

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on Answer Sheet 2 with a single line through the centre.*

Passage One

Questions 46 to 50 are based on the following passage.

Humans are fascinated by the source of their failings and virtues: This preoccupation inevitably leads to an old debate: whether nature or nurture moulds us more. A revolution in genetics has poised this as a modern political question about the character of our society: if personalities are hard-wired into our genes, what can governments do to help us? It feels morally questionable, yet claims of genetic selection by intelligence are making headlines.

This is down to "hereditarian"(遗传论的) science and a recent paper claimed "differences in exam performance between pupils attending selective and non-selective schools mirror the genetic differences between them". With such an assertion, the work was predictably greeted by a lot of absurd claims about "genetics determining academic success". What the research revealed was the rather less surprising result: the educational benefits of selective schools largely disappear once pupils' inborn ability and socio-economic background were taken into account. It is a glimpse of the blindingly obvious—and there's nothing to back strongly either a hereditary or environmental argument.

Yet the paper does say children are "unintentionally genetically selected" by the school system. Central to hereditarian science is a tall claim: that identifiable variations in genetic sequences can predict an individual's aptness to learn, reason and solve problems. This is problematic on many levels. A teacher could not seriously tell a parent their child has a low genetic tendency to study when external factors clearly exist. Unlike-minded academics say the inheritability of human traits is scientifically unsound. At best there is a weak statistical association and not a causal link between DNA and intelligence. Yet sophisticated statistics are used to create an intimidatory atmosphere of scientific certainty.

While there's an undoubted genetic basis to individual difference, it is wrong to think that socially defined groups can be genetically accounted for. The fixation on genes as destiny is surely false too. Medical predictability can rarely be based on DNA alone; the environment matters too. Something as complex as intellect is likely to be affected by many factors beyond genes. If hereditarians want to advance their cause it will require more balanced interpretation and not just acts of advocacy.

Genetic selection is a way of exerting influence over others, "the ultimate collective control of human destinies," as writer H. G. Wells put it. Knowledge becomes power and power requires a sense of responsibility. In understanding cognitive ability, we must not elevate discrimination to a science, allowing people to climb the ladder of life only as far as their cells might suggest. This will need a more sceptical eye on the science. As technology progresses, we all have a duty to make sure that we shape a future that we would want to find ourselves in.

46. What did a recent research paper claim?
- A) The type of school students attend makes a difference to their future.
 - B) Genetic differences between students are far greater than supposed.
 - C) The advantages of selective schools are too obvious to ignore.
 - D) Students' academic performance is determined by their genes.
47. What does the author think of the recent research?
- A) Its result was questionable.
 - B) Its implication was positive.
 - C) Its influence was rather negligible.
 - D) Its conclusions were enlightening.
48. What does the author say about the relationship between DNA and intelligence?
- A) It is one of scientific certainty.
 - B) It is not one of cause and effect.
 - C) It is subject to interpretation of statistics.
 - D) It is not fully examined by gene scientists.
49. What do hereditarians need to do to make their claims convincing?
- A) Take all relevant factors into account in interpreting their data.
 - B) Conduct their research using more sophisticated technology.
 - C) Gather gene data from people of all social classes.
 - D) Cooperate with social scientists in their research.
50. What does the author warn against in the passage?
- A) Exaggerating the power of technology in shaping the world.
 - B) Losing sight of professional ethics in conducting research.
 - C) Misunderstanding the findings of human cognition research.
 - D) Promoting discrimination in the name of science.