Hero Dog Treat Harvard Case Solution & Analysis

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Acknowledgement

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Background Research

The science behind this experiment will be how dogs' taste buds work, dogs' sense of smell, and how these two key elements help them choose between different food.
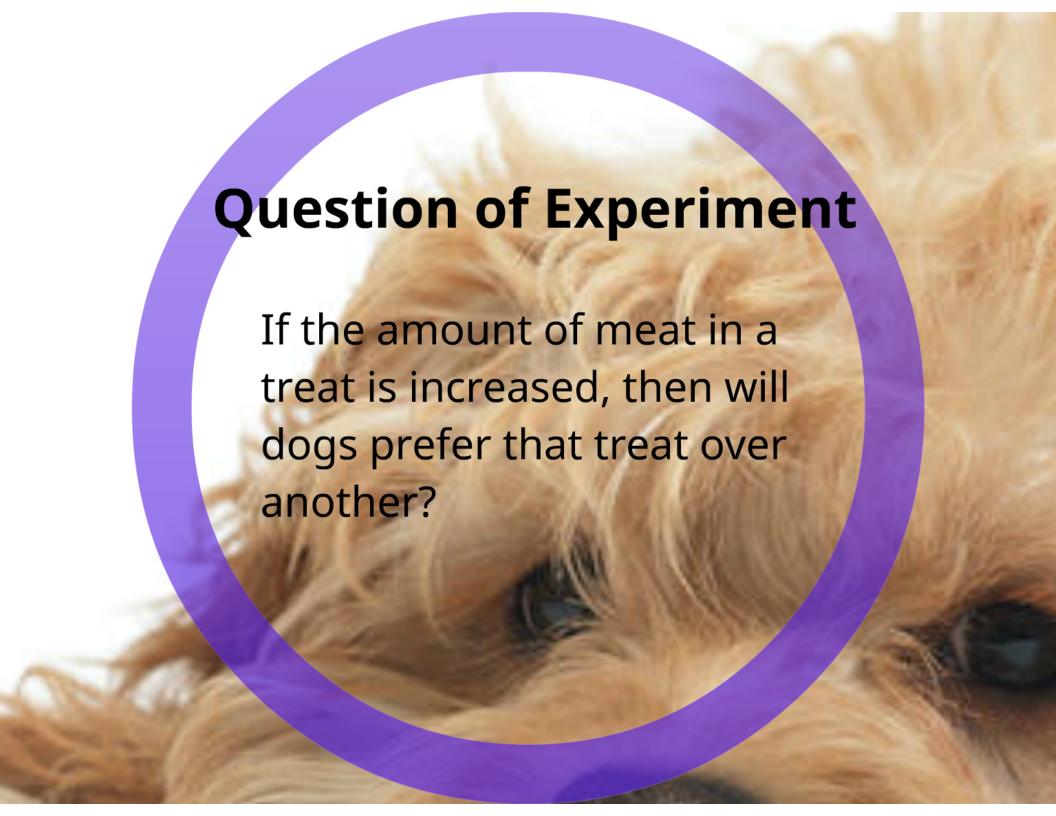
Like humans, dogs distinguish taste with taste buds which include small bumps on the surface of our tongue. Humans have around 9000 taste buds while dogs only have 1700, taste buds in humans and dogs are similar in certain tastes such as sweet, sour, salty and bitter, the only difference is their taste of salt.

Humans really enjoy salt and look for it in our food such as potato chips, and other kinds of junk food, dogs on the other hand, get a lot of salt from their source of meat since they are mostly carnivorous. Sense of smell also relates to options since dogs rely on scent due to their 300 million olfactory receptors. Dogs' sense of smell is so strong that some are used to sniff out drugs and one dog even sniffed out breast cancer- saving her companion.

Technical Terms

papilla: the bumps on the tongue which distinguishes different tastes.

olfactory receptors: are located in the nose which detect different odors by activating nerve impulses to the brain

Question of Experiment

If the amount of meat in a treat is increased, then will dogs prefer that treat over another?

Hypothesis

This experiment is about which treats dogs prefer and why, my hypothesis is that the dogs will prefer the treats that have a higher meat content in them because dogs' ancestors, the wolves, are mostly carnivorous and as they evolved, I think that these traits have remained.

Purpose

I wanted to figure out what affects the treats that dogs prefer over another. Is it the meat content that the treats contain? Is it the sense of taste or smell? I wanted to figure out the answer to these questions.