Are we all getting dumber?

shrouded	crow	reversing	baffled	begs	culprit	decline

Whatever stupid things humanity did in the 20th century, we all had at least one thing to 1._____ about: as measured by IQ tests humans were steadily getting smarter. But recent research has worrying news: this trend seems to be 2._____. Humanity is now officially getting dumber.

It probably shouldn't worry us if some part of the population saw a 3._____ in IQ, but according to this new study it appears to be the entire nation of Norway. When scientists analyzed some 730,000 IQ tests given to Norwegian men before their military service from 1970 to 2009, they found that each generation of Norwegian men appear to be around seven IQ points dumber. That's pretty horrifying news for fans of progress, but it also 4._____ one incredibly important question: Why? What's causing IQ scores to start heading in the wrong direction?

You might first wonder whether some change in the genetic makeup of a particular group has caused the decline (you could call this the 'dumb people have more babies' hypothesis). But that seems to be ruled out by the new research, which shows that even within single families IQ has declined.

So, we know that the 5._____ is nurture rather than nature, but scientists are still 6._____ as to what exact aspect of modern life is driving the decline. Some have proposed that it's our tech obsession, but as the decline started in the 1970s, well before everyone spent their days staring at screens, that can't be the whole story. Other proposed explanations are unhealthy modern diets, increasingly trashy media or a decline in the quality of schooling. Although the exact cause of the decline is 7._____ in mystery, we should all probably start worrying about what our sedentary, screen addicted, junk food-munching lifestyles might be doing to our brains.

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