

 theday.co.uk/the-new-einstein-taking-28-a-levels-at-17-4



Superbrain training: Mahnoor hopes to study medicine at Oxford University.

But is she wasting her time? Mahnoor Cheema is studying everything from ancient history to marine science. Some believe she would be better off doing other things.

What's happening?

Mahnoor has to make up her mind what to study today. She is doing four **A-levels** at school, but another 24 at home. Perhaps it is time to focus on Latin... or history... or law...

She already has 34 **GCSEs**. She spent just 10 days studying for each of them.

Find out more

"I think I just have a good memory," she says. "It's my biggest tool."

But there is more to it than that. Her **IQ** has been measured at 161, which is as high as **Einstein's** was. When she was younger, her mother helped her to play chess and do maths.

Mahnoor could do A-level maths problems when she was at primary school, but was not allowed to move up a year. It was hard for her to make friends because she felt so different.

She thinks schools should do more to support gifted children. And she is unhappy that her school told her it was a bad idea to take so many GCSEs.

She does not think that she works too hard. She says that her parents have always made sure that she has a social life and gets involved in other activities: "So I play the piano, I do chess, I do swimming, I go out with my friends."

But is she wasting her time?

Some say

Yes! Nobody needs 28 A-levels. You only need three or four to go to **university**. When Mahnoor is older she may regret not spending more time with her friends or focussing on her goal of being a doctor.

Others think

No! It is amazing that Mahnoor is spending her spare time to learn more about the world. She will be able to do anything she wants to when she is older. And it is a much better use of time than video games!

Some people say

"The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955), German physicist

What do you think?

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - Do you know someone very clever?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: Does Mahnoor find every subject easy?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure about this story.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - Your teacher suggests that you should spend all your spare time studying. Think about what you would say.

5. Express

What do others believe? - Which subject is the most fun? Take it in turns to say.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Imagine you wake up with the world's best memory. Write a story about it.

Glossary

A-levels - The national exams taken by 17 and 18-year-olds in parts of the UK. A-level grades are used to determine university places.

GCSEs - National exams taken by 15 and 16-year-olds in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

IQ - A means of measuring human intelligence. A person's IQ is usually ascertained by making them sit a standardised test. Some have criticised these tests as a means of evaluating intelligence, claiming that they ignore much of what it means to be intelligent.

Einstein - Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was the most influential scientist of the 20th Century. His theory of relativity made the development of nuclear power - and the nuclear bomb - possible.

University - When people leave school, they can go to university to study more and get a degree.