

Performance Task #3: The Controversy of Intelligence

Student prompt: Today you will be gathering information and evidence that you will use to help you form an opinion on this topic: *"Is intelligence fairly measured in our country?"*

Make sure that you view all available information sources. Utilize the handout provided to you by your teacher to keep track of evidence and information you gather from the sources.

Information Sources:

Source 1: [The Controversy of Intelligence](http://tinyurl.com/hkjw9kg) (<http://tinyurl.com/hkjw9kg>) *video*

Source 2: [What does it mean to be smart?](http://tinyurl.com/zhcae6) (<http://tinyurl.com/zhcae6>) *printed text - included below*

Source 3: [Smartest People Today](http://tinyurl.com/z259ucp) (<http://tinyurl.com/z259ucp>) *printed text with infographic- included below*

What Does it Mean To Be Smart?

By Ben Michaelis, PhD., Mar. 31, 2013

Hey, you. Yeah, you, let me ask you something: Which one of these two people is smarter?

John, 36, was born on the Upper West Side of Manhattan to parents who were both in the financial services industry. At the age of four, he scored "off the charts" on an aptitude test. He was enrolled in a Gifted and Talented school in his area and sailed through his academic subjects, in spite of getting teased a bit in high school. John was a good kid, but basically a loner. He always had one or two friends, but he didn't spend much time socializing.

John attended Emory University in Atlanta where he majored in Comparative Literature. At the age of 24, he was accepted to a doctorate program at American University. Eight years later, John got his Ph.D. in American History. He has been trying to get a tenure track job ever since, but the job market has been tight and he does not interview particularly well. For the past several years, John has been working at the information desk at Barnes and Noble. With help from his parents, John is getting by. He has a few friends, but generally feels lost, lonely and unfulfilled.

Angie, also 33, was born in the South Bronx, less than one mile away and three months removed from John. She took the same aptitude test as John did, but didn't make the cut-off. Angie attended her local public school where she got good, but not great, grades. When she was about 11, while hanging around her uncle's auto repair shop Angie discovered that she had an interest in, and a knack for, understanding the way cars work. She started to spend more time around the shop and learned more and more about the intricacies of cars. She began to help out around the shop here and there. Angie did just enough to get by in school. She didn't get much attention from her teachers. She was admitted to a local college, and enrolled in a bunch of classes that sounded interesting enough, but she didn't know what she wanted to study.

After her first semester, Angie needed some money so she "officially" began working at her uncle's body shop part-time. A semester later, she dropped out and began working there full-time. Angie's uncle passed four years later, and left her the shop in his will. In the eight-and-a-half years since, Angie has built a successful business, hired someone to help her with the books and day-to-day maintenance, and opened another shop. Angie has plans to open a third location in an upper middle class area in New Jersey where she now lives with her husband and five-year-old daughter. Angie is happy and is a well-regarded member of the community where she grew up. She has contributed to several local charities, including her former church and little league team near her old neighborhood.

Which one of these people is smarter?

Admittedly, I put my thumb on the scale for Angie, hoping that you would see her as the smarter one, but to be fair, the question itself is unfair and we should probably all stop asking it.

The idea of "smart" vs. "dumb" is outdated and unfair. It is an idea that is, forgive me, quite dumb, past its prime and past its time. Comparing the intelligence of two different people is like using *Play-Doh* to brush your teeth: That is to say, it doesn't make any sense. It hurts people emotionally to think that they are not smart and puts a vague, unfair burden on people who "make the grade[s]."

Instead of talking about "smarts," we should be talking about adaptation. For now, Angie appears to be adapting more effectively than John, but that could change, for both of them. The world is changing and the question is how do we effectively change with it.

Angie is using her knowledge of cars, business, and people, to earn a good living, take care of herself and her family, create jobs, and give back to her community. John, on the other hand is using his intelligence to earn a degree that is not really serving him at the present time, and is not helping those around him. If you ever saw the movie *Forrest Gump*, you probably remember the line that Forrest's mother told him, "Stupid is as stupid does." That is true. And so is the corollary: "smart is as smart does." That's what adaptation is all about.

One of Angie's strongest attributes is her will and resilience. She has had the wherewithal to overcome and overwhelm a world that told her that she is not particularly smart because she didn't, or possibly couldn't, jump through each academic hoop that came her way. Also, in this case, here is a woman who has succeeded in a historically male-dominated business, despite the fact that people have undoubtedly doubted her skills because of her gender.

As a child, Angie was, what I have come to call, a "square peg kid," a person who had lots of wonderful qualities, but didn't fit into the traditional educational framework. Most people who fall into this category fall through the cracks in the system. Some people, like Angie, rise above it, but others become so disheartened by the stings of life that by the time they reach adulthood, they simply shut down and stop trying. As a clinical psychologist, I see a lot of people in my practice who are perfectly bright and lovely, but who feel that because they did not do well in school that somehow they are flawed human beings.

If we begin thinking about how we (and our kids) have adapted to our environments rather than how "smart" we are, we will all be better served. It is both more useful and more emotionally healthy to do so. When we stop thinking about intelligence as a static and comparable trait, and start thinking about how we adapt to our circumstances, we will all be better off because we will open up a more inclusive space for personal growth. This new way of thinking may even help us to preserve the spirit and talents of more of our "square peg" kids, and in doing so, strengthens our country's hand as well.

Top 10 Smartest People Alive Today

www.bitrebels.com

As we all know, there are some pretty clever people in the world. There are people who have been able to redefine physics, chemistry, biology and our entire outlook on life itself with seemingly no instruments at all. There's no doubt **Einstein** is one of these people, and his name has become synonymous with the word genius. Maybe it's because he managed to figure out some of the world's most elusive mathematical problems. Einstein is said to have had an IQ over 200, and he is regarded as one of the smartest people to ever walk this earth. Did you know that when looking at the top 10 smartest people alive today, there are several who surpass Einstein's intelligence. It's quite intriguing, isn't it?

Even though IQ and intelligence are measurable metrics, I still have a hard time labeling people based on their intelligence. I think being labeled does something to us that isn't good for overall creativity. Creative thinking has such a broad perspective that measuring intelligence in each area would not only be almost impossible, but also very time consuming. It would be time consuming enough to possibly deem the whole measurement a waste of time to begin with.

However, measuring IQ and folding it on paper as a top 10 smartest metric is the only way that everyone will understand and get an overview of it. Some people are smarter than others, it's just what we are all used to, but there are of course different kinds of smart. You can be a mathematical genius but have no skills at all when you are out in public and trying to communicate. You can be someone who is able to accurately predict the future, but your short term predictions might fail catastrophically. Then what does it mean if you are on the top 10 smartest people list?

In a fresh infographic called **Top 10 Smartest People Alive Today** from **Super Scholar**, we are treated to some quite impressively smart people and some basic information about their backgrounds. There's no doubt all of these people are at a level apart from us ordinary people. Let's take **Terrence Tao** for example. He is 36 years old and is considered the smartest person on this infographic. It would be easy to call him the smartest person alive, but I am sure there are a few people out there who would have objections about that, so I have decided to keep away from it.

Mr. Tao is said to have an IQ of 230, which of course when compared to Einstein's 200 is quite impressive. Tao was actually the youngest participant in the **Mathematical Olympiad**, and he won when he was just 13 years old. Again, it's all about mathematics. What's more interesting is that as of today, Tao has published over 230 research papers, which in itself is a feat. What they are all about I could only speculate.

Do you think you would fit in with this top 10 smartest people list? Have you ever taken a real IQ test? Maybe you are even a member of MENSA, who knows. It's good to know that the intelligence of mankind is going up. Maybe one day we'll see a stop to all the stupid things we are doing to each other and the world, or maybe we will become worse. Most of these people have chosen a more laid back approach to everything except their mathematical connection to the world, which in itself is one less problem to worry about.



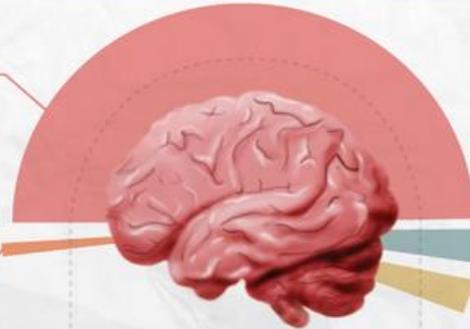
SMARTEST PEOPLE

JUDGING HOW SMART A PERSON IS CAN BE A VERY SUBJECTIVE MATTER. DOES THEIR IQ SCORE MAKE THEM THE SMARTEST? OR IS IT MORE ABOUT ACCOMPLISHMENTS? THE DEBATE OVER THIS LIKELY WILL NEVER CEASE. BELOW, THOUGH, ARE 10 PEOPLE (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER) THAT NOBODY WOULD DENY ARE UNWORTHY OF BEING CALLED THE SMARTEST PEOPLE ALIVE TODAY.

JUST HOW SMART IS SMART?

50%
of people have IQ scores between **90 and 110**

0.5%
of people are near genius or genius **(over 140)**



2.5%
of people are mentally deficient / impaired **(under 70)**

2.5%
of people are very superior in intelligence **(over 130)**



STEPHEN W. HAWKING AGE 70

Probably the most recognized name on this list.

Stephen Hawking has made a name for himself with his groundbreaking research into theoretical physics as well as authoring books that have

helped us mere mortals understand the universe.

All while facing the debilitating effects of ALS.

IQ 160

Author of 7 bestselling books

Recipient of 14 awards of recognition

KIM UNG-YONG

AGE 50

*The phrase **child prodigy** gets tossed around so much these days, but in the case of Kim Ung-Yong, child prodigy is an understatement.*

The Guinness Book of World Records lists him as having the highest confirmed IQ in the world.

By the age of 2, he was fluent in four languages, and by age 4 was auditing college courses.

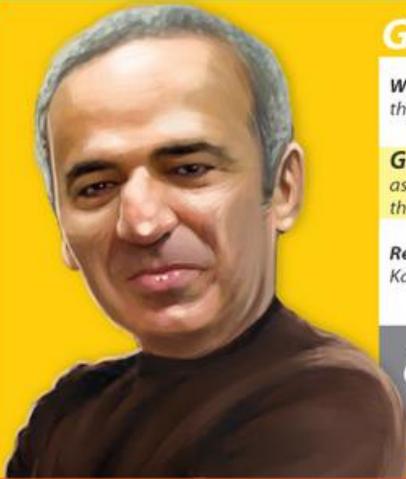
If that wasn't enough, he was invited by NASA to study in the United States by the ripe old age of only 8.

IQ 210

Worked for NASA as a teenager!

Child prodigy.





GARRY KASPAROV

AGE 49

While he may have lost at chess to a computer, we won't hold that against him.

Garry Kasparov holds the record

as the youngest undisputed world chess champion, when he won the title at the age of 22.

Retiring from the sport in 2005,

Kasparov now dedicates his time to politics, and writing.

IQ 190



Ran for President Of Russia



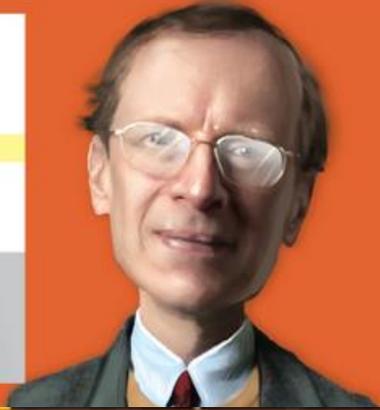
Founder of the United Civil Front

Holds the record for longest stretch as the No. 1-rated chess player.

SIR ANDREW WILES

AGE 59

In 1995, British mathematician Sir Andrew Wiles proved the 358-year-old it should say mathematical theory "Fermat's Last Theorem," which was widely regarded as the most difficult math problem in the world.



IQ 170



Knighted for his contributions to mathematics

Recipient of 15 prizes in math and science



PAUL ALLEN

AGE 59

As the co-founder of Microsoft, Paul Allen is definitely the most successful in turning his brain power into riches.

With \$14.2 billion

Allen is ranked as the 48th richest person in the world, owns multiple companies and sports teams and is one of the world's biggest philanthropists.

IQ 170



Scored a perfect 1600 on the SAT



Net worth: 14.2 Billion

RICK ROSNER

AGE 52

With an IQ of 192, you wouldn't think Rick Rosner's job title would be that of a television writer who most recently worked for Jimmy Kimmel.

But then again, he isn't your average genius.

In fact, his resume includes stints as a stripper, roller-skating waiter, bouncer, and nude model.



IQ 192



Changed his name to stay in high school into his 20s.



JUDIT POLGAR

AGE 35

Her father raised both her and her sisters in an experiment in education by attempting to prove that children could make exceptional achievements if trained in a specialist subject from a very early age.

We would have to say his experiment was a success.

At the ripe old age of 15, Judit Polgar beat Bobby Fisher, becoming the youngest grandmaster of chess at the time.

IQ
170



Child prodigy



Did we mention she beat Bobby Fisher at chess when she was only 15?

CHRISTOPHER HIRATA

AGE 30

Christopher Hirata is one of those people even smart people are jealous of.

By 14, he had entered Caltech

By 16, he was working with NASA on projects dealing with colonizing Mars and he earned his PhD in astrophysics from Princeton at age 22.

IQ
225



Child prodigy



Youngest American (at 13) to win a gold medal in the International Physics Olympiad



TERRENCE TAO

AGE 36

Tao credits his start in mathematics to watching Sesame Street as a toddler.

By the age of 2, while most of us are still getting adjusted to walking, and talking, Tao was able to calculate basic arithmetic.

By age 9, he was taking college level math courses, and received a Ph.D from Princeton at 20.

At 24, he became the youngest ever full professor at UCLA.

IQ
230



Tao was the youngest participant to date in the International Mathematical Olympiad, winning the gold medal when he was 13.



Tao has published over 230 research papers.



JAMES WOODS

AGE 65

No that's not a typo, James Woods is a genius.

On his SAT, Woods scored a perfect 800 on the verbal and 779 on math.

He enrolled in linear algebra at UCLA while in high school before accepting a full scholarship to MIT, where he caught the acting bug, dropped out of college and never looked back.

One can only imagine what his career would have looked like if he'd stayed in academia.

IQ
180



Won three Emmy Awards



Two Academy Award nominations

