

Name: _____

Date: _____

A Vocab Test for the Overachiever

Section One: Definitions

Select the option that best matches the definition of the provided word.

1) Define *pride*.

- a) a school motto, because your mascot is a lion. They hand out “PRIDE tickets,” which can be entered into a weekly drawing. You don’t receive one until fifth grade because you are a well-behaved child. Your actions don’t get praise because you already meet the expectations and thus don’t require the extra motivation.
- b) the feeling you get when you learn that your GPA is a 5.02, quickly diminished when you realize that doesn’t even place you in the top 10 of your class.
- c) what your parents seem to feel toward you. Your mother posts your accomplishments on Facebook so her mutuals from ten years ago can give it a quick thumbs-up emoji and move on with their day. Your father tells you he’s proud enough as it is, but proud enough isn’t enough for you.
- d) the first of the seven deadly sins, though it doesn’t seem all that deadly in moderation.

2) Define *cohort*.

- a) the people you fall with. The kids whose potential you see drain out of them when burnout hits. One of you ends it all, three months before graduation. You sit in the gifted classroom with a friend you haven’t spoken to in years and grieve in rueful silence.
- b) the people you let go. Friends you probably will never see in person again. Friends whose lives you only get glimpses of from their Instagram posts. Just a few years ago you told each other everything.
- c) the people you grow beside. There were six of you in elementary school. In sixth grade, you sat in the hallway during math class and played candy heart bingo for hours on end because if one of you knew the content, surely you all did, and why bother sitting in a classroom?
- d) the people you compete against. What stands between you and your perception of greatness.

3) Define *smart*.

- a) the thing you were told you were in second grade when they pulled you out of the classroom with a handful of other kids and sent you to a renovated closet so you could do a research presentation on spiders for “enrichment.”
- b) the thing you internalized. The thing that rooted itself deeper every time you saw yourself as something other. Better, even.
- c) the thing you incorporated into your identity to the point where the fear of being wrong sometimes outweighs the desire to learn. If you’re not naturally perfect, then what are you?
- d) the thing you’re not supposed to tell kids they are anymore. Their egos become overinflated (allegedly), though the opposite seems more true. Everything is a competition because there’s only so much praise to go around.

4) Define *nerd*.

- a) a term used by your sister when she’s upset that she has to live up to your image in the eyes of the teachers. She’ll text you “why do you have to be smart” and “are you snapchat AI cuz u both gave me the same answer,” or she’ll call you and begin with “hey nerd” as a way of greeting. Most of the time it’s a joke. Probably.
- b) a candy, but not the one they used to explain to you that you were different. There are 100 red candies in a bowl. 95 of them are strawberry, and 5 of them are cherry, and you’re one of the cherries, but it’s okay because they all look the same.
- c) a joke that conveys a “why would you do that to yourself” kind of message. What you call your triple-STEM-major friend, or your father when he recites movie lines word for word. Affectionate disbelief.
- d) a label you wear. Most people do, at one point in their lives, whether they want to or not. Everyone loves something unabashedly. Could ramble on about it for hours, if not for the fear of being judged.

5) Define *gifted*.

- a) a tag applied to children whose minds don't function the way the other children's do. Some studies identify five types of "overexcitabilities" in gifted children, many of which align with other forms of neurodivergency. These are often ignored because gifted children are—for the most part—high functioning.
- b) a word that evokes the nature versus nurture debate. Do you perform well academically because the material naturally comes easier to you than your peers, or did your preschool teachers excel at preparing you and give you a head start?
- c) an exclusive group whose members are determined by a test you take in first grade that then shifts your entire future. Your friend graduates with a higher GPA and she far exceeds your math abilities, and a test she took at age six deemed her "lesser" in a sense.
- d) a trait that became a part of your identity in elementary school. Something you don't mention frequently today. Gifted kids turn into burnt-out adults like everyone else.

Section Two: Short Answer

In no more than a sentence, answer the following prompts to the best of your ability.

- 1) What is your potential? Do you think you'll ever reach it, or will you be permanently stuck in the limbo between good and great?
- 2) Is second-best any better than worst?
- 3) If all children are special, are any of them?
- 4) Where did we go wrong?