Online Appendix

A   Screener Questions

There are many important issues facing our country today. Research shows that issues people think are important can affect their views on other issues. We also want to know if you are paying attention. Please ignore the question and put "crime" in the top position and "unemployment" in the bottom position. Leave the rest of the issues in the same order.

Please rank the following issues facing the nation from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important). You can change your rankings by dragging and dropping different issues.

- Health care
- Unemployment
- The federal budget deficit
- The Afghanistan war
- Crime
- Education
- Relations with other countries

We would like to get a sense of your general preferences.

Most modern theories of decison making recognize that decisions do not take place in a vacuum. Individual preferences and knowledge, along with situational variables can greatly impact the decision process. To demonstrate that you've read this much, just go ahead and select both red and green among the alternatives below, no matter what your favorite color is. Yes, ignore the question below and select both of those options.

What is your favorite color?

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black
- ☐ Red
- ☐ Pink
- ☐ Green
- ☐ Blue

We are also interested in what sections people like to read in the newspaper. This might affect what they learn from articles and how they feel about the issues discussed in them. We also want to see if people are reading the questions carefully. To show that you've read this much, please mark both the classified and none of the above boxes below. That's right, just select these two options only.

Regardless of how frequently you read the newspaper, what would you say are your favorite newspaper sections to read? (please check all that apply)

☐ National   ☐ Classified   ☐ Science and Technology

☐ Local   ☐ Style   ☐ Opinion

☐ Real Estate   ☐ Sports   ☐ None of the above

☐ Comics   ☐ Business   ☐ All of the above

When a big news story breaks people often go online to get up-to-the-minute details on what is going on. We want to know which websites people trust to get this information. We also want to know if people are paying attention to the question. Please ignore the question and select FoxNews.com and NBC.com as your two answers.

When there is a big news story, which is the one news website you would visit first? (Please only choose one)

☐ New York Times website   ☐ FoxNews.com   ☐ NBC.com

☐ Huffington Post   ☐ Google News   ☐ USA Today website

☐ CNN.com   ☐ Yahoo! News   ☐ Other [   ]

In the grid below, you will see a series of statements. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly
People convicted of murder should be given the death penalty	○	○	○	○	○
Please click the "neither agree nor disagree" response	○	○	○	○	○
Gays and lesbians should have the right to legally marry	○	○	○	○	○
World War I came after World War II	○	○	○	○	○
In order to reduce the budget deficit, the federal government should raise taxes on people that make more than $250,000 per year	○	○	○	○	○
The Affordable Care Act passed by Congress in 2010 should be repealed	○	○	○	○	○
The government should require all electricity power plants to significantly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions even if it might increase electricity bills a few dollars a month.	○	○	○	○	○

In the grid below, you will see a series of statements. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly
By law, abortion should never be permitted	○	○	○	○	○
In order to reduce the budget deficit, the federal government should eliminate all welfare programs that help poor people	○	○	○	○	○
Two is greater than one	○	○	○	○	○
The federal government should raise the minimum wage to $10	○	○	○	○	○
Obama was the first president of the U.S.	○	○	○	○	○
The federal government should guarantee health insurance for all citizens	○	○	○	○	○
The federal government should pass new rules that protect the right of workers to join labor unions	○	○	○	○	○

B Full Text of framing experiment

Imagine that your country is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

Subjects are then randomly assigned to one of the two following conditions:

Condition 1, Lives Saved Frame: "If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved. If Program B is adopted, there is 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and 2/3 probability that no people will be saved."

Condition 2, Mortality Frame: "If Program A is adopted, 400 people will die. If Program B is adopted there is 1/3 probability that nobody will die, and 2/3 probability that 600 people will die."

C ANES economic liberalism question wording

Item 1: Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Suppose these people are on one end of the scale, at point 1. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale?

Item 2: Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Suppose these people are on one end of the scale, at point 1. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale?

Item 3 (reverse coded): Some people think the government should provide fewer services, even in areas such as health and education, in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are on one end of the scale, at point 1. Other people feel that it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale?

D   Graph of Item Information Functions (IIF)

In this appendix, we graphically show the item information functions (IIF) for each item. It shows that the high difficulty of stand-alone Screeners means they do a good job of discriminating between those with moderate and high levels of attention but are unable to distinguish among respondents at the bottom range of attentiveness. In contrast, the grid Screeners do not contribute as much information to the full attentiveness scale (or at the top end of the range of attentiveness) as the stand-alone Screeners. But they do discriminate very well between people at the low end of the scale (since these are the people that tend to fail the grid items).
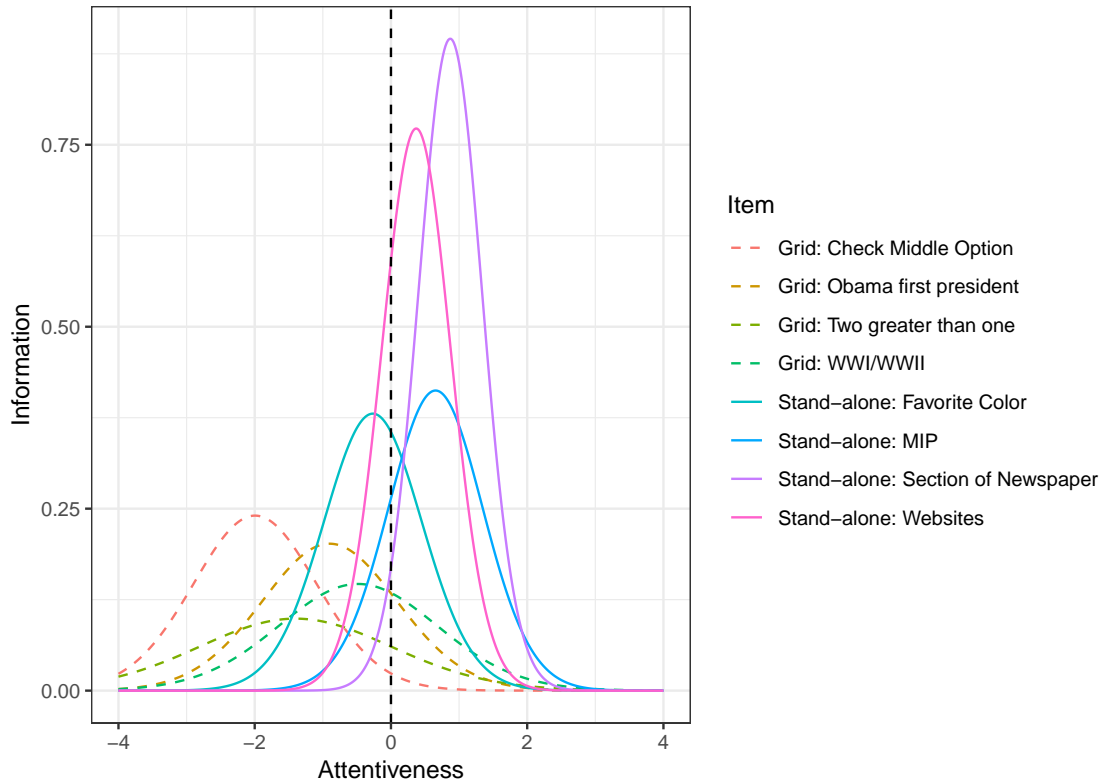
E   Relationship Between Scales, Education, and Knowledge

A concern could be that our Screener questions are capturing cognitive ability rather than engagement with a survey. Indeed, both Berinsky, Margolis, and Sances (2014) and Alvarez et al. (2019) find Screeners sometimes correlate with education.

Table A1 examines the relationship between our attentiveness scales and respondents' demographics attributes such as education. We find that none of our attentiveness scales are strongly predicted by demographics such as education or age (Table A1).

Table A1: Relationship Between Scales and Education

| | Dependent variable: | | | |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
	Full Scale	Traditional	Grid	Mixed
Some College	0.172***	0.086*	0.265***	0.151***
	(0.050)	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.050)
College	0.139***	0.101*	0.163***	0.093*
	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.051)
Age/100	1.355***	0.936***	1.499***	1.166***
	(0.132)	(0.135)	(0.132)	(0.133)
Female	0.347***	0.329***	0.194***	0.315***
	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.043)
White	0.099	0.104	0.054	0.085
	(0.080)	(0.082)	(0.080)	(0.081)
Black	−0.215**	−0.124	−0.304***	−0.187*
	(0.096)	(0.098)	(0.096)	(0.097)
Hispanic	−0.128	−0.061	−0.189**	−0.175*
	(0.095)	(0.097)	(0.095)	(0.096)
Constant	−26.670***	−18.500***	−29.382***	−22.937***
	(2.561)	(2.617)	(2.562)	(2.590)
Observations	2,524	2,524	2,524	2,524
R^2	0.102	0.061	0.101	0.082
Adjusted R^2	0.100	0.059	0.099	0.079

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

We also examine the relationship between political knowledge and attentiveness. The survey we use in the paper also asks five political knowledge questions. We use a two-parameter IRT model to scale political knowledge based on these five items. Table A2 shows that there is a modest relationship between knowledge and attentiveness. A one

standard deviation increase in knowledge only leads to a .2-.3 standard deviation increase in attentiveness. Moreover, political knowledge explains a relatively small portion of the variance in attentiveness.

Table A2: Relationship Between Scales and Knowledge

	Dependent variable:			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Full Scale	Traditional	Grid	Mixed
Political Knowledge	0.273***	0.202***	0.319***	0.241***
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Some College	0.110**	0.040	0.193***	0.096*
	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.050)
College	0.029	0.019	0.035	−0.004
	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.051)
Age/100	0.801***	0.526***	0.852***	0.677***
	(0.137)	(0.141)	(0.135)	(0.139)
Female	0.384***	0.356***	0.237***	0.347***
	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.042)
White	0.125	0.124	0.084	0.108
	(0.078)	(0.081)	(0.077)	(0.079)
Black	−0.135	−0.064	−0.210**	−0.116
	(0.094)	(0.097)	(0.093)	(0.096)
Hispanic	−0.062	−0.012	−0.111	−0.117
	(0.093)	(0.096)	(0.092)	(0.094)
Constant	−15.948***	−10.569***	−16.860***	−13.472***
	(2.649)	(2.744)	(2.624)	(2.697)
Observations	2,524	2,524	2,524	2,524
R^2	0.150	0.088	0.166	0.119
Adjusted R^2	0.147	0.085	0.164	0.116

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01