

Why Does Scrolling Leave You More Bored?

Name: _____

Class: _____



Does feeling bored mean that something is boring?

1. Think about these questions as you watch. You can write your notes afterward.

What does the person at the bus stop want to find out about the chair? What happens to that curiosity when they swipe?

As the images on the screen change, does the person become less bored? Explain using a detail from the video.

Ten Minutes, Two Ways

In Tam and Inzlicht's experiment, 159 college students try both of the following conditions.

One video

Watch a ten-minute video without skipping.

Total viewing time: 10 minutes

Switching between videos

Switch freely among seven five-minute videos.

Total viewing time: 10 minutes

2. Both conditions last ten minutes. Why would the results be harder to interpret if one lasted five minutes and the other twenty?

3. Which statement describes a result, and which offers a possible explanation for it? Explain the difference.

When participants could switch between videos, their average boredom ratings were higher and their average satisfaction ratings were lower.

Switching from one video to another may make it harder to get absorbed in what we are watching.

Three Switches, Two Goals

Ada

Ada wants to learn how to fold the corner of a paper box. The first video cuts out that step. In the second, a hand blocks the fold. The third shows only the finished box. In the fourth, she finds the step she needs. She watches it and tries it with her own paper.

Ben

Ben gets curious when he sees a paper box being made. Before the first fold is finished, he switches to a cake video. Before the decorating is done, he opens a basketball video. Without waiting to see whether the shot goes in, he switches to a cat video. He keeps hoping to find something more interesting.

4. They both switch videos three times. Do they do it for the same reason? Explain using a detail from each passage.

5. Write a question Ben could ask about the paper box video, with an answer that would emerge as the box is made. How could this question help him decide when to stop watching?

A question to explore

How it could guide his decision

Leisure

W. H. Davies • 1911

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

Complete poem. The original text is in the public domain.

6. What might the “stars” in the streams in broad daylight actually be? Explain what this comparison helps us notice.

7. The speaker in the poem has “no time,” but the person at the bus stop has ten minutes. How are the things they miss similar? How do the reasons differ?

Eyes on the Book

Jean Honoré Fragonard • Young Girl Reading • c. 1769



Young Girl Reading • Oil on canvas
National Gallery of Art, Washington • 1961.16.1 • Public domain image
Gift of Mrs. Mellon Bruce in memory of her father, Andrew W. Mellon

8. What do the girl's gaze, the way she holds the book, and her posture suggest about her experience of reading? Support your interpretation with details from the painting.

When Her Gaze Shifts

9. Imagine the girl raising her head and looking straight at us. How would that change your interpretation of her relationship with the book?

The viewer in the video is already thinking about what to watch next. A gallery visitor wants to glance at this painting and move on.

10. Which question could draw the visitor back to the details of the painting? Explain your choice and why the other question would require a different source.

Who wrote the book she is holding?

Where do the girl's gaze and the hand holding the book direct our attention?



A One-Minute Guide to Looking

11. Write an 80-100-word audio guide script for someone looking at Fragonard's painting.

Guide the listener's eyes from one detail to another. Ask a question that helps them notice a connection between the details, and leave the answer to them.

Title:

Sources

Video

Ask One More • Why Does Scrolling Leave You More Bored?

Poem

W. H. Davies

Leisure

First published in Songs of Joy and Others, 1911.

The complete original English poem. Public domain.

[Original Poem ↗](#)

[National Library of Wales Record ↗](#)

Painting

Jean Honoré Fragonard

Young Girl Reading

c. 1769

National Gallery of Art, Washington

Gift of Mrs. Mellon Bruce

Accession number: 1961.16.1

Public domain museum image. Full composition, original proportions and colors.

[Artwork and Image Record ↗](#)

[Open Access Policy ↗](#)

Research Featured in the Video

Katy Y. Y. Tam and Michael Inzlicht (2024)

Fast-Forward to Boredom: How Switching Behavior on Digital Media Makes People More Bored.

Journal of Experimental Psychology: General.

[Article • 10.1037/xge0001639 ↗](#)

Looking Closely

[National Gallery of Art • Explore Place and Belonging: Do Ho Suh ↗](#)

The opening image is from the episode's original animation. Ada and Ben are fictional examples created for these activities, not participants in the study.