

Anything

Told they could enter anything, as long as the room agreed, 10,529 strangers agreed on the word anything.

THIS IS	PART OF	STATUS
PAPER 005 · A FINDING	THE GAME · ACT II, ROUND 2	FILED · V1 · 31 AUG 2026

SOURCE

11,031 23 to 24 Mar 2026

COMMENTS DATES

IN PLAIN WORDS

A week after the YES round, we posted a rule with no answer in it: “You may enter anything. Convergence required. Non-matching inputs will not persist.” The room had to land on one answer, and the rule refused to say which.

It landed on the word anything. 8,821 of 11,031 comments were that one word. 1,892 wrote something else. 209 wrote anything with words attached. The round passed on its first attempt, the day after it opened.

This paper is about what a crowd reaches for when it is asked to agree and given nothing to agree on. The answer is the instruction itself.

THE QUESTION WE ASKED

The YES round had shown that a crowd will perform an exact act it is told to perform, given enough repetition. This round removed the act. **Can a crowd converge on one answer when no answer is named?** If it can, the follow-up is which answer, and why that one.

WHAT WE DID

- **Instruction:** “You may enter anything. Convergence required. Non-matching inputs will not persist.”
- **Where:** one Instagram post, 23 March 2026. The pass was declared on 24 March.
- **Who:** the ordinary audience of the account plus whoever the platform showed the post to. 10,529 distinct people commented.
- **How we counted:** every comment on the post. A comment counted as the word if its text was anything,

in any capitalisation, and nothing else. Comments that contained the word with other text were counted separately. Everything else counted as another answer.

- **Not enforced:** the threat in the rule, that non-matching inputs would not persist, was framing. Nothing was deleted. We say so because a reader would otherwise assume the 80 percent was manufactured by removal.

WHAT HAPPENED

TABLE 1. What 11,031 comments contained.

COMMENT	COUNT	SHARE
The word anything, alone	8,821	80%
Anything with something attached	209	2%
Another answer entirely	1,892	17%
Comments on the post	11,031	10,529 people

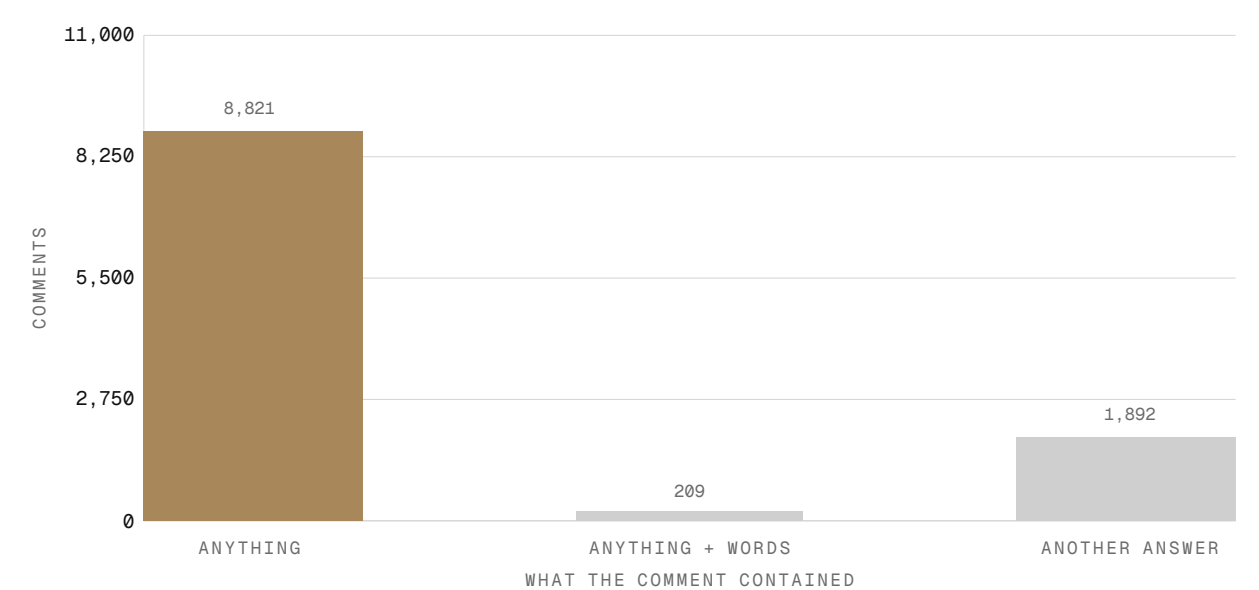


FIGURE 1. The three kinds of comment. The room was offered any word and chose the one in the rule.

TABLE 2. Shares with 95 percent intervals.

MEASURE	COUNT	OF	SHARE	95% INTERVAL
The word anything, alone	8,821	11,031	80.0%	79.2% to 80.7%
Anything with something attached	209	11,031	1.9%	1.7% to 2.2%
Another answer entirely	1,892	11,031	17.2%	16.5% to 17.9%

Compare the exact rate with the YES round a week earlier: 66 percent wrote the word they were told to write; 80 percent wrote a word they were not told to write. The open instruction produced tighter

agreement than the closed one.

TABLE 3. The post at platform scale, as of 31 August 2026.

REEL	VIEWS · REACH	COMMENTS TODAY
Round 2 · 23 March 2026	209,921 · 131,656 reach	21,818
Likes on the reel	16,337	

Platform numbers are from the Instagram API on 31 August 2026. Comment counts there include replies and everything written since the round, which is why they run above the counts this paper analyses; views and reach are the tallies the platform reports.

WHAT IT MEANS

Asked to agree on anything, a crowd agrees on the instruction. The most visible word in the room is the meeting point, and no channel is needed to find it.

This is the focal point mechanism again, one round before the number experiment made it famous inside the Game. Thomas Schelling described focal points in 1960 as the answers people converge on without communicating, because each expects the others to expect it. In the number round the focal point was cultural (seven). Here it was textual: the rule contained exactly one candidate word, and the crowd took it.

The 80 percent is higher than the YES round for a reason worth stating. YES was an order, and an order invites a small share of people to refuse it in public; 30 percent of that thread ignored the rule. Anything was a puzzle, and a puzzle invites people to solve it together. The same crowd behaves differently depending on whether it is being commanded or being asked to coordinate.

The 1,892 other answers are not noise. They are the people who read “you may enter anything” literally and did, which is a perfectly correct reading of the rule. The round only worked because the literal readers were outnumbered by the coordinators.

WHAT THIS DOES NOT SHOW

- **The counting base includes replies.** The ledger records comments, not top-level entries, so the 80 percent is a share of the whole thread.
- **Visibility again.** Early commenters chose anything and were the most liked; later arrivals saw a wall of the word. We cannot separate independent choice from joining.
- **One instruction, one wording.** A rule that said “you may enter any word” instead of “anything” would likely not have produced this. The result may be specific to the word doing double duty as noun and instruction.

WHAT WE WOULD RUN NEXT

The same rule with the candidate word removed: “Enter one word. Convergence required.” With no word in the instruction to take, the crowd has to find a focal point elsewhere, and where it goes would tell us how deep the shared prior runs.

THE WHOLE ROUND

The round this paper reads is 2 posts, not one. Every post is below with the platform’s numbers and what the comment archive holds of each.

POST	DATE	VIEWS	REACH	COMMENTS	ARCHIVED
Attempt 1	2026-03-23	209,921	131,656	21,818	11,095
Pass declared	2026-03-24	93,705	53,014	1,178	1,145
THE ROUND		303,626	184,670	22,996	12,240

Views, reach and comments are the platform’s figures from the Instagram API, snapshot 2026-08-31, and keep growing. The reach total adds each post’s reach and overlaps between posts, so it is not a count of distinct people. Archived is the number of comments the archive holds for the post; ingestion is selective, so a gap between the two columns is expected and is stated wherever it changes a count in the paper.

IN THE RECORD

The round is filed in the Chronicle as THE CONVERGENCE, ◇030. It followed THE YES ROUND, ◇029, and set up THE NUMBER, ◇035.

THE POSTS, AS ISSUED

The instruction as it went out: the reel frame beside the caption, captured from the operation’s own signed-in account. What the paper counts is the answer to exactly this.



THE RECEIPTS

Native captures of the comments this paper leans on, taken from the operation’s own signed-in account on 31 Aug 2026. Handles and like counts are as they stood that day; the numbers in the paper are the round-time count.



METHOD NOTE

- **Source of truth:** the round ledger (Act II, Round 2) as filed on the round record, with the counts witnessed at the time of the round.
- **Focal points:** Schelling, T. C. (1960). *The Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard University Press.

SOURCES, BY LINK

01 Attempt 1 · 2026-03-23 · <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWOh7ERicIk/>

02 Pass declared · 2026-03-24 · <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWRGGi0CZFM/>

WHERE THE NUMBERS COME FROM

POST-LEVEL COUNTS

Views, reach, comments, likes, shares and saves per post come from the Instagram Graph API (Meta), read with the operation's own access token for its own business account. Each paper states the date of the snapshot it uses. These are the platform's counts of events, not of people: one person can view a reel twice and comment ten times, and the counts keep growing after a round closes.

COMMENT TEXT

The comment archive is the operation's own database of public comments on its own posts, pulled through the Instagram Graph API comments endpoint and stored with the comment id, username, text, like count, timestamp and whether it is a reply. Ingestion is selective: the most engaged posts were backfilled and recent posts are pulled daily, so some posts are held whole and others only in part. Every paper states how much of each post the archive holds. Every count that reads text (exact matches, categories, keyword themes) is run as a read-only script against this archive, and the scripts are in the repository beside the paper data.

THE ROUND LEDGER

For Act II rounds, the counts filed on The Game's round record at the time each round closed. Where a paper uses a ledger figure it says so, and where the archive re-count differs from the ledger both numbers are shown.

RECEIPTS

Every comment and post shown as evidence is a native capture from the operation's own signed-in Instagram session, taken by opening the exact permalink, with the source URL, a description, the rights basis and a file hash recorded in a manifest that is checked on every build of the site. Nothing shown is recreated, retyped or edited beyond cropping to the post header and the comment.

STATISTICS

Shares carry Wilson 95 percent intervals: the range the share would land in 19 times out of 20 if the

same count were taken on a fresh crowd of the same size. Differences between two shares carry a Wald interval. Where a study is cited as a baseline, its own reported figure and sample size are used.

WHAT NONE OF THIS CAN SEE

No demographics beyond what people typed. No view durations. No private messages. No comments that were deleted before the archive pulled them. No way to verify that a self-report is true. Every paper's limits section names the specific things its count cannot show.