

## THE CANDLE

The test was created <sup>[1]</sup> by [Gestalt psychologist Karl Duncker](#) and published posthumously in 1945.

A study was conducted a few decades ago which analysed what happens when people are given conceptual challenges and offered rewards for finding a solution quickly. The exercise presented to the participants was the “candle problem” as shown in the picture below.

To complete the exercise, participants must attach the candle to the wall so the wax does not drip on the table.

The key to solving the exercise is to overcome “functional fixedness.” Participants must see the box as more than a container for the tacks; they must also be able to see its function as a platform for the candle. This task is neither routine nor algorithmic; it requires a relative amount of creative thinking and problem-solving ability.

Participants were split in to two groups, one group was told they were being timed in order to collect norms on solution times for the exercise, the other group were offered monetary incentives for completing the exercise quickly.

## OARS

Before showing this slide, can ask “Who here likes to cook?”

Note that sometimes the best dishes are those with the fewest (but highest quality) ingredients.

Ask participants of suggestions of dishes that use 5 or fewer ingredients.

Then, change to this slide and note that one of the nice things about MI is that, at its essence, it has only four key ingredients.