

Rights of Lefties

What do Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon have in common? They were all left-handed! Beginning early in history, **southpaws** were feared, neglected, and punished because use of the left hand was considered evil. In fact, the Latin word for "left" is "**sinister**." Due to this **prejudice** against the left, left-handed people were forced to **switch** hands. This change caused many problems for lefties in school, which resulted in frustration, bad behavior, and high **drop-out** rates. Maybe that is why lefties were **stereotyped** as unintelligent, an idea that could not be further from the truth.

Researchers studying the brain have found differences in the left side and right side of the brain. Researchers believe that people who use more of the left side of their brain tend to be more intelligent. They also tend to use language better and solve problems faster. However, one study also showed that left-brain people tend to have worse memories.

So, which side of the brain do lefties use? Actually, both. Right-handed people use the left side of the brain more, whereas left-handed people use both sides of the brain almost **equally**. The part connecting the two halves of the brain is usually larger in left-handed people. Therefore, information can pass more efficiently from one side of the brain to the other. The left **hemisphere** of the brain controls speech, language, writing, **logic**, mathematics, and science. The right hemisphere controls music, art, creativity, perception, and emotion. Since lefties use both sides, they are often both creative and scientific.

Approximately ten percent of the world is left-handed, and the ratio of left-handed males to left-handed females is two to one. Thankfully, parents and teachers no longer treat left-handedness as a problem to be cured. It may actually contribute to a child's excellence! If allowed to learn and develop in their own way, lefties will **excel** in school. Perhaps one of these lefties might turn out to be the next Einstein or da Vinci.



Scan the passage and complete the notes with the correct information.

males for every
the part connecting

passes more efficiently
the right hemisphere

the left hemisphere
use both hemispheres

I. The brain

- A. The left hemisphere: language, logic, math, science
- B. 1 _____: music, art, creativity, emotion

II. Right-handed and left-handed people

- A. Right-handed people use 2 _____ more
 - i. Have worse memories
- B. Left-handed people 3 _____
 - i. 4 _____ the two halves of the brain is larger
 - Information 5 _____ from one side to the other
 - ii. Ten percent of the population is left-handed
 - iii. There are two left-handed 6 _____ one left-handed female

Writing

Write your own short paragraph by answering the questions below.

My Right Hand

(1) Which hand do you usually use to do things? (2) What are the characteristics of a person who uses that hand? (3) Are you similar to that kind of person? (4) Why or why not?

Example

I usually use my right hand to do things. A right-handed person tends to be logical and scientific. I am similar to a right-handed person. I am good at science and math. Also, I am not very creative.