

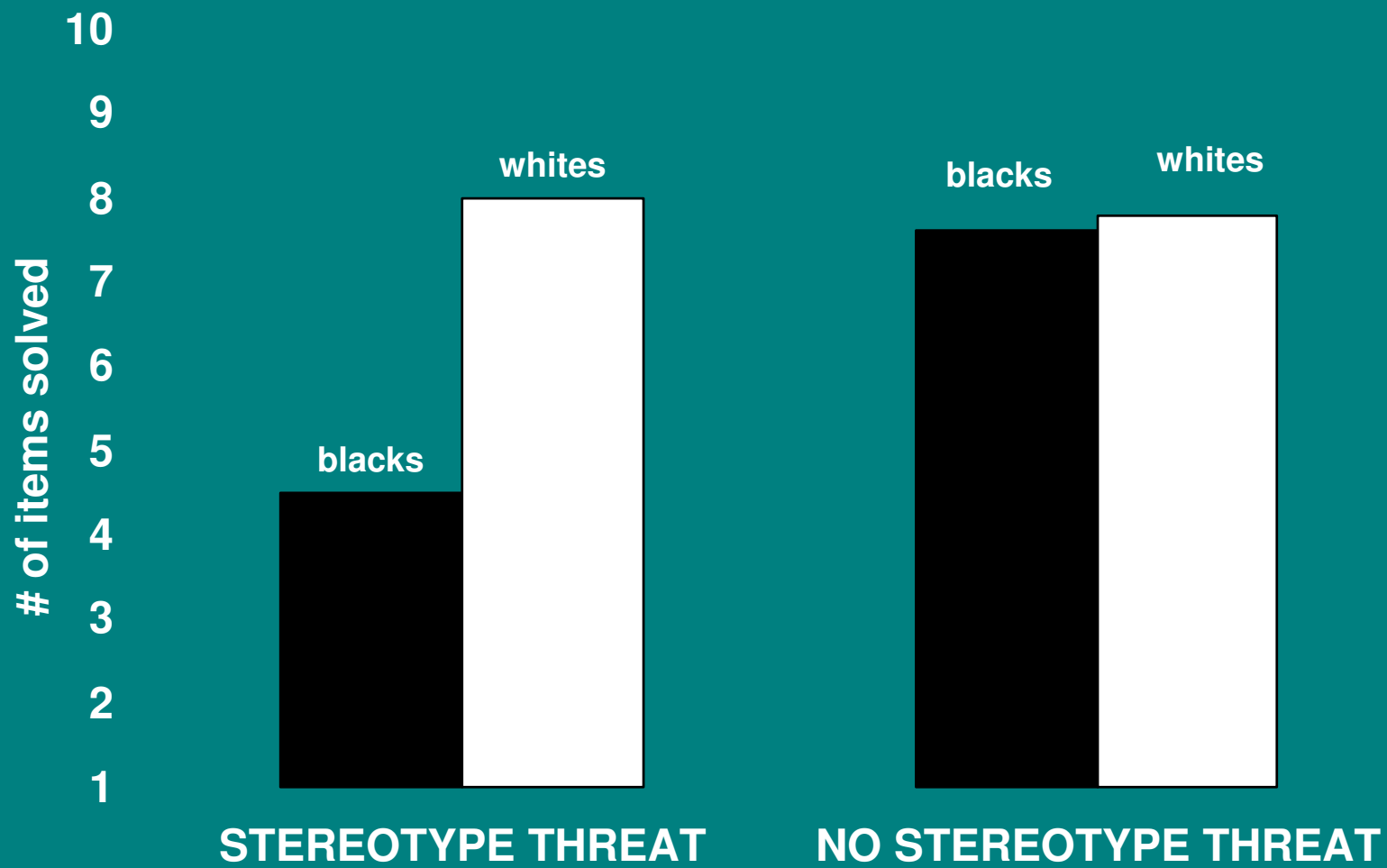
How Racial Stereotypes Color Self-Perceptions of Ability and Why it Matters

Joshua Aronson
New York University

Stereotype Threat:

- Apprehension that one's performance, behavior, or appearance may confirm a negative stereotype about one's social identity group.
- This concern divides attention between task at hand and self-evaluative concerns
- Triggered by situational cues but consequences depend importantly on person's beliefs and attitudes and self-concepts

Performance



Additional Studies Finding Performance Effects

- Women taking math tests
- Latinos taking verbal tests
- Elderly taking short-term memory tests
- Low SES Students taking verbal tests
- Blacks and Miniature Golf
- Women taking tests of political knowledge
- White males taking tests of social sensitivity
- White Males Taking Math Tests

Stereotype Vulnerability: Risk Factors for Underperformance

- Acceptance of the stereotype
- Expectations of prejudice
- Belief that tests are biased against minorities
mistrust
- academic engagement--caring about success

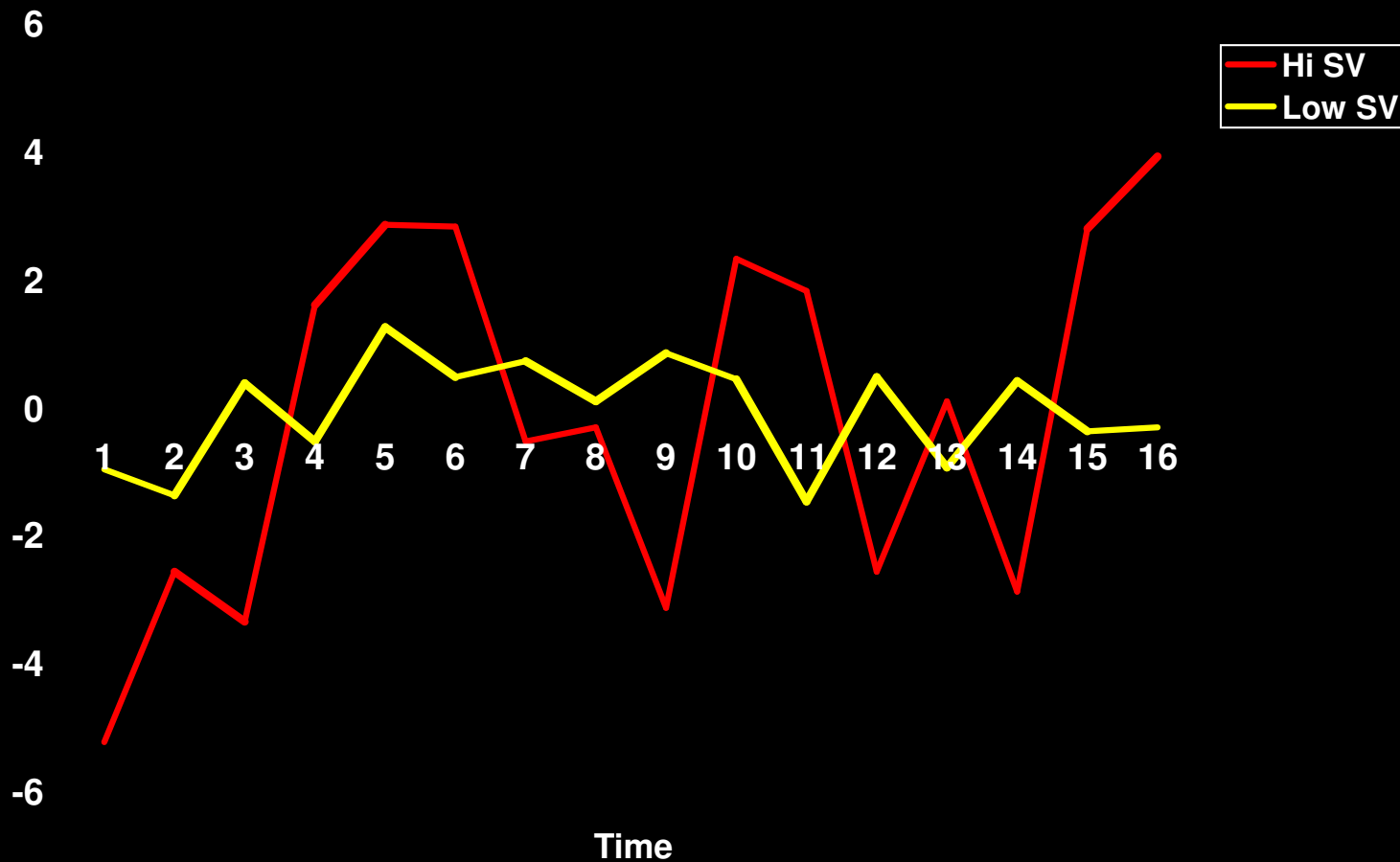
Laboratory Experiment on Stereotype Threat

Steele & Aronson (1995)

- Method: Reducing Evaluative Scrutiny
- Measure: Blacks' and Whites' GRE Test Performance

Diary Study

Academic efficacy over time for typical high or low Stereotype Vulnerable student



Performance Boosting
Interventions Based on
Assumptions of ST Theory

Affirming Students' Self Concepts Against Threat

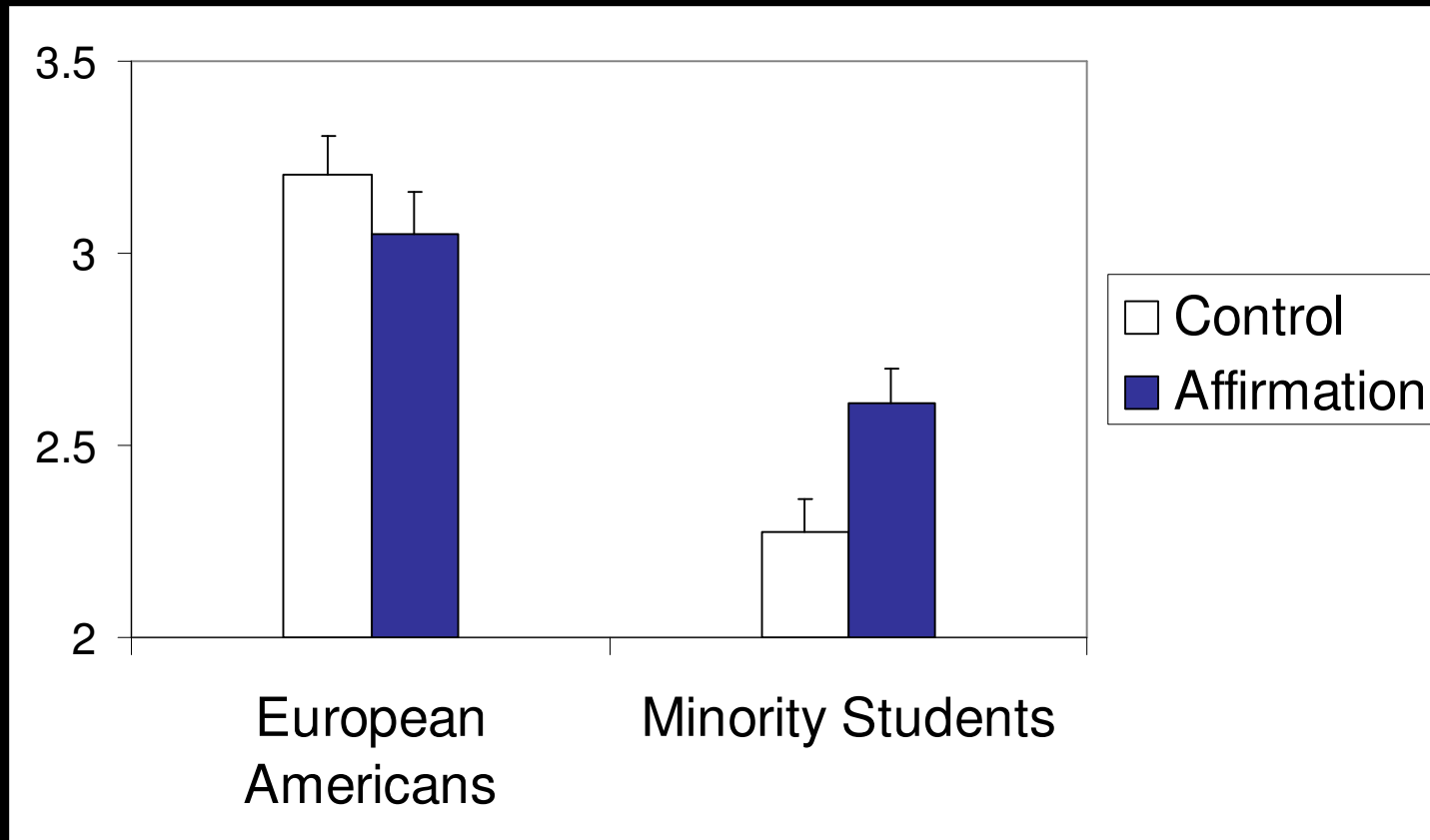
Cohen et al, 2006

Method:

At beginning of school year, Students wrote essays about important personal values

- Own values (experimental group)
- Other people's values (control group)

End-of-quarter course grade: Replication (After 2 treatments) (Adjusted for baseline performance within- race)



Implicit Theories of Intelligence

Create *situations and encourage mindsets* that stress the expandable nature of intellectual competence, the learning orientation

- Stereotypes validate a fixed view of intelligence, *an-IQ-is-everything* way of thinking about ability among both targets and perceivers.
- It creates a mindset where *looking* and *feeling* smart become more important than *getting* smart, and this creates problems of its own. It makes evaluation stressful and problematic; it makes poor performance demoralizing

Experiment

Aronson (2000)

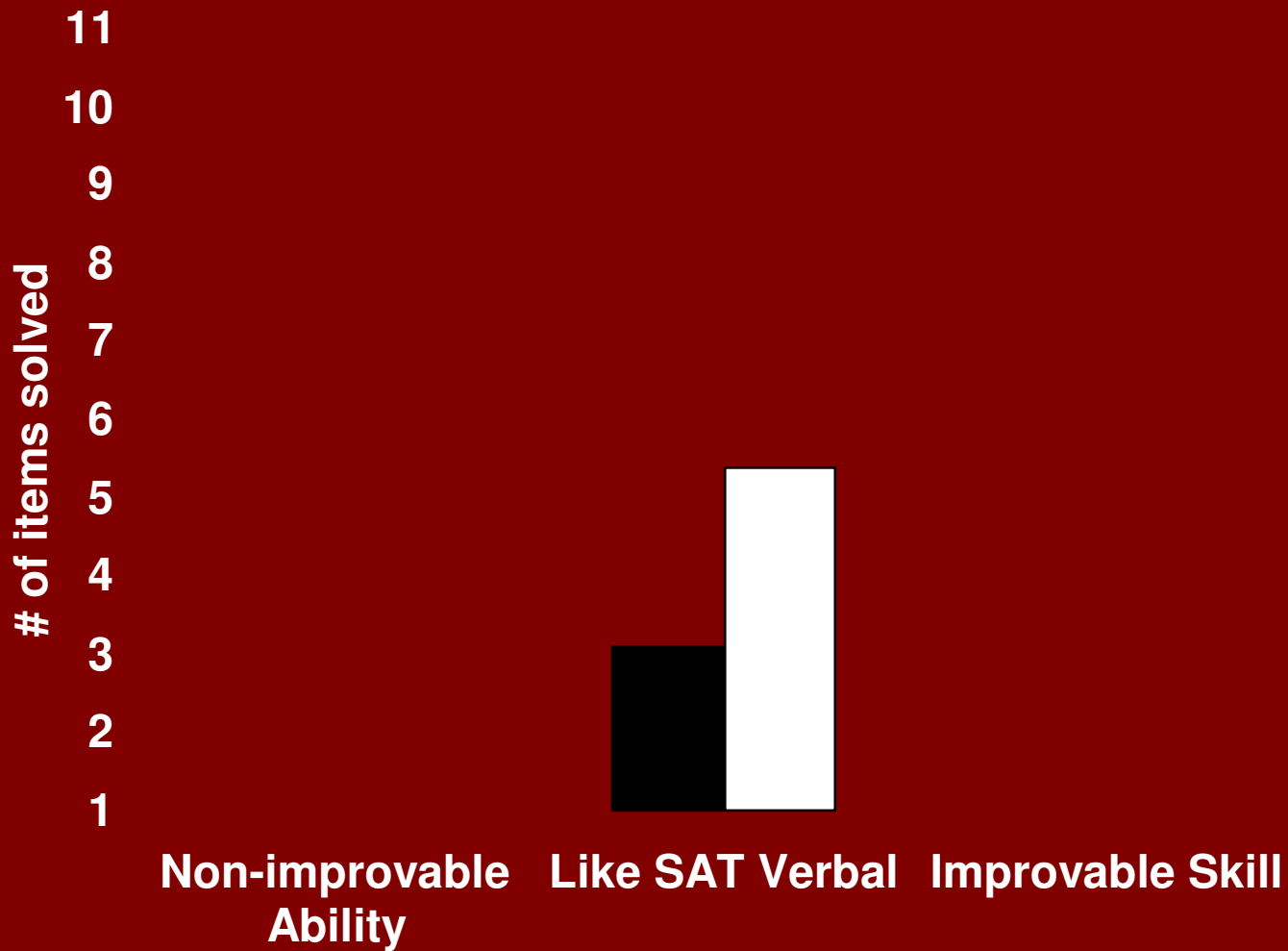
Question:

What if you believed ability is malleable? Would it reduce effects of stereotype threat?

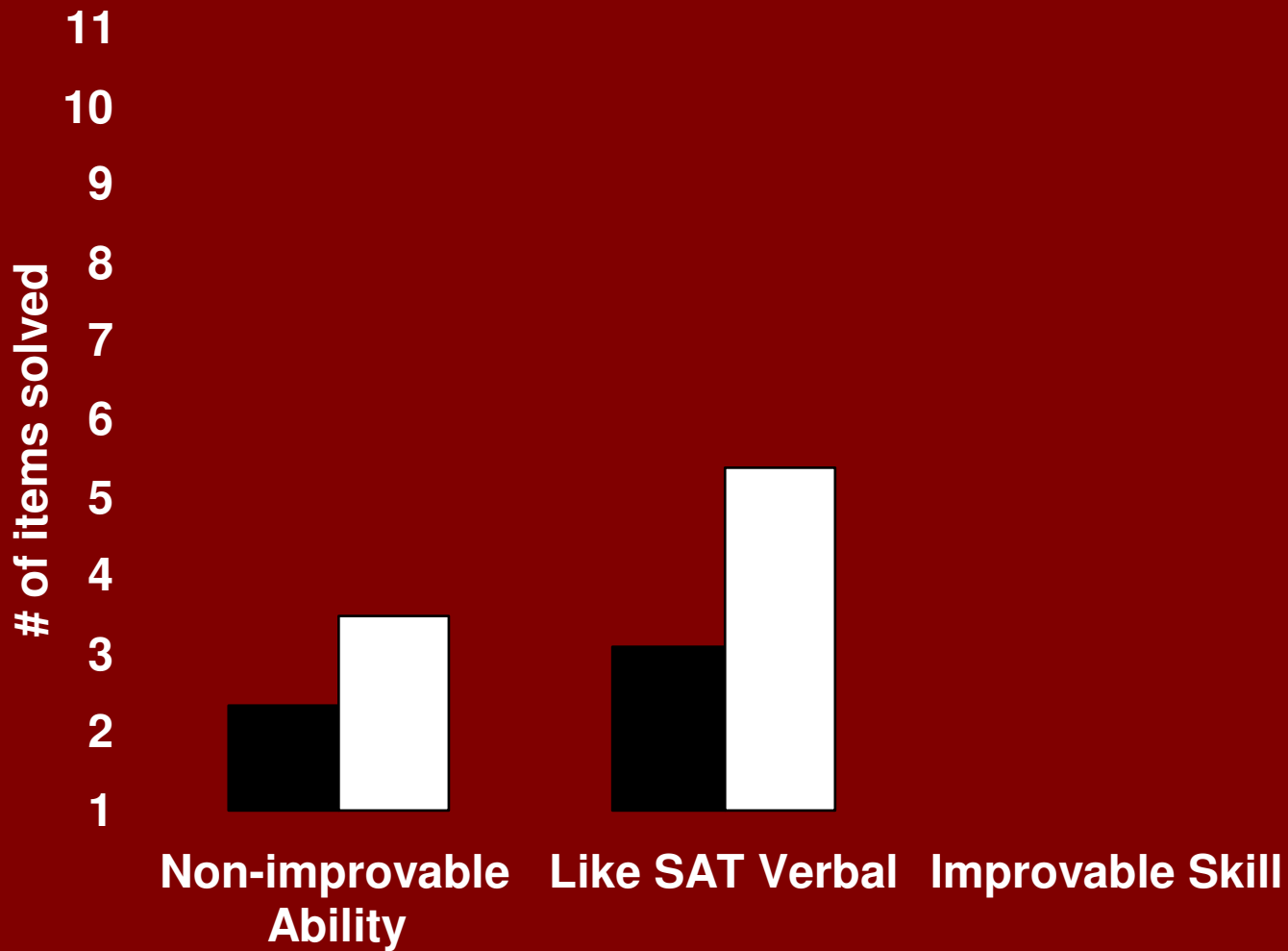
Method: Framing test as a measure of a fixed or a malleable ability

Measure: Blacks' and Whites' Test Performance

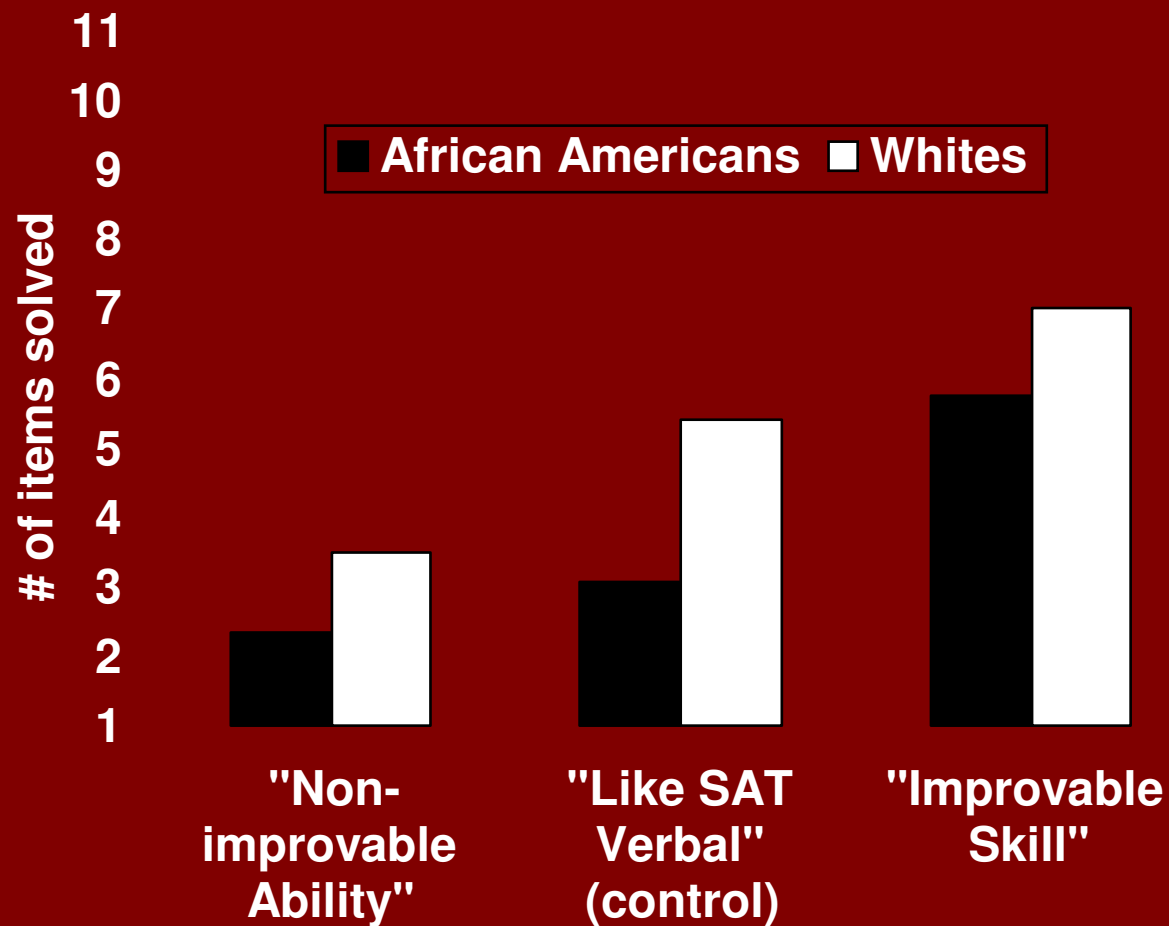
Conceptions of Ability and Test Performance



Conceptions of Ability and Test Performance



Conceptions of Ability and Test Performance

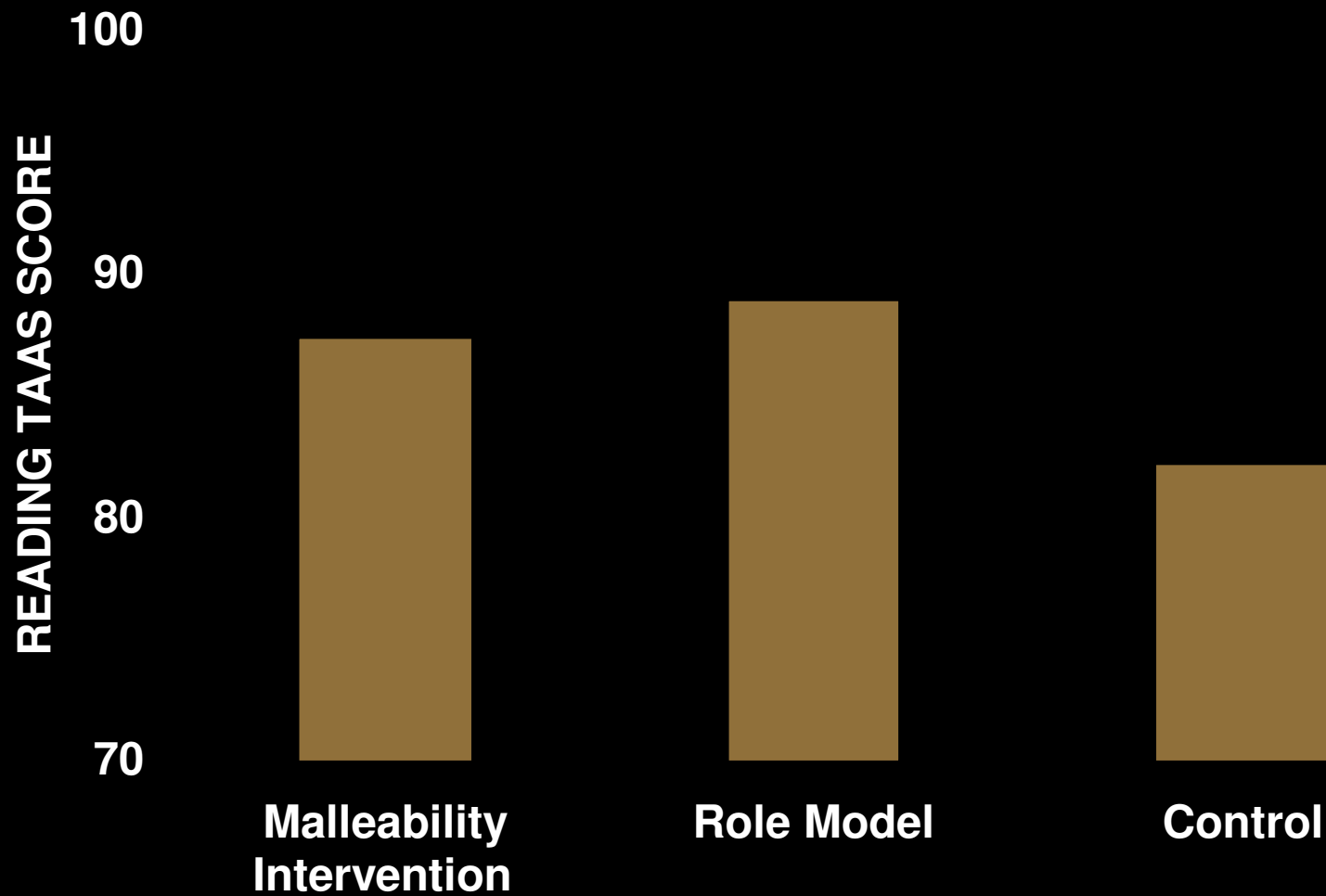


Middle School Intervention

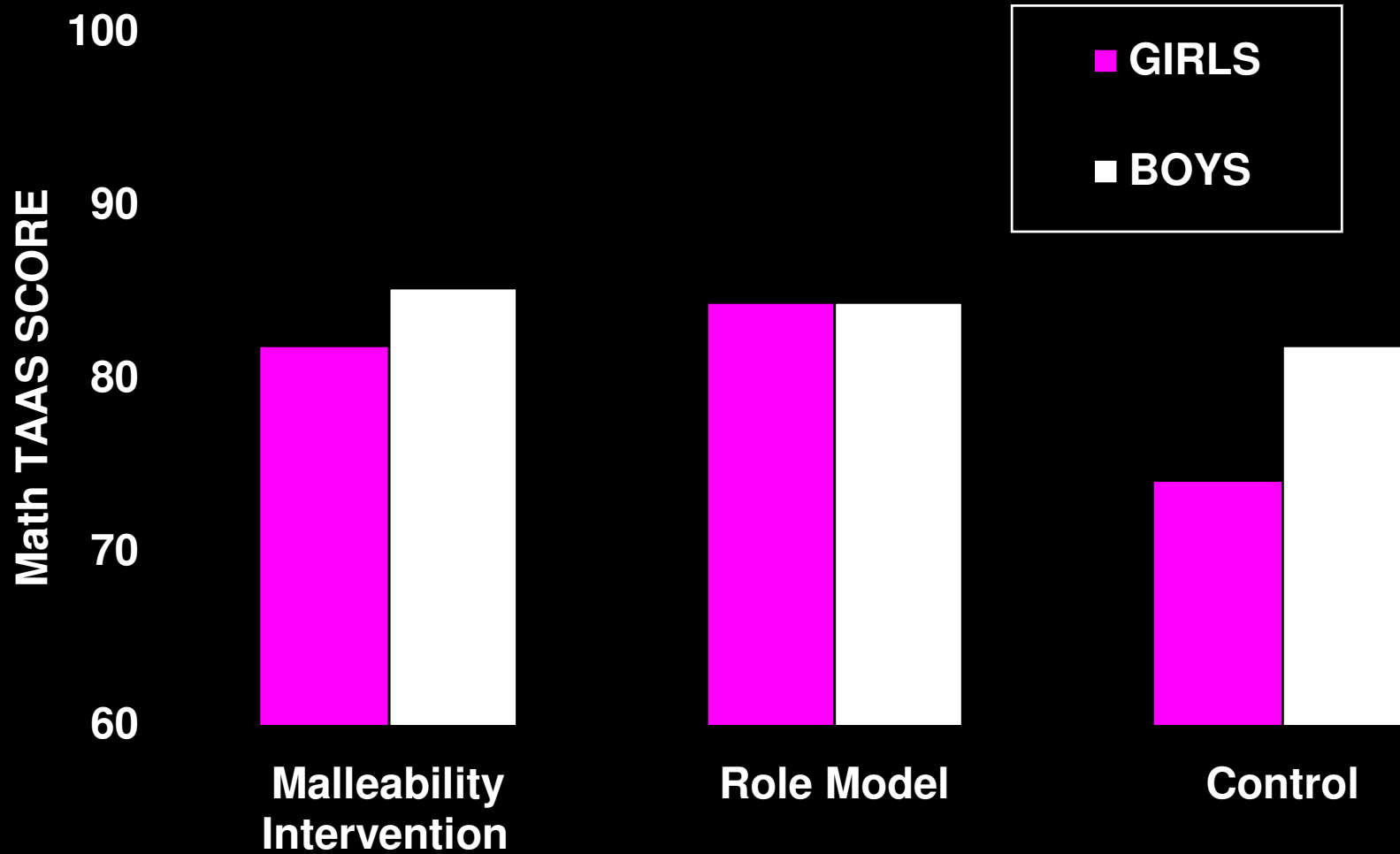
Question: Can psychological intervention raise test scores of minority students?

- Method: mentoring study; attitude change
- Conditions:
 - Malleability of intelligence
 - Role Models: senior students who stress the normality of early difficulty
 - Control (drug abuse message)
- Measure: Texas statewide test (TAAS)

7th Grade Reading TAAS--Latinos



7th Grade Girls' Math TAAS



Conclusions

- Human Intelligence is more fragile than we have customarily thought
- This is a function of both the person and the situation--the situation and the way the individual responds to it.
- Thus, there are multiple ways to help students perform better--change the situation and teach adaptive attitudes