

# How to measure IQ (with string)

An adaptable activity for topics in psychology

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(For *any class size*, cut one piece of string per student, 27 inches each)

Give each student a piece of string.

Tell students:

1. Wrap the string around your head at forehead level to “measure your brain size.”
2. Pinch the string to mark the size of your head. Stand up and compare the string with other student’s strings until you find someone who has a larger head. Once you find a student with a larger head, go back to your seat.

Once a single student is left standing, the instructor announces that this person will get the best grade in the class because they are the smartest.

# Instructions

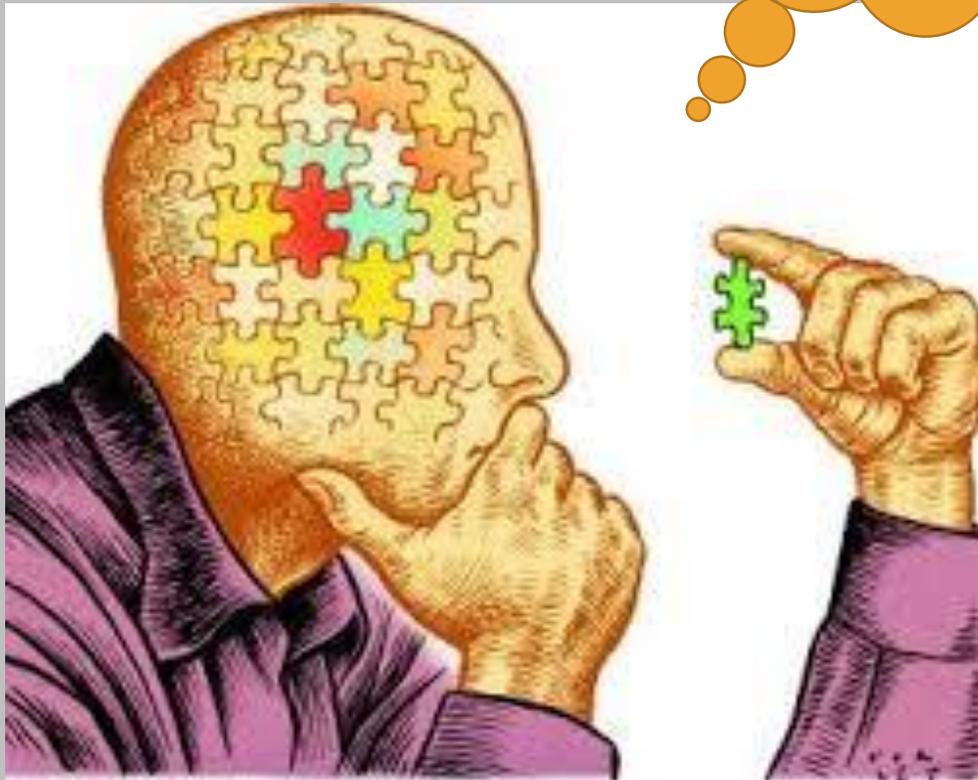


# Purpose

Critical  
Thinking

Skepticism

Total  
Participation



What is the ONE THING YOU WANT YOUR STUDENTS TO WALK AWAY FROM YOUR CLASS REMEMBERING?

# When can I use this?

This activity can be used in a variety of units in Intro Psychology, as well as in upper level topic classes as an ice-breaker activity.

- Social Psychology

- Intelligence and IQ testing

- Research Methods

- Statistics

This can be adapted to any class size.



# Social Psychology

Point out that (whatever gender the student with the largest head circumference is) are smarter than (other gender).

If no student has challenged you at this point, you may ask them if they are suspicious of anything you just said. Ask them why they were suspicious? Ask them why they might have kept going with the activity even though they were suspicious?

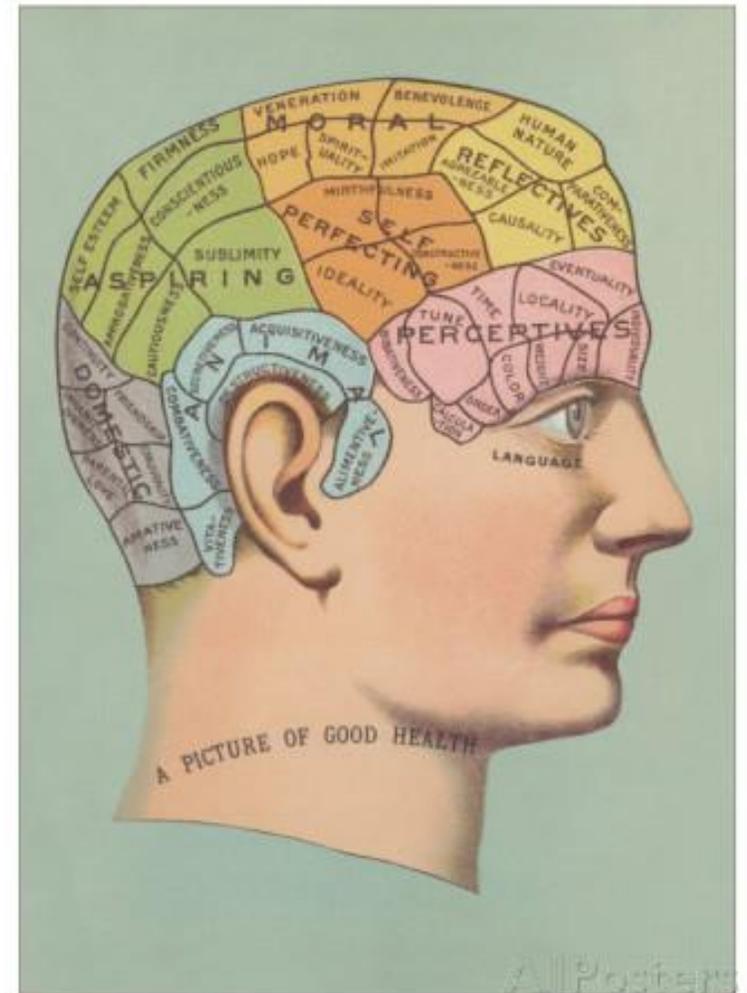
**Because you are a teacher! (an authority figure).**

Show them Milgram video, talk about obedience to authority.

# Intelligence

Early measures of intelligence included phrenology, which is similar to this activity!

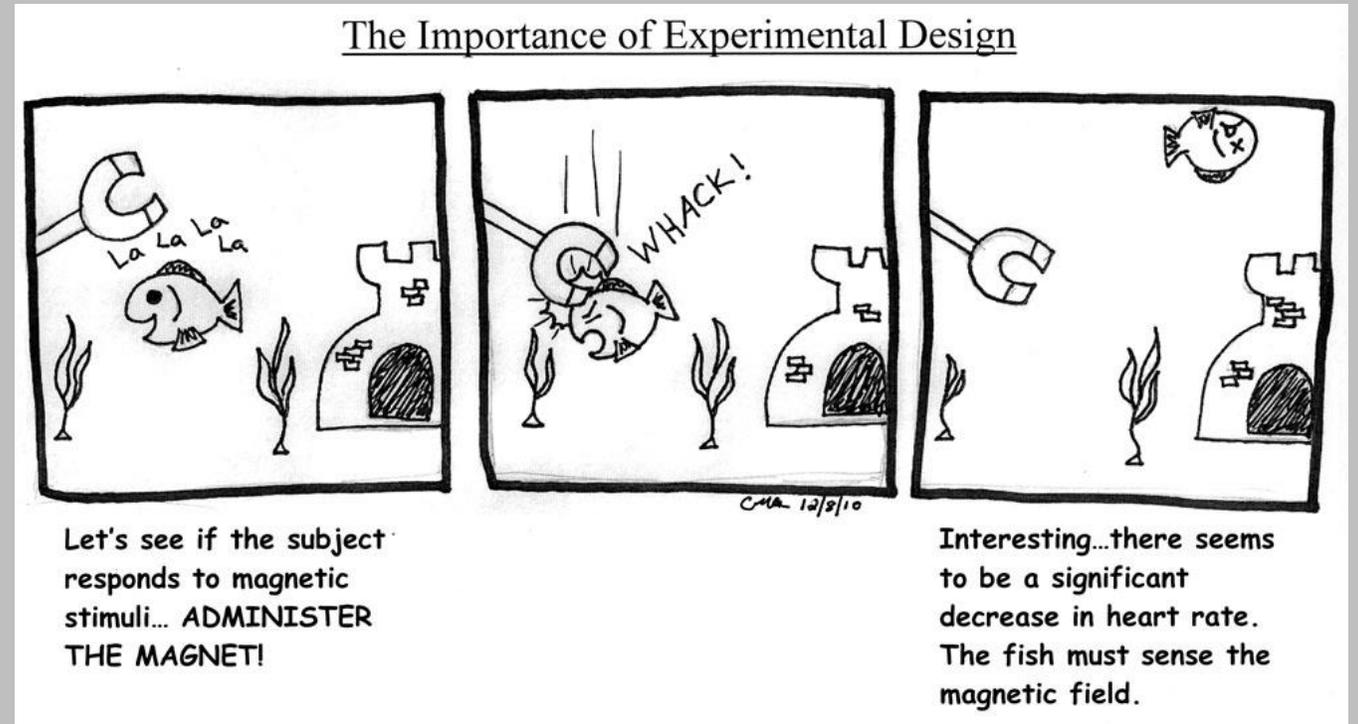
Current measures of intelligence still struggle to accurately measure native intelligence rather than learning!



# Research Methods

What type of research method are we using to study intelligence?

Have we established a causal relationship between head size and intelligence?



# Statistics

Actually measure the string to the nearest 16<sup>th</sup> of an inch (or use centimeters) and collect all the data.

Have the class work together to calculate descriptive statistics on their data, and decide if it is “normally distributed”.

