College Guild
PO Box 6448, Brunswick ME 04011

DOGS
~ Intelligence ~
Unit 2 of 4

"A dog teaches a boy fidelity, perseverance, and to turn around three times before lying down."
~ Robert Benchley ~

"The great pleasure of a dog is that you make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself, too."
~ Samuel Butler ~

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1. What are 3 other words that we use for human "intelligence"? (Example: "brainy")

Testing for math and language skills is usually what is used to arrive at a human "IQ." IQ, or Intelligence Quotient, compares your responses on certain tests to what the average should be for your age – 100. That's why when you hear, "That guy has a 200 IQ," it means s/he's really brainy! Telling someone s/he has an IQ of 20 is a major insult.

Despite tests for IQ, intelligence in humans doesn't have a clear cut definition. We can come up with other kinds of examples, such as how long it takes to learn to knit, winning at chess, being able to write a creative poem, etc. Social IQ is another way to judge intelligence: how to talk to your neighbor vs. a stranger; how to act with the warden vs. your cell mate, etc.

2. How would you define human intelligence (IQ) to cover all situations?

3. Design a test to measure intelligence.

However, this course isn't about humans.

4. How would you define intelligence when it comes to DOGS?

As impossible as it may be to come up with a perfect definition, there is at least one official test to measure canine IQ. In giving the test, the requirement for the tester is to stay calm – don't fuss at the dog, raise your voice, act disgusted or overexcited. If the dog doesn't think of the whole thing as a game, forget it. Of course, the breeds who are anxious to please their owners cooperate anyway.

The other problem is the tester's ability to perform. If the tester uses the wrong tone of voice, encourages the dog, or speaks at inappropriate times, the test results will be questionable.

5. Design a test where the tester does not speak.

6. Design a test where the tester uses commands.

7. Design a test where the tester demonstrates to the dog what he wants the dog to do.

In the official test for "Obedience and Working Intelligence," the following are measured:

> Learning through observation
> Problem solving
> Learning by paying attention
> Social learning
> Short term memory
> Long term memory
> Manipulation ability
> Language comprehension
> How the dog learns

8. Pick one of the above and explain what it means and how you would see it in the dog's behavior during an average day.

The canine IQ Test has 12 steps, and they get harder as you go along. The dogs are scored from 1 to 5 (the highest). Here's the explanation for the first test.

TEST 1

The first test is a measure of *observational learning* as it applies to an everyday association that the dog should have learned simply through living in its current home. This test provides an easy starting point for testing your dog's adaptive intelligence.

Select a time of day when you do *not* typically walk your dog. Make sure your dog is awake and in the same general area that you are. When the dog looks at you, *silently* pick up your coat and keys and the dog's leash (if you usually use one) and then stop where you are, without moving toward the door. If the dog runs to the door or comes directly to you indicating some excitement or interest, score 5. If not, move directly to the door and then stop. If the dog comes to you in anticipation of a walk or going out, score 4. If not, place your hand on the doorknob, and turn it back and forth to make a noise. If the dog comes to you, score 3. If the dog pays some attention during the preceding activities but does not come to you or the door, score 2. If the dog pays no attention, score 1.
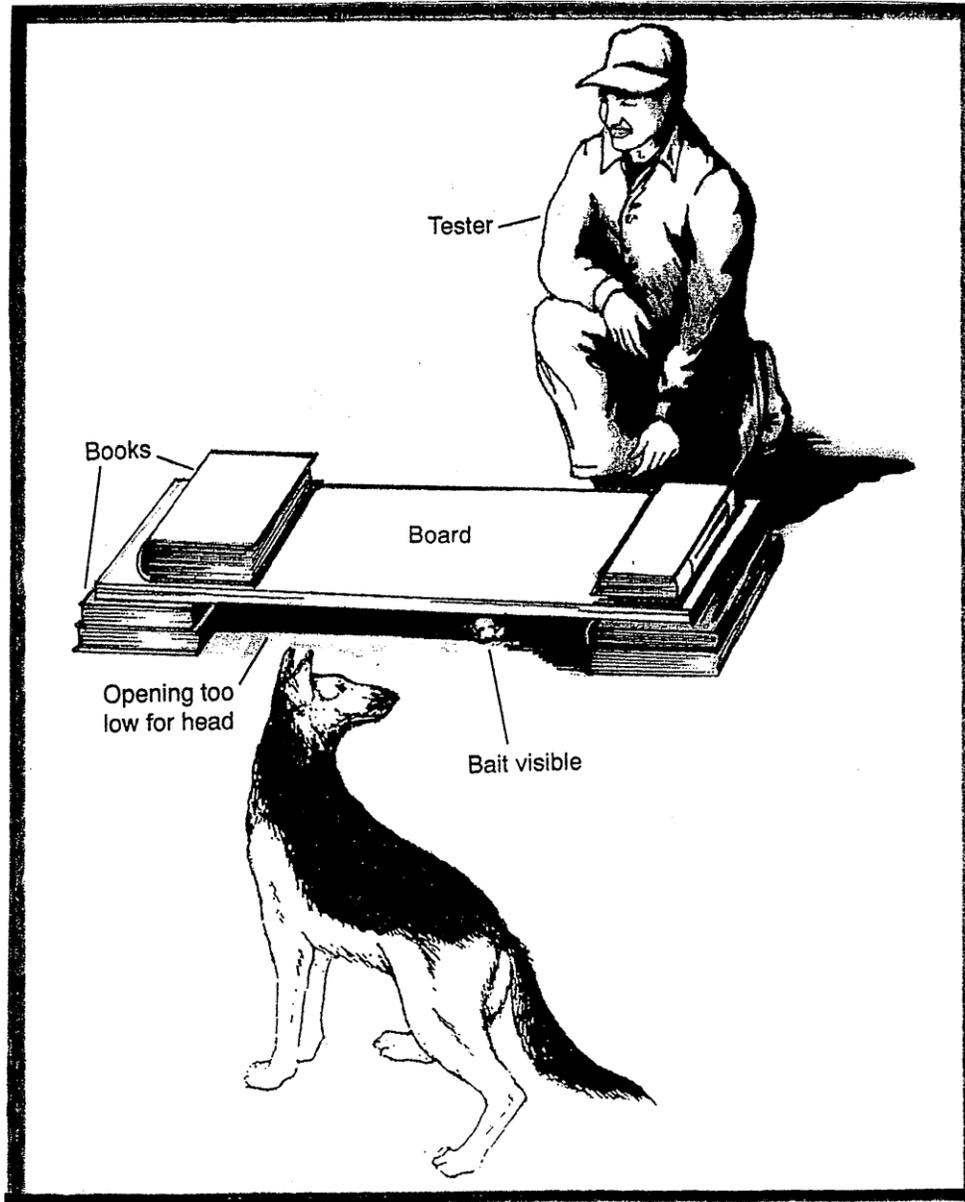
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9. What if the dog doesn't want to go for a walk? Does that mean he's more (or less?) intelligent because he has a different opinion than his owner's?

10. How would you measure intelligence using your dog's normal behavior when he's home?

Other parts of the Canine IQ Test:

      a. Put a bit of food under a tin can and see how long it takes the dog to knock over the can.

      b. Rearrange a room when the dog isn't there and see if he notices.

      c. Throw a towel over the dog's head and time how long it takes him to get it off.

This next step measures "problem solving and manipulation ability." The dog has to get some food that he cannot reach with his nose. He has to figure that out and then use his paws. How long it takes him is how he is graded.
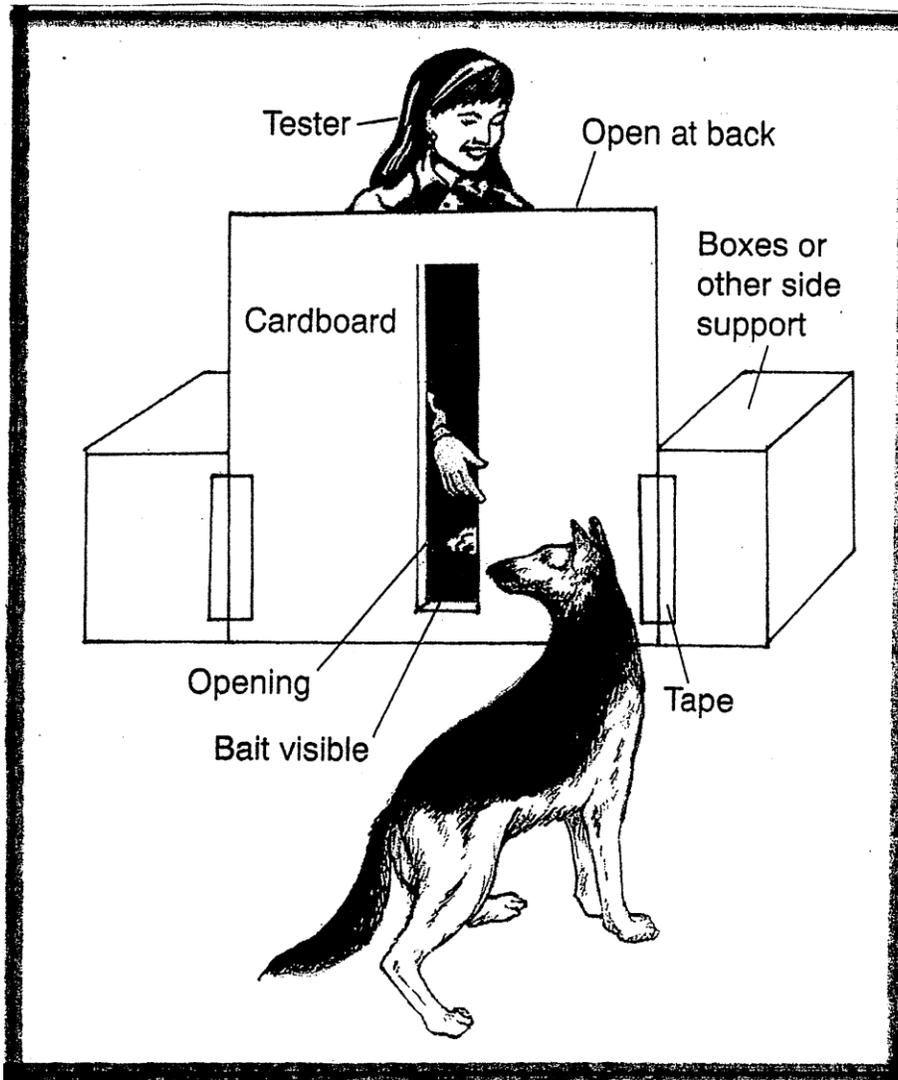

11. Design and describe another test for the same skills. How would the tester be acting?

12. Draw a picture of your test set-up.

The 12th and last part of the Dog IQ Test is the hardest. It's like the previous problem – solving one, but it requires the dog to have a broader picture of the problem. He has to step back enough to figure out how to get the food by going behind a barrier instead of under it.

The highest score is 5, when the dog can get the food within 15 seconds. The lowest is zero, when the dog has made no effort to try and get the food for 2 minutes.

13. What would the behavior be for a score of 2? A score of 3? A score of 4?

14. What is a test you could give a human to measure problem solving?

15. What is the dog's opinion of all this testing?

16. In your experience with dogs, which breed seemed to be the most intelligent?
   (To answer this question, a mixed breed, or "mutt" can be considered a breed.)

17. Which breed(s) of dogs have been part of your family, or are you most familiar with?

18. Which breed of dog would you choose to have? Why?

There have been amazing stories of dogs able to trail their owners for long distances to a place where the dog has never been – an ability comparable to ESP in humans. There have been hundreds of cases reported of this psychic kind of intelligence. One very early, famous example concerns "Prince," a dog who in World War I swam across the English Channel (21 miles) and found his owner in France. Another is about a dog whose family moved from New York to California. Eleven months later, the dog showed up at their new home!

19. Write a story about a dog with this kind of ESP.

An old children's song goes:

How much is that doggy in the window,
The one with the waggley tail?
How much is that doggy in the window?
I do hope that doggy's for sale.

20. If you were buying a doggy, would you want to buy a brainy or a below average one? Explain in a poem.

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Remember: First names only & please let us know if your address changes

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