**Supplementary Material**

**Description of the Pilot Study**

Six basic stories were written depicting the conflicts included in the story. These were the basis for the definitive scripts presented below. For each of the stories, six variations were conceived; three of them described the actions of the first possessor, and the rest described the actions of the second character. Each set of variations were designed to describe the characters’ claims as having a low, a medium or a high merit.

“Merit” was determined according to a group of considerations regarding the characters’ actions that we supposed a priori that would affect subjects’ judgment: time and effort involved, esthetic and innovative value of the results of their actions, commitment or formality of the actions, difficulty of feats.

Adult participants (recruited from social networks; *N* = 105, age *M* = 31.6, SD = 10.1; females = 57%; see Table 2 in the main text for details) filled online forms containing four random stories to judge over. Each participant read a version of each of the stories in which the claim of one of the characters was fixed at the medium level of merit, while the merit of the claim of the other character was not informed. After reading the story, the participant was presented with the three variations regarding the merit of the claim of the character that was absent in the previously read story, in a random order. Participants judged who should own the object in dispute considering each of the variations of the story.

The following is one example of the Discovery vs. Creation story presented to the volunteers (translated from the original in Spanish), along with the variations for the absent information regarding one of the characters claim’s merit. In the following example, the merit of the Discoverer is fixed (the section of the text in italics), while the possible levels of merit of the Creator is presented in the variations below.

**Basic story.** “One day, Luis was walking in the forest when he found several pieces of wood. “Excellent!” he said, “These pieces of wood are nobody’s, so I’ll take them. Now they are mine.” He picked the pieces, then, and hid them behind a big rock, and said “I will leave my wood here behind this rock. I’ll come back for them later.” After he had hidden the wood, Luis kept walking.

*Luis found the wood while he was exploring a section of the forest which was dark and dense, and which almost nobody knew. So only Luis could have found it. That’s why Luis was the first to find and grab the pieces of wood, say they were his, and put them away.*

Some time later, Nico was there and saw the wood that Luis had put behind the rock. Nico said “Cool, some pieces of wood! I am going to make a chair.” Nico then built a chair with the wood.

(In the next page we will tell you how Nico built the chair)

Later, Luis came back and found Nico with the chair. When he saw it, he said: “My wood!”; but Nico said: “My chair!”. “The chair is mine because I found and grabbed those pieces of wood. They are mine!” said Luis. “The chair is mine because I built it. It’s mine!” said Nico. And they could not reach an agreement.”

**Variations in the Creator’s merit.** These were presented (without any indication of the relative value of them) in a random order in the following page in the online form. Participants decided who should own the object in dispute (the chair, in this case), and give a confidence value on a 1 to 5 scale to allow comparison of the strength of decisions favoring the same character.

***Low merit.*** “Nico built an uncomfortable, slicky, and ugly chair. Hardly would have anyone tried to sit in it without it coming apart. It took him less than 15 minutes to build it.”

***Medium merit.*** “Nico built a pretty precarious chair. It was very easy, he didn’t work on it more than half an hour. Anyone could have built it.”

***High merit.*** “Nico built an ordinary neat chair; nothing out of the ordinary. He had to work on the chair for two hours. It was not easy.”

After all data was collected, the version of each of the stories that showed the most balanced distribution of judgments was chosen to redact the definitive scripts used for the videos, which are translated in full below.

**Translated Scripts for the Videos Used in the Study**

The following are the translated scripts from each of the six stories. Each number between parentheses indicates the vignette that accompanied the script in the videos. Each of the stories had a second version in which characters (names and looks) were switched between the first and second character in the story. After the scripts, links to the videos of both versions of the stories are given.

**Discovery versus Transaction.** “(1) One day, Martín was exploring the forest. It was a dark sector of the forest, full of trees and plants. Almost nobody had been there before Martín. (2) Suddenly, while he was walking in the forest, Martín saw a gold coin on the floor. Martín said: ‘I found a gold coin! Now it’s mine!’ Martín was the first one to found and grab the coin, and say it was his. (3) Then, he kept walking and saw José. Martín showed him the gold coin, and José said: ‘It’s very beautiful!’ Martín gave the coin to José, and José said: ‘Thanks!’ (4) After that, Martín and José stayed there running races for a while. (5) When it was getting late, Martín said: ‘José, it is already late, and I want to go home. Will you give me back my gold coin?’ But José answered: ‘No, I am not giving it back, because you gave it to me. Now the coin is mine’. And they could not reach an agreement.”

Version 1: https://youtu.be/DjBN-WKS4P8

Version 2: https://youtu.be/Xw5\_Dqu5TnI

**Transaction versus Occupation.** “(1) Fernando had two houses. He lived in one of them, but he did not use the other one. (2) One day, Fernando met his friend Gonza, showed him the house that he did not use, and gave him the keys to the house. But he never said if Gonza should return them or not. (3) But Gonza did not move to that house. Some time went by. Once, another boy called Lauti found the empty house, got into it, and started living there. (4) Lauti stayed living in the house for several days. He took his bed and some clothes with him. Sometimes, he went by the house, changed his clothes and slept there. When he was in the house, some friends went by to visit him. (5) Then, another day, Gonza went by the house’s door. When he saw Lauti he said: ‘This house is mine, because Fernando gave it to me’. But Lauti answered: ‘No, this house was empty, and now I am living here. So it’s mine’. And they could not reach an agreement.”

Version 1: https://youtu.be/wjehQNTLrfA

Version 2: https://youtu.be/bOhlkprmXpE

**Transaction versus Creation.** “(1) Elena had some pieces of wood and iron. (2) One day, Elena sold the pieces of wood and iron to Miriam. First, they reached an agreement and both signed a paper. Then, Miriam gave the money to Elena, and she gave Miriam the pieces of wood and iron. (3) But Miriam did not use those pieces of wood and iron. Instead, she left them on her home’s sidewalk. (4) Another day, another girl called Yolanda went by Miriam’s house. She took the sticks and pieces of iron and used them to build a little table. It was very easy. Yolanda made the table within a short time. It was a regular and very little table. (5) When Miriam saw the little table she said: ‘This little table is mine, because the sticks and pieces of iron are mine because Elena gave them to me’. But Yolanda answered: ‘No, the little table is mine, because I built it’. And they could not reach an agreement”.

Version 1: https://youtu.be/F6CWTvCR1Q4

Version 2: https://youtu.be/gJaQbVZOvVI

**Creation versus Occupation.** “(1) Elena had some pieces of wood, some nails and some pieces of iron. As she did not need them, she abandoned them in the street. (2) Marta passed by and saw them. She figured that with those materials she could build a little wooden house. Marta built a regular and very little house. She did it just like that. It was very easy to build the little house. She did it in short time. When she was over, she went back to her family house with her mom and dad. (3) The next day, Julia walked by that street and saw the little house that Marta had built. As it was empty, Julia moved in the little house and stayed there for a long time. (4) She took her bed and clothes with her. She stayed at the little house all day. Her friends visited her very often. (5) Some time later, Marta came back. When Marta saw Julia, she asked her: ‘What are you doing living in my little house? Can’t you see it’s mine? I made it!’ But Julia answered: ‘When I got here there was nobody in it. That is why I stayed. It’s been a long time since I’ve been living here, so now it’s mine’. And they could not reach an agreement”.

Version 1: https://youtu.be/V5tzuXP6Y6k

Version 2: https://youtu.be/lUQzlA-hCtw

**Discovery versus Occupation.** “(1) One day, Belén was ascending a mountain. The mountain was far from the town, and it was very hard to climb. Before Belén did it, nobody had climbed that mountain. Belén was the first one to reach its heights. (2) While she was exploring the mountain, she found a cave. Belén said: ‘What a nice cave! Nobody lives here. Now, the cave is mine’. And she wrote her name on top of the entrance. Belén was the first one to see the cave and say that it was hers. After that, she left the mountain and went home. (3) Some time later, Joaquina went to tour the mountain. The road was already signaled, as other people had been there after Belén. Joaquina saw the cave and said: ‘What a nice cave! I am going to come and live here’. (4) Joaquina stayed living in the cave for several days. She took a bed and some clothes with her. She told her friends that she was living in the cave so they could visit her. (5) On another day, Belén went back to the cave. When Belén saw Joaquina, she asked her: ‘What are you doing living in my cave? Can’t you see it’s mine? I discovered it and put my name on the entrance’. But Joaquina answered: ‘When I got here there was nobody in it, that is why I stayed. I have been living here for many days, so now it’s mine’. And they could not reach an agreement”.

Version 1: https://youtu.be/YmDNfrJIy78

Version 2: https://youtu.be/A-BBhJXwMtI

**Discovery versus Creation.** “(1) One day, Luis was walking by the forest. It was a dark place, full of trees and plants. Nobody had ever reached that sector of the forest. While walking, Luis found a bunch of wood pieces: ‘This is great! This wood is nobody’s, so I’ll take it. Now it’s mine’. Luis was the first one to find those pieces of wood, pick them up, and say they were his. (2) Luis took the wood pieces to a close path and put them behind a big rock. After that, he continued walking. (3) Later, Nico walked by that place and saw the wood pieces that Luis had put behind the rock. (4) Nico said: ‘Wow, a bunch of wooden pieces! I am going to build a chair’. Then, Nico built a chair with the pieces of wood. He did it in short time. It was a weak, uncomfortable, and ugly chair. If a big person would have sit on the chair, it would have broken down. (5) Some time later, Luis came back, saw the chair and said: ‘My wood pieces!’ But Nico answered: ‘It’s my chair!’. Luis said: ‘The chair is mine because I found and picked up those wooden pieces. They are mine’. And Nico answered: ‘The chair is mine because I made it. It’s mine’. And they could not reach an agreement”.

Version 1: https://youtu.be/t7paP3JTbkw

Version 2: https://youtu.be/8Cjr0GzD4PQ

**Supplementary Data**

Supplementary Table 1

*Effects of Gender on Judgments of Adults and Children*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Conflict | Children | | Adults | |
|  | 1st/T | stat. | 1st/T | stat. |
| D vs. C | F: 25/36  M: 26/36 | *p =* .795  𝜒2 = 0.067 | F: 11/29  M: 4/22 | *p =* .126  𝜒2 = 2.350 |
| D vs. O | F: 32/34  M: 36/39 | *p =* .760  𝜒2 = 0.093 | F: 14/32  M: 9/22 | *p =* .836  𝜒2 = 0.043 |
| D vs. T | F: 29/31  M: 38/43 | *p =* .453  𝜒2 = 0.563 | F: 15/29  M: 9/12 | *p =* .169  𝜒2 = 1.89 |
| C vs. O | F: 27/31  M: 41/43 | *p =* .199  𝜒2 = 1.646 | F: 19/29  M: 7/12 | *p =* .664  𝜒2 = 0.189 |
| T vs. C | F: 26/34  M: 32/39 | *p =* .556  𝜒2 = 0.346 | F: 20/32  M: 16/22 | *p =* .433  𝜒2 = 0.614 |
| T vs. O | F: 26/36  M: 29/36 | *p =* .405  𝜒2 = 0.693 | F: 23/29  M: 15/22 | *p =* .366  𝜒2 = 0.815 |

*Note.*  The data shows the decisions in each conflict, plus the summary of all the stories involving the Discovery claim, the summary of total answers for all six conflicts, and the analysis of the occurrence of a first possessor-bias in children and adults, according to gender in adults and children. Shown are the total cases of decisions favoring the first character over the total answers, and the statistical analysis. Data was analyzed through two- tailed Chi Square tests.

Supplementary Table 2

*Effects of Order of Presentation of Stories for Children and Adults*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Conflict | Ordering (Children) | | Ordering (Adults) | |
|  | 1st/T | stat. | 1st/T | stat. |
| D vs. C | 1st: 12/19  2nd: 12/18  3rd: 14/17  4th: 13/18 | *p =* .348  𝜒2 *=* 0.88 | 1st: 2/10  2nd: 3/16  3rd: 8/16  4th: 2/9 | *p =* .363  𝜒2 *=* 0.83 |
| D vs. O | 1st: 17/18  2nd: 18/18  3rd: 19/19  4th: 14/18 | *p =* .051  𝜒2 *=* 3.80 | 1st: 7/16  2nd: 4/9  3rd: 8/14  4th: 4/12 | *p =* .414  𝜒2 *=* 0.67 |
| D vs. T | 1st: 17/18  2nd: 18/19  3rd: 16/19  4th: 16/18 | *p =* .366  𝜒2 *=* 0.82 | 1st: 6/9  2nd: 6/14  3rd: 8/12  4th: 4/7 | *p =* .929  𝜒2 *=* 0.01 |
| C vs. O | 1st: 19/19  2nd: 15/18  3rd: 17/18  4th: 17/19 | *p =* .449  𝜒2 *=* 0.57 | 1st: 7/14  2nd: 6/9  3rd: 5/7  4th: 8/12 | *p =* .362  𝜒2 *=* 0.83 |
| T vs. C | 1st: 12/18  2nd: 16/18  3rd: 14/18  4th: 16/19 | *p =* .325  𝜒2 *=* 0.97 | 1st: 4/9  2nd: 10/16  3rd: 11/16  4th: 11/14 | *p =* .093  𝜒2 *=* 2.83 |
| T vs. O | 1st:14/18  2nd: 14/19  3rd: 13/18  4th: 14/17 | *p =* .730  𝜒2 *=* 0.12 | 1st: 11/16  2nd: 10/10  3rd: 6/9  4th: 11/5 | *p =* .670  𝜒2 *=* 0.18 |

*Note.*  The data shows the decisions in each conflict, plus the summary of all the stories involving the Discovery claim, the summary of total answers for all six conflicts, and the analysis of the occurrence of a first possessor-bias in children and adults, according to the order of presentation for children and adults. Shown are the total cases of decisions favoring the first character over the total answers, and the statistical analysis. Data was analyzed through probability regressions.

Supplementary Table 3

*Effects of Age in Children and Adults*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Conflict | Children | Adults |
| D vs. C | p = .165  𝜒2 = 1.93 | p = .009  𝜒2 = 6.73 |
| D vs. O | p = .177  𝜒2 = 1.82 | p = .0945  𝜒2 < 0.01 |
| D vs. T | p = .476  𝜒2 = 0.51 | p = .926  𝜒2 = 0.01 |
| T vs. O | p = .005  𝜒2 = 8.02 | p = .333  𝜒2 = 0.94 |
| T vs. C | p = .771  𝜒2 = 0.08 | p = .630  𝜒2 = 0.23 |
| C vs. O | p = .420  𝜒2 = 0.65 | p = .362  𝜒2 = 0.83 |

*Note*. The table displays the statistical data from probability regressions of judgments for each conflict according to age.

Supplementary Table 4

*Justification Types for Judgments across the Four School-Levels Studied*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level | Claim-Based | | Unspecific | | No justification | | Total |
|  | 1st | 2nd | 1st | 2nd | 1st | 2nd |  |
| K4 | 76 | 18 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 110 |
| K5 | 100 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 124 |
| FG | 84 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| SG | 83 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 104 |
| All | 343 | 54 | 18 | 13 | 6 | 3 | 438 |

*Note*. The table shows the number of justifications of the two defined types (claim-based or unspecific) for decisions favoring either the first possessor (1st) or the second character (2nd). K4 and K5 represent the 4- and 5- years old kindergarten levels, respectively, while 1G and 2G represent first and second primary school grades. See Table 1 in the main text for the description of each school level.