
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Take Away English 隨身英語

Are we born to love learning? 人天生就愛學習嗎？



字彙 : *philomath* 愛學問的人

Are you the kind of person who hated school? Or are you more like Michael Nicholson, who can't stop learning? He currently has 30 degrees including 22 **master's** and a **doctorate**! If you're also passionate about studying, you might be a philomath – a person who loves to learn and study. The word comes from Greek with 'phil' meaning 'a lover of' and 'math' meaning 'learning'.

Humans are all philomaths to an extent – our brain is **hardwired** to be **curious**. We want to learn and understand, partly to make sense of the world but also because of something called **neoteny**. This is a term that refers to the **juvenile characteristics** of some animals, including humans, being **retained** into adulthood. One of these **traits** is **neuroplasticity**, which helps our brains stay flexible – this gives us the ability to learn throughout our lives. Many creatures which are **genetically close** to us, like **primates**, can't do this and only learn during their **adolescence**.

But for every person who loves learning, there are plenty who can't stand it. Lots of people remember their school days as being boring or even pointless. Why is this? **Educational anthropologists** have suggested that if a **concept** or idea is too **complex** or dull, it becomes harder to link old and new ideas together. If that's the case, we lose **motivation** and **absorb** less information. This negative experience of education at school may lead to people avoiding learning opportunities in later life. -

So, don't let a bad educational experience prevent you learning something new as an adult. **Evolution** has made us **lifelong learners**, so take advantage of your biology and discover your inner philomath. Who knows what you could achieve?

字彙表

master's	碩士學位
doctorate	博士學位
hardwired	天生的，本能的
curious	好奇的
neoteny	幼態持續，幼稚
juvenile characteristics	幼年特徵
retain	保留
trait	特徵
neuroplasticity	神經可塑性
genetically close	基因相近的
primate	靈長類動物
adolescence	青春期
educational anthropologist	教育人類學家
concept	概念
complex	複雜的
motivation	積極性，動力
absorb	掌握
evolution	進化
lifelong learner	終身學習者

測驗與練習

1. 閱讀課文並回答問題。

1. True or False? *Michael Nicholson has 22 degrees.*
2. Which language does the word 'philomath' come from?
3. Why does the writer say 'humans are all philomaths to an extent'?
4. True or False? *Neuroplasticity helps humans learn throughout their lives.*
5. Why is it difficult to absorb information that is too complex or dull?

2. 選擇意思恰當的單字或片語來完成下列句子。

1. A common _____ of children's TV is humour.

philomath	characteristic	primate	concept
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2. Some exam questions were very _____. I couldn't answer them.

hardwired	flexible	complex	lifelong
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3. He struggles to _____ when he isn't interested in the subject.

retain	absorb	link	learn
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4. After four years of studying, she graduated and got her _____.

traits	evolution	doctorate	adolescence
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5. The dog was _____ of the new food. He sniffed it before trying it.

curious	educational	master's	pointless
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答案

1. 閱讀課文並回答問題。

1. True or False? *Michael Nicholson has 22 degrees.*

False. He currently has 30 degrees including 22 master's degrees and a doctorate.

2. Which language does the word 'philomath' come from?

It comes from Greek with 'phil' meaning 'a lover of' and 'math' meaning 'learning'.

3. Why does the writer say 'humans are all philomaths to an extent'?

Because our brain is hardwired to be curious.

4. True or False? *Neuroplasticity helps humans learn throughout their lives.*

True. It helps our brains stay flexible.

5. Why is it difficult to absorb information that is too complex or dull?

Because it becomes harder to link old and new ideas together, so we lose motivation.

2. 選擇意思恰當的單字或片語來完成下列句子。

1. A common **characteristic** of children's TV is humour.

2. Some exam questions were very **complex**. I couldn't answer them.

3. He struggles to **learn** when he isn't interested in the subject.

4. After four years of studying, she graduated and got her **doctorate**.

5. The dog was **curious** of the new food. He sniffed it before trying it.