

THE COLLEGE APTITUDE TEST

“Johnson! Have you assembled the test-writing task force?” asked Wilfred Wigglethorpe, the head of the organization who created the college aptitude test, the ACT. Wilfred Wigglethorpe was a proud man, descending from a distinguished line of Wigglethorpes who toured the world to find lands to plunder, horses to steal, and children to murder. This same spirit lived on in Wilfred, who always had the same desires—all except for the stealing of horses, of which he detested, and he referred to the animals frequently as “huge, goofy-looking rats.”

“Yes, sir. Just as you requested,” replied Johnson. Johnson was the man’s last name. If your last name is Johnson, then there’s a good chance that you are a subordinate who follows orders to the tee but has moral questions about what he is asked to do. You are also told to “shut up” a lot, and you are usually prone to accidents where someone else is at fault. And if you happen to be in the military, the lieutenant will always send you to run out into the

open first, just to see how good of shot the sniper is. It’s not good to be a Johnson, unless of course you are Robert Wood Johnson of Johnson & Johnson. How the Johnsons survived long enough to start a medical supplies empire is a mystery and a contradiction to all things natural, therefore these Johnsons could not have been human.

“Alright, gentlemen, I’m very glad you could join us today. Before we begin, I’m going to pose a question: How many of you have ever had so much money that you didn’t know what to do with it? So much money that as you were taking a dump, it’s easier to reach for a one-hundred dollar bill to wipe your ass than it is to grab the toilet-paper?” The men chuckled nervously, mostly because the thought of using such crisp, sharp paper as toilet-paper was a little unsettling. “The best part of it is, we’re going to pretend to be non-profit. For any of you that don’t have a business sense, non-profit is a synonym for tax-exempt.”

The men laughed, but one of the men who was hired to write the English

section of the four-part test raised his hand. He clearly didn't get the joke. "What's a synonym?"

Another of the writers of the English section replied, "It's a word that sounds exactly like another word, but they usually mean two totally different things."

"Non-profit sounds like tax-exempt?"

"No," interjected another, "that's a homony... harmony. It's called harmony."

"Harmony? I thought that had something to do with music."

"Yes, well, the words 'non-profit' and 'tax-exempt' would fit quite nicely in a musical lyric."

"I see... That makes sense. I get it now!" The man laughed a hardy belly laugh, but when he realized no one was laughing with him, he immediately stopped. Embarrassed, he pretended he had to use the restroom, and rushed out of the room in shame. In an amazing coincidence, the man was actually a descendant of ancient Samurai warriors. Having no way to regain his honor, he ended up thrusting a katana through his abdomen, consequently bleeding to death on the restroom floor.

"Okay," said Mr. Wigglethorpe, "now that we're all on the same page, I've come up with a lengthy list of the joys in life we will experience with all the money we will receive from pre-college students, and I'd like to share a few of them with you. Let's see... Yes, we will be able to take lots of vacations and write them off as 'research' for the test." The men laughed as they imagined trips to Bermuda, the Keys, Jamaica, and even Cannibal Island. (The man who fantasized about that last trip would later receive a life sentence for serving his neighbor at a dinner party. This same man chose all the literature for the reading section of the test.) "We will all drive fast cars." The men laughed again and pictured themselves in Vipers, Corvettes, and an old 1920's LaSalle. (The man who fantasized about that last car would later die in a car accident, attempting to demonstrate the idea of momentum to his dog. Airbags and a seatbelt would have saved him, but instead, the brittle makeup of the LaSalle collapsed under the momentum of the rather large semi-truck, severing his body into numerous pieces. This same man wrote the science part of the

test.) “And we will all have lots and lots of sex.” The men were immediately silenced. They looked at each other with confused and somewhat disgusted looks. “No, not with each other! With interns, lots and lots of beautiful interns!” The men gave a deep sign of relief and began again with the incessant, mindless laughter. (The one man that was disappointed they wouldn’t be having sex with each other was later imprisoned for managing a kiddy-porn ring. This same man aided the cannibal in choosing the literature for the reading section of the test.)

“Now, calm down,” said Mr. Wigglethorpe. “I’m sure we could enjoy fantasizing about this all day, but we have work to do. Quickly now, how many people do we have here, Johnson?”

Before Johnson could respond, one of the writers of the math section of the test shouted out, “The square root of two!”

Mr. Wigglethorpe looked at Johnson, and Johnson shrugged. “I don’t believe that makes any sense, sir,” said Johnson. “That would mean we have 1.414 people in this room.”

“What, are you a math genius now, Johnson?” retorted Mr. Wigglethorpe. “Let the man explain himself.”

Another of the math writers said, “We have 48 people here. I came about this answer by using the equation ‘*x equals number of people here.*’ I also used an advanced logarithm which involved counting each and every person here one by one on my fingers, putting this integer into my equation, and producing the answer of 48.”

“Hey!” said another of the math writers. “We should make 48 the highest possible score, representing the number of people that worked on it. Doesn’t that sound keen?”

“I like it,” said Mr. Wigglethorpe, “but 48 is one of my least favorite numbers.”

“Oh,” responded the writer in disappointment.

“Math team, you’re all fired.”

“But...”

“No buts, get out of my sight.” The math team all sat up from their chairs, not really knowing what just happened since the losing of their jobs wasn’t entirely

logical. They were quickly distracted by a heated discussion about the average amount of footsteps one had to take to leave the room and how that corresponded to the amount of footsteps one had to take to leave the building, which inevitably determined how far one must walk before he/she could walk completely off the Earth. "Now what does that leave us, Johnson?"

"38, sir."

"There's a bloody guy in the restroom," said one of the science writers out of the blue. "I asked him if he was alright, but I'm not sure why he didn't respond."

"37 then."

"37? Bah! If there's one number I hate worse than 48, it's 37. Johnson, you're fired. Now how many do we have?"

"36, sir."

"Perfect!"

© 2004 **Marshall North**
Some rights reserved.

The College Aptitude Test by Marshall North is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License.

<http://www.MarshallNorth.com/>