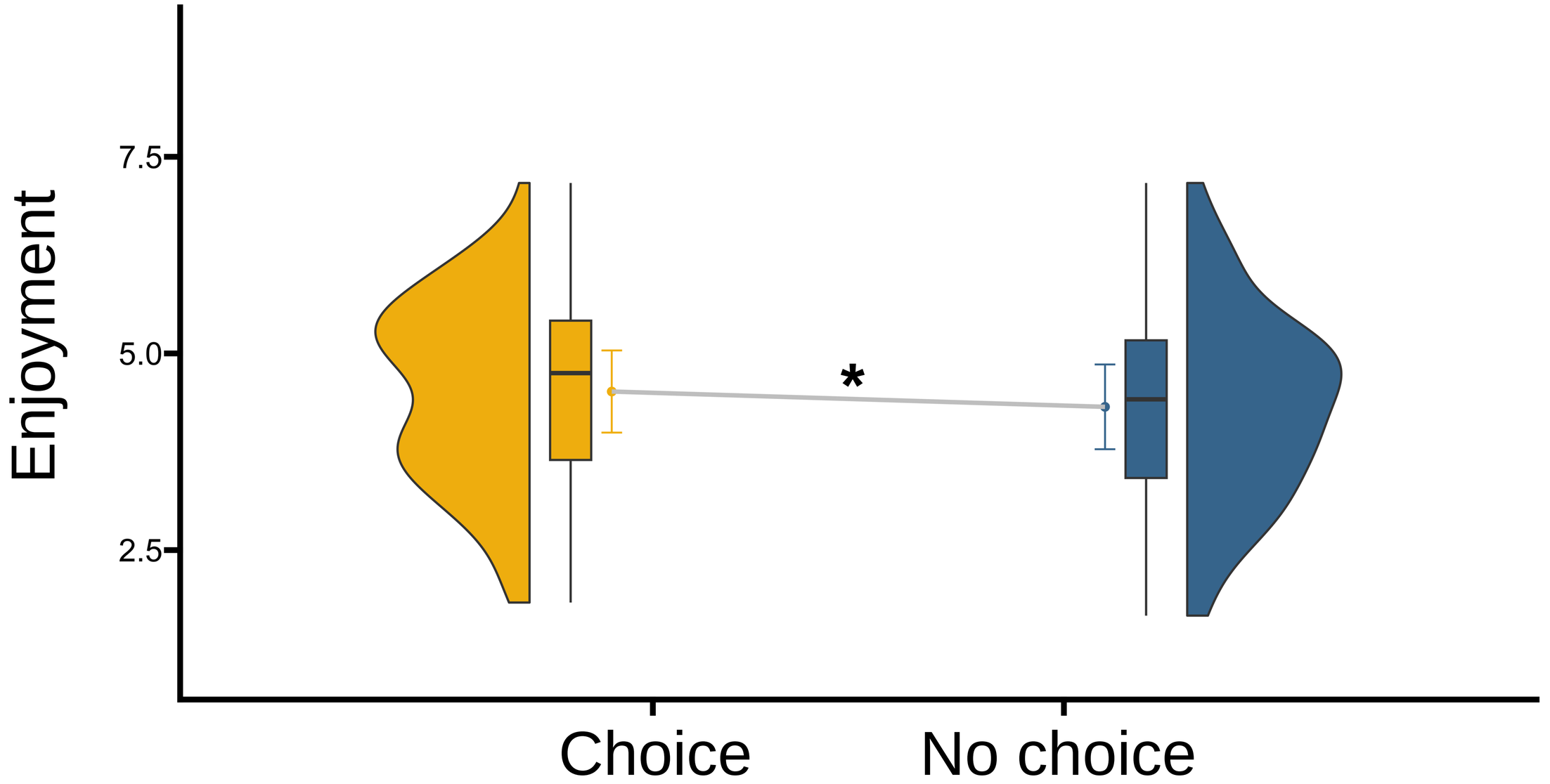




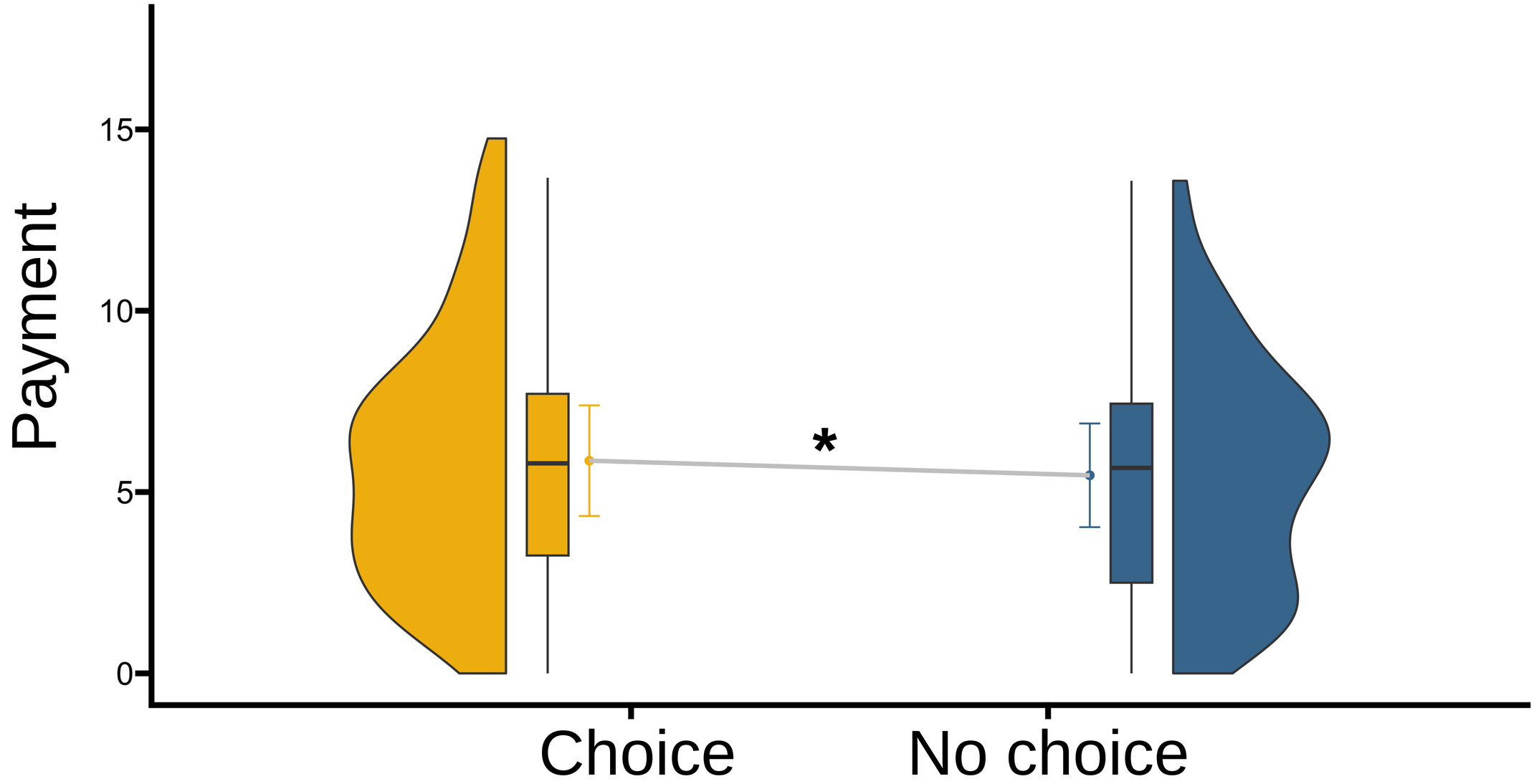
Experiment 1b



β= -0.19, SE= 0.08, *t*= 2.35, *p*= 0.02



β= -0.40, SE= 0.13, *t*= -3.06, *p*= 0.003



Conclusions

- Choice can boost reading enjoyment and willingness to pay for books
- Choice itself is desirable

Dr Saloni Krishnan

Prof Jessie Ricketts

Dr Carina Spaulding

N-CoDe Lab
Neuroscience of Communication Development

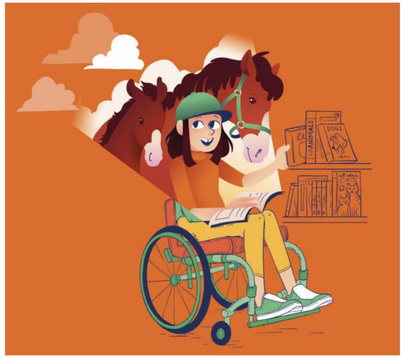
THE READING AGENCY

@amritabrains

Amrita.bains.2020@live.rhul.ac.uk

UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

Success



Choice

Access to books

Connection

Social

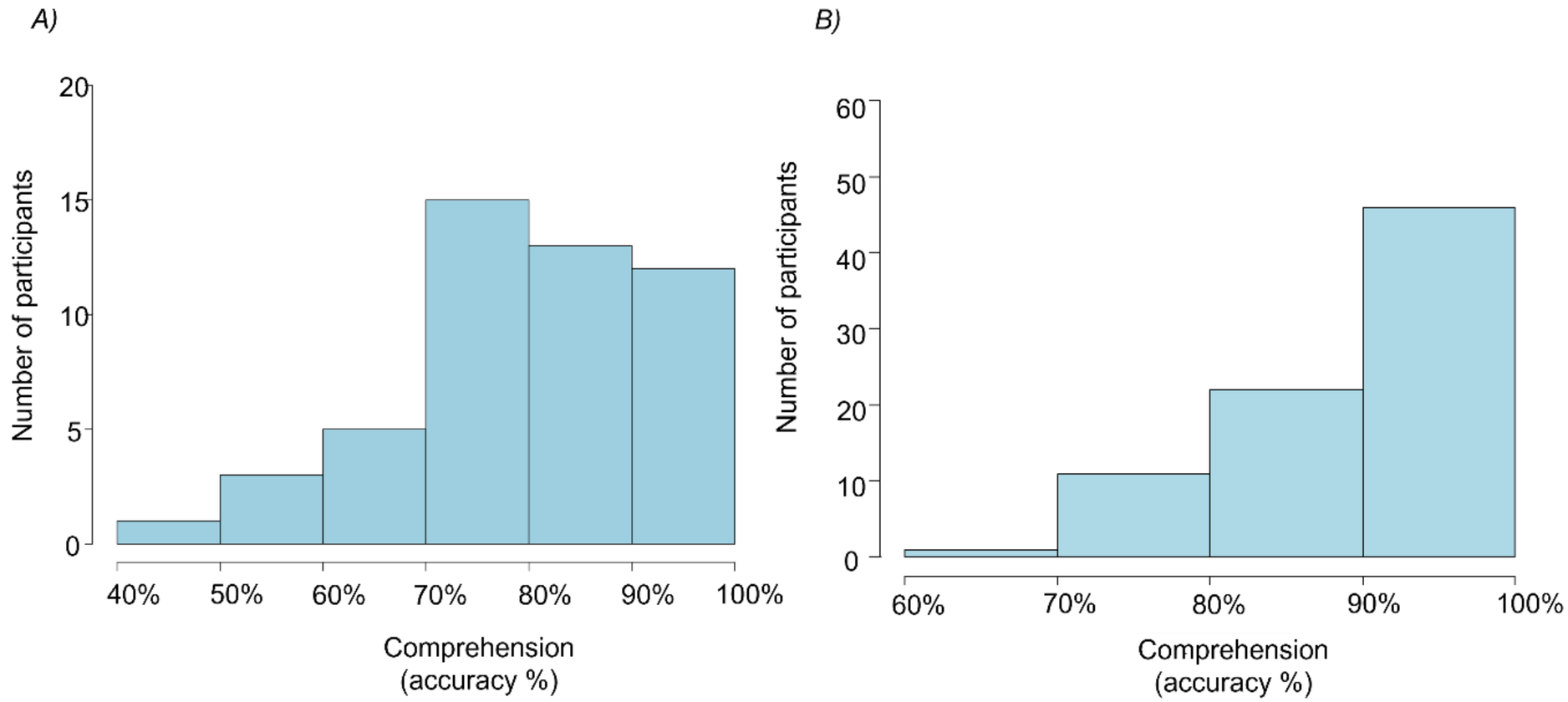
Time

McGeown, Oxley, & Love to Read partners (2023)

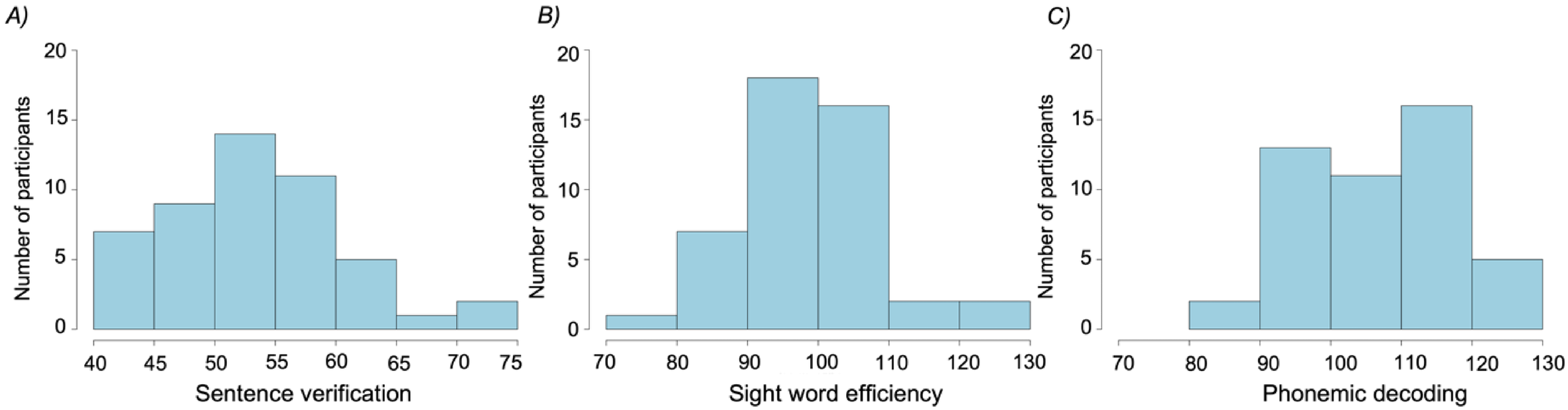
Choice and reading ability

- No relationship between choice and comprehension

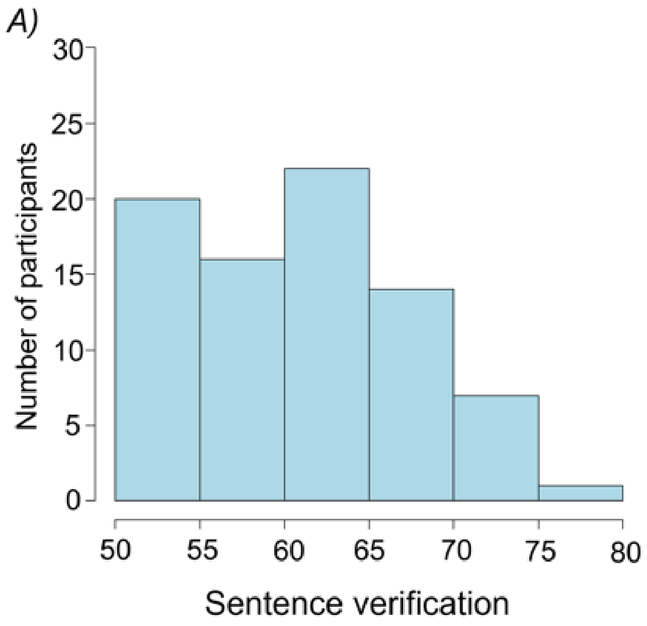
- Across both studies we did not find any interaction between the TOWRE and choice

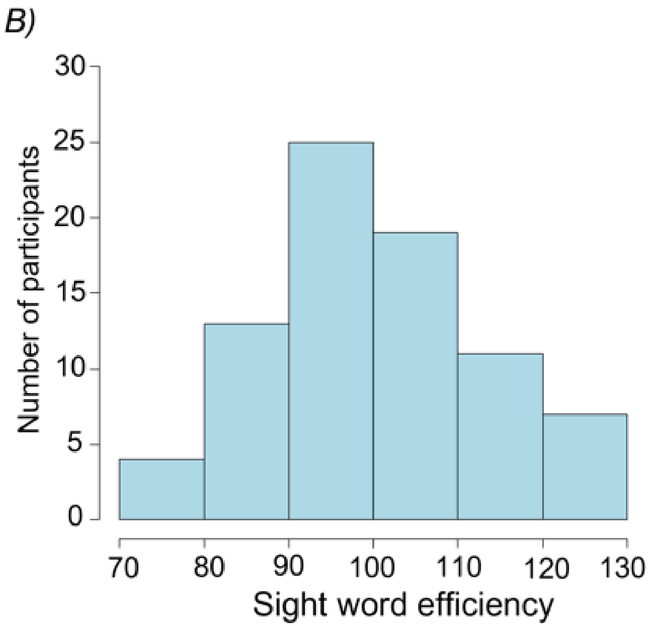

A)
Number of participants
0
5
10
15
20
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Comprehension
(accuracy %)
B)
Number of participants
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Comprehension
(accuracy %)

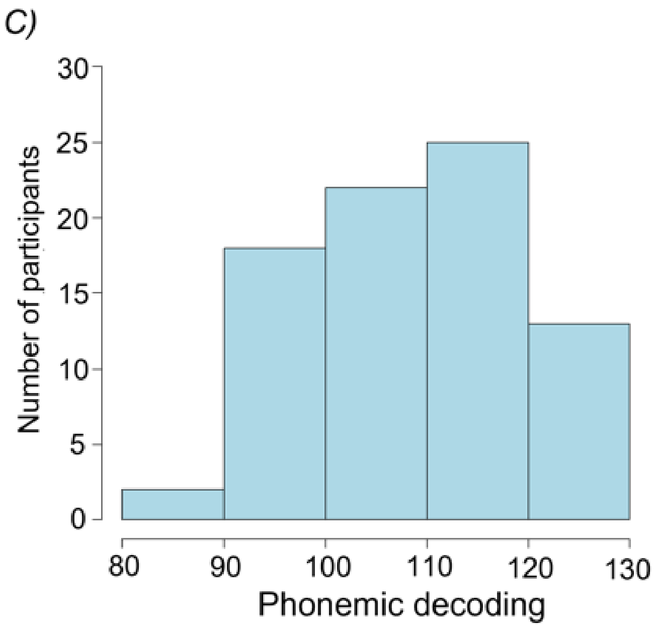
Experiment 1a



Experiment 1b







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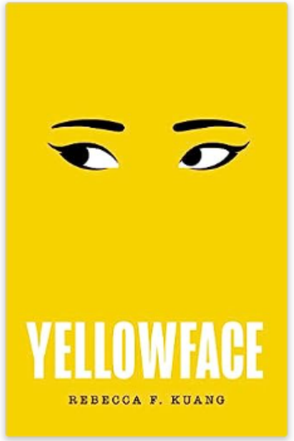

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by Rebecca F Kuang (Author)

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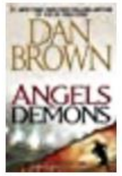
1

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (Millennium, #1)
by Stieg Larsson
4.16 avg rating — 3,051,645 ratings
score: 306,871, and 3,102 people voted

2

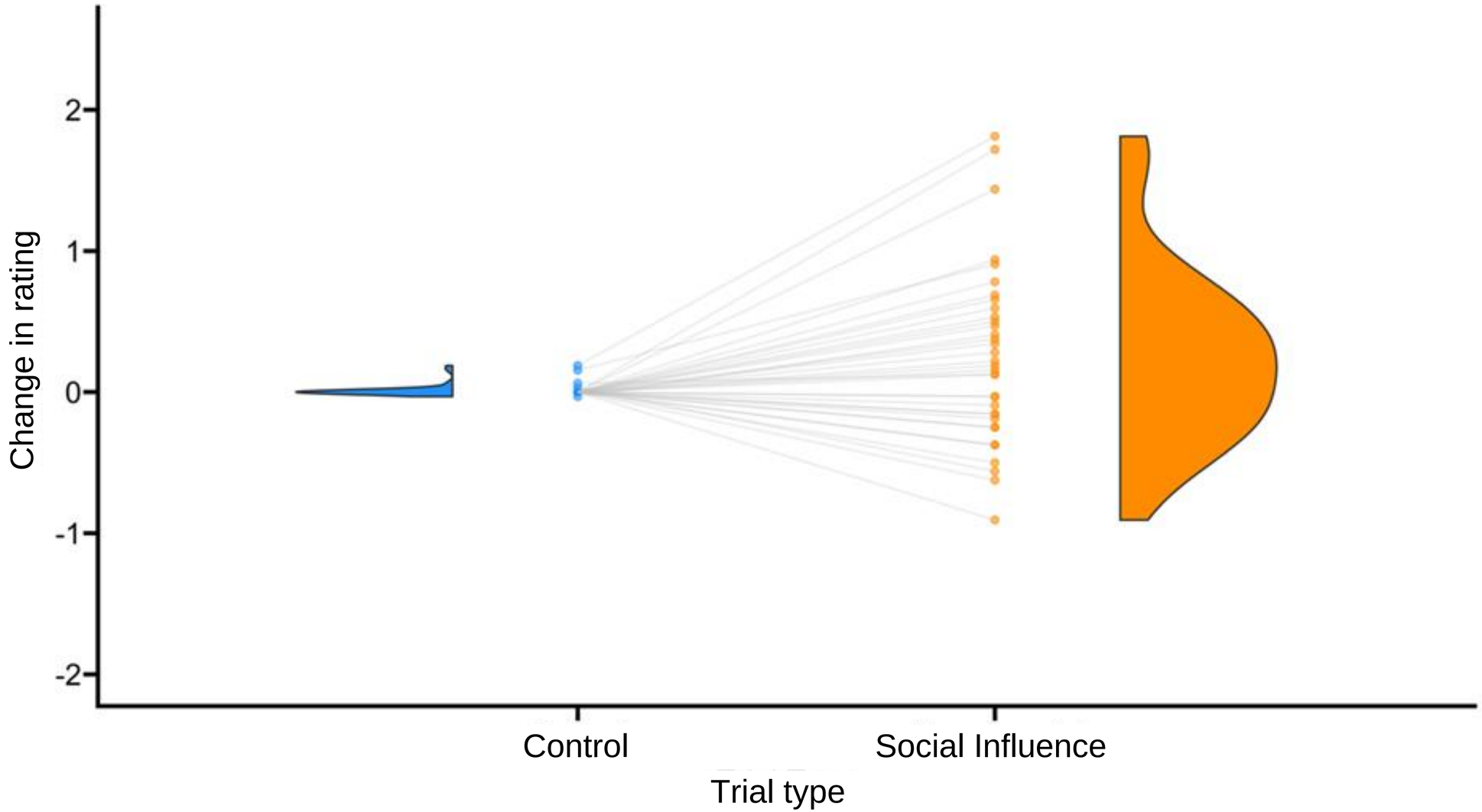
And Then There Were None
by Agatha Christie
4.28 avg rating — 1,234,935 ratings
score: 239,914, and 2,423 people voted

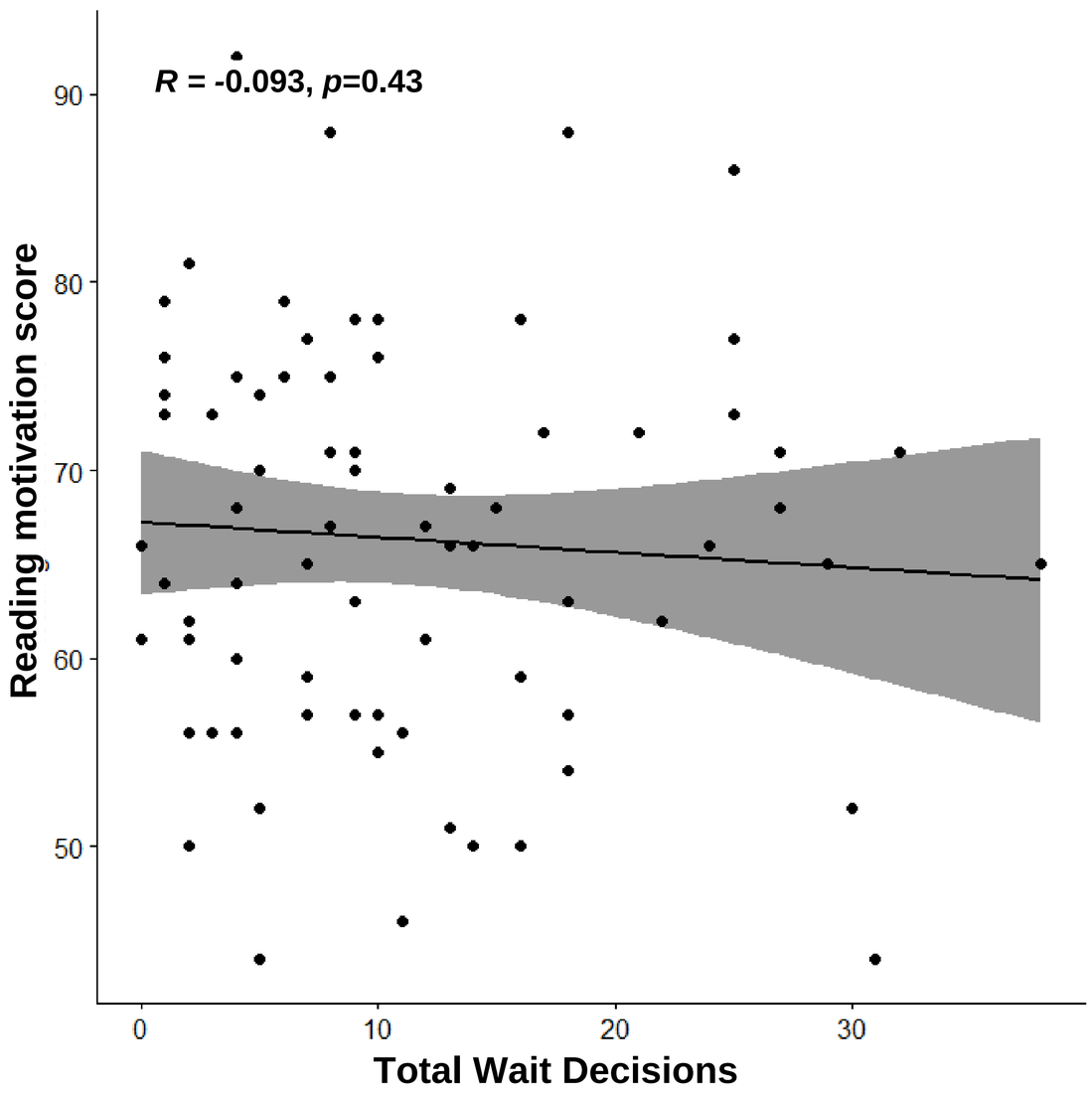
3 

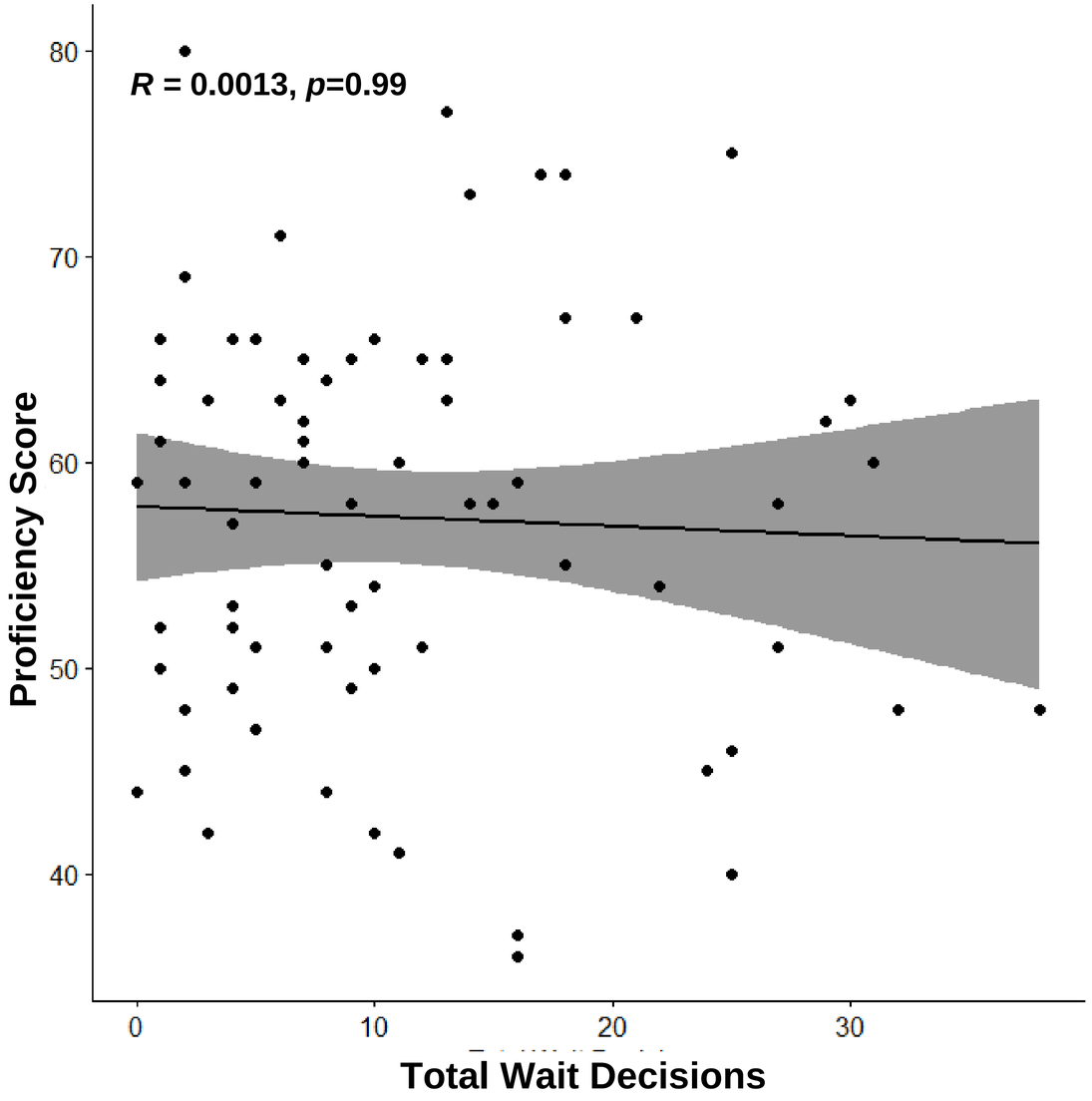
Angels & Demons (Robert Langdon, #1)
by Dan Brown (Goodreads Author)
3.93 avg rating — 3,091,465 ratings
score: 146,552, and 1,491 people voted

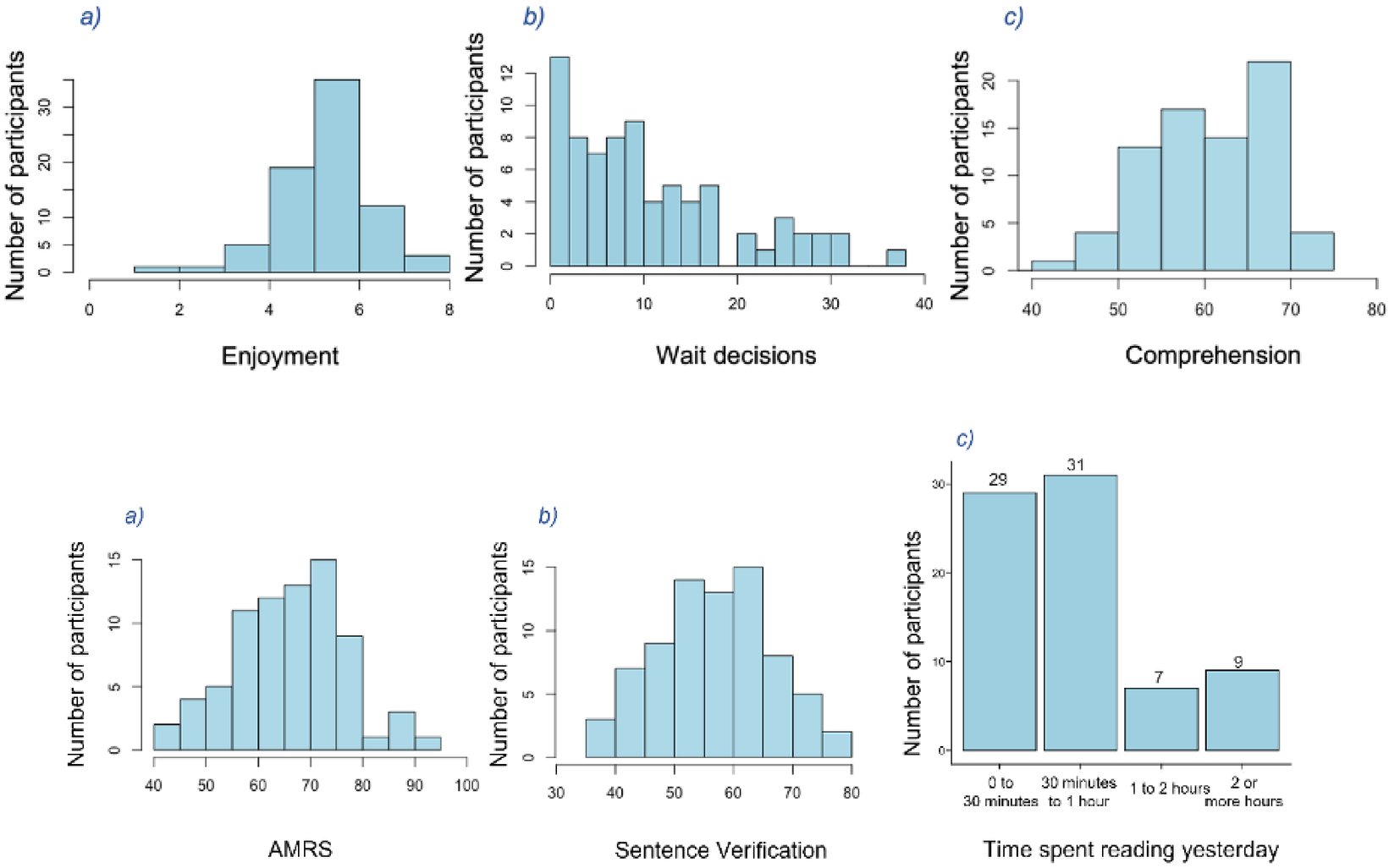
4

Rebecca
by Daphne du Maurier
4.24 avg rating — 589,736 ratings
score: 105,602, and 1,088 people voted


Change in rating
2
1
0
-1
-2
Control
Social Influence
Trial type


R = -0.093, p=0.43
Reading motivation score
90
80
70
60
50
0
10
20
30
Total Wait Decisions


R = 0.0013, p=0.99
Proficiency Score
80
70
60
50
40
0
10
20
30
Total Wait Decisions



Bains et al. (2023). Using a willingness to wait design to assess how readers value text. *NPJ Science of Learning.* 8, 17. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1038/s41539-023-00160-3