

Reading Comprehension (Reading Explorer)

Read the passage. Click the correct answer for each question.



We all know that certain physical characteristics are inherited. They are determined by the genes we receive from our biological parents. The color of our eyes, whether our hair is straight or curly, the color of our skin, and even whether or not we will develop certain diseases are all characteristics we are born with.

There are other factors that genetically related individuals often share: height, weight, life expectancy. The fact that these tendencies appear to be genetically influenced has caused many people to wonder whether or not psychological characteristics are also determined before we are born.

Nativists are the group of thinkers that believe that our behavior, personality, and mental abilities are all determined by our genetic code. They claim that this theory proves why certain abilities appear early in life. Other abilities are pre-programmed to appear at certain points of life due to maturation, responding to an inner "biological clock."

The opposing group of thinkers, the environmentalists, suggest that the human mind is a tabula rasa or blank slate at birth and it can only be filled by experiences. They conclude that all psychological characteristics and behaviors are the product of learning. Maturation only affects biological aspects and the psychological ones are all governed by our upbringing.

1. What is the purpose of this passage?

- to disprove a specific theory
- to present two opposing theories
- to prove a specific theory

2. Which of the following statements is true about biological parents?

They have the same eye color as their children.

They share genes with their children.

They keep experiences from their children.

3. Which of the following is NOT a genetic trait?

weight

age

hair texture

4. Which of these statements would a nativist disagree with?

Any child can grow into an intelligent adult with the proper education.

Children are not as influenced by their surroundings as some people believe.

The cognitive abilities of the parents are often reflected in their children.

5. Which of these statements would an environmentalist agree with?

Children's thinking skills reflect their parents' cognitive abilities.

Intelligent children will grow up to become intelligent adults in any environment.

Parenting styles affect the personality and development of children and teenagers.