



Curiosity Guide #404

Central Nervous System

Accompanies Curious Crew, Season 4, Episode 4 (#404)

Blinking Eyes

Investigation #4

Description

Try not to blink!

Materials

- A friend
- Mirror

Procedure

1. Have your friend sit in front of a mirror.
2. Without touching your friend, quickly move your hand toward your friend's face.
3. Did your friend blink?
4. This time, tell your friend not to blink and bring your hand in again quickly.
5. Could your friend keep her or his eyes open?
6. Why?

My Results

Explanation

Blinking is a reflex that we don't *have* to think about, but we *can* think about blinking if we choose to. When something moves toward our face quickly, we blink to protect our eyes from something getting in them. The first time you moved your hand toward your friend's face, your friend saw the hand moving. This means that your friend's eye received visual stimuli of the moving hand. The eye then sent an impulse from the sensory neuron to the Central Nervous System. The impulse connected to an interneuron and then to a motor neuron, which sent signals to the muscles around the eye and caused the friend to blink.

In the second attempt, interneurons give a person more control, so if the friend concentrates on keeping the eyes open, he or she can block the outgoing signal to the motor neuron. When a person tries to move the body, they are involving many interneurons to control each movement.

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