Studies on child metacognition have recently focused on how expectations about memory functioning can influence memory decisions through the use of metacognitive rules (Geurten, Willems, & Meulemans, 2015). The memorability-based heuristic is demonstrated when people implement a more conservative response criterion for a class of stimuli that is anticipated to be highly memorable compared to a class of stimuli that is anticipated to be less memorable (Dobbins & Kroll, 2005; Ghetti, 2003). The purpose of this study was to examine whether children are able to use the expected memorability of information to guide their recognition decisions.

**AIMS**

(1) to determine whether children are able to employ a metacognitive heuristic based on memorability to guide their recognition decisions before the age of 9 years.

(2) to explore whether the context in which an item is presented can influence its expected memorability.

**BACKGROUND**

The ability of young children to employ the memorability-based heuristic to reduce their false recognition rate was demonstrated. Furthermore, our results also suggest that context may have an influence on the formation of metacognitive expectations in children. This could have important implications concerning methods of assessing memory in children. In situations where children have to answer to multiple memory questions, the likelihood that they will claim to remember something from the past will depend on how well they remember the answers to the other memory questions.

**METHOD**

Participants: 72 children aged 4, 6, and 9 years

**Materials**

- **High-memorability list**
  - 22 high- + 10 medium
- **Low-memorability list**
  - 22 low + 10 medium

**Procédure**: Two recognition tests (16 study words + 16 distractors)

**RESULTS**

- **FR**
  - $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .26$

- **C**
  - $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .11$

**DISCUSSION**

