You have read the excerpt about genetic and environmental influences on I.Q. scores, from “Psychology”, by H. Gleitman.

Form a group of 3 or 4 students. Working with your group, consider the following questions. (We will then discuss them as a whole class.)

1. Why is it difficult to distinguish between genetic and environmental influences?

2. What evidence is there for the existence of *genetic* influences on I.Q. scores? (List as many different pieces of evidence as you can.) Do you find this evidence convincing? Why or why not?

3. What evidence is there for the existence of *environmental* influences on I.Q. scores? (List as many different pieces of evidence as you can.) Do you find this evidence convincing? Why or why not?

4. What influences on a child’s intellectual development could be classified as “environmental”? (List as many examples as you can.) Are all of these influences taken into account in the environmental studies cited in the excerpt? How might these additional influences affect the correlations in the studies?

5. What point is being made by the example of “two samples of seed”, on page 621?

6. What are the implications of this whole “genetic vs. environmental” debate on questions of mathematics ability and *race*?

7. What are the implications of this whole “genetic vs. environmental” debate on questions of mathematics ability and *gender*?

Reading assignment for next week: Read the (one-page) excerpt from “Innumeracy: Mathematical illiteracy and its consequences”, by J.A. Paulos; and the (three-page) excerpt from “Mathematics for the public”, by E.J. Barbeau (a professor at the University of Toronto).