A Brief History of IQ tests
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Standardized IQ Tests

The term “IQ” was coined by a German psychologist named William Stern as an acronym for *Intelligenz-Quotient*. IQ was a score derived from one of a number of standardized tests (psychologist-administered) designed to access one’s intelligence. In the beginning, researchers questioned whether human intelligence could actually—and accurately—be measured. While interest in the measuring of intelligence dates back millennia, it was not until relatively recently that the first IQ test was born. In 1904, French government officials asked psychologist Alfred Binet to help them decide which students were most likely to experience difficulty in school, since they needed a way to identify and help these youngsters. (Primary school education was mandatory in France). Binet asked a colleague, Theodore Simon, to help him create a test with questions focusing on practical matters such as attention, memory and problem solving, things the children were not taught in school. Some children were able to answer more advanced questions than their age group, and so, based on these observations, the now classical concept of *mental age* came into being. Their test, the *Binet - Simon Scale*, was the first standardized IQ test.

By 1916, Stanford University psychologist Lewis Terman had taken the Binet - Simon scale and adapted it the American public. The Binet–Simon Scale (adapted) was named the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale* and soon became the standard intelligence test—for several decades—in the United States. The Stanford-Binet, as it is called, used (and uses) a single number known as IQ (“intelligence quotient”) to represent an individual’s score on the test.

One’s IQ was originally determined by dividing the test taker’s mental age by his chronological age and multiplying the resulting quotient by 100. Needless to say, the works only for—or best for—children. For example, a child with a mental age of 13.2 years and a chronological age of 10 would have an IQ of 132—and be eligible for Mensa! (13.2 ÷ 10 x 100 = 132). During World War I, several tests were developed by the United States Army with an eye to screening recruits and determining eligibility for certain military jobs. The Army Alpha was a written test and the Army Beta was administered only in cases where the recruits were illiterate. These and other IQ tests were eventually used for a less than admirable purpose, screening new immigrants as they entered the United States from Ellis Island. IQ test results were inappropriately used to make sweeping generalizations and to verify the claim of “surprisingly low intelligence” of Jewish and Southern European immigrants. These test results and outlandish claims led to a then popular proposal by the “racially motivated” psychologist H.H. Goddard—and others (1920)—to enable Congress to enact restrictions in immigration. Despite the fact that the tests administered were in *English only* and the vast majority of the immigrants could not understand that language, the United States government deported many thousands of worthy
individuals whom they unfortunately labeled as “unfit” or “undesirable.” And this took place a full decade or so before the news began to trickle in from Nazi Germany about Adolph Hitler’s new eugenics! This is, indeed, a sad chapter in the history of the United States of America.

In 1955, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale made its debut. The WAIS, as it is called, was psychologist Robert Wechsler’s first test, and the WISC (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children) and the Wechsler Preschool Primary Intelligence Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) were developed later. The adult version has since gone through three revisions: WAIS-R (Revised, 1981), the WAIS-III (1997), and, in 2008, the WAIS – IV made its first appearance in the United States. The WAIS-IV is still not available in a number of countries; and it has not been officially translated and sanctioned in Spanish (at least not in Mexico, where I call home).

Rather than scoring the test on a chronological and mental age-related scale and norm, as was the case with the Stanford-Binet, all versions of the WAIS are scored by comparing the test taker’s score to those of other test takers in the same age group. The average IQ score (worldwide) is 100 with 2/3 of the scores lying in the “normal” range, between 85 and 115. The WAIS norms have become the standard in IQ testing, and they are also used in the Stanford-Binet, with the exception of the WAIS Standard Deviation of 15. The Stanford Binet has an SD of 16, and at least one Cattell test “boasts” an SD of 23.8; often reporting very flattering IQ scores that, in reality, are really a bit deceptive.

High Range IQ Tests and the Wealth—and Dearth—of the Brain

For “genius types”, high range IQ tests just may be their refuge and haven. For many others, high range IQ tests are fun, challenging, and they provide the test taker with a wealth of insight. Many high range tests have an average score fixed at about 145 or 150. The “gamut” measured by these tests is usually between IQ 120 and 190. Below 120 there can be no realistic reporting of one’s score (with perhaps 0 correct on the test); and above 190 (200 on some tests), IQ scores are very difficult to interpolate and report, but not impossible.

Paul Cooijmans of The Netherlands is considered the founding father of high range IQ tests and he is the creator of most of the original—and now classic—high range IQ tests. He is also the founder and administrator of super high IQ societies, such as the Glia Society, The Giga Society and the Grail Society. Among Cooijmans’ most famous and popular tests are The Test For Genius, The Nemesis Test and Qoymans’ Multiple Choice Test. Cooijmans presence, influence and participation are factors to be considered and they are integral to the ethos of high range IQ tests and societies. Other classical (and new) high range IQ test gurus include Ron Hoeflin, Robert Lato, Laurent Dubois, Mislav Predavec, Jonathon Wai, Kenneth Ferrell, Jeff Leonard, Jason Betts and Ivan Ivec. All are experienced and well-qualified.

(Nota Bene: There are no women high range IQ test authors).
With just a tiny bit of knowledge at my then immediate disposal, I asked Ivan Ivec, a 36-year old Croatian and Mensan, and Jason Betts, an Australian from the island of Tasmania and also a Mensa Member, for adequate descriptions of-and the purpose and value of high range IQ testing. Both of these men are IQ test authors (“creators”) in the high range—and both have very high IQs. I immediately found out that, aside from their inherent difficulty, high range IQ tests have yet another very noteworthy quality—they have no time limit! And, after you have finished, you (usually) have the option to send your answer sheet (“better” sent with brief explanations for each answer…) to the test administrator (usually the author) either by email or by postal mail.

According to Betts “There are different types of intelligence that manifest differently at different levels. We know people have different skills and levels of different types of intelligence—such as verbal, patterned, spacial, conceptual, mathematical—but there are different WAYS of g to manifest [sic], i.e., logical, lateral, convergent, linear, divergent [and] even (gasp!) inspirational and genius!”

Both high range IQ tests and standardized IQ tests show and report the manifestation of a g-factor, or “general intelligence factor”; but g is manifest in different ways. “And that’s why high range tests work. They really work” states Betts.

Both Jason Betts and Ivan Ivec claim that a test taker will achieve a similar score on a high range IQ test as he would on a standardized IQ test, such as the WAIS, the RAPM, the CFIT and the Stanford-Binet. (This claim may be equally debatable, however, given the human condition and the fact that IQ scores may rise or fall substantially, depending upon one’s physical and mental state ((mood)) at test time). Ivec informs us that another benefit of high range tests is that they are relatively inexpensive (10€ or $15 in most cases—and sometimes free!); and there are contests when favorite IQ tests are featured or new IQ tests are debuted. With lucrative prizes on occasion, these contests can be a “big money draw” for many eager participants. Both Ivec and Betts hold contests and feature a test of the month to introduce a new test, advertise a favorite test or to attract participants in order to norm a high range IQ test.

According to Ivec, “The main complaint that mainly [sic] refers to IQ tests is that they generally require a certain knowledge, such as mathematics, and therefore, they are not culturally unbiased. It should be understood that this knowledge [knowledge needed for high range tests] is mainly on [sic] the primary school level, and so, these criticisms are often reckless, if not malicious.”He continues, “However, for a complete insight into their own abilities, people are encouraged to take more tests of different types and, preferably, from different authors.”

Ivec’s special IQ society and his high range IQ tests can be found at www.ultimaiq.net. Jason Betts’ tests (as well as those tests of a score or more other authors) can be found on the World Genius Directory at www.psiq.org. Jason Betts is the author, editor and publisher of the World Genius Directory. I encourage you all to visit both sites, do your reading and
investigating, and, by all means, download and print a high range IQ test. Then get comfortable—but not too comfortable—in your long-duration leisure chair and try to get a genius’ score. Perhaps you will be pleasantly surprised—after all, you only need to score “average.”

I have lately become “addicted” to high range IQ tests, but I have yet to cover the spectrum of special abilities these tests challenge. “Addicted…”? Well, not really, but—almost! I am not expert test taker—far from it—and some tests are more difficult than others. But, I much prefer sitting down and struggling through my latest high range IQ test challenge to paying “good money” to see the highly flaunted yet pathetic, lukewarm, uncreative, poorly-directed and pitifully-portrayed vampire “flick” (movie) that is currently the rage. Maybe Hollywood needs more “high range” directors like George Lucas and Quentin Tarantino in its midst.

High range IQ tests are the next best thing to paper money and hot bread! But remember, an IQ test does not define us. Our lifetime of achievements, our ambitions our goals and our resourcefulness are far more valuable assets in our estimation of self.

Enjoy the test!