

Girls do better than boys on timed tests

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Vanderbilt University scientists trying to determine how male and female brains differ have discovered timing is everything.

In a study involving more than 8,000 males and females ranging in age from 2 to 90, researchers Stephen Camarata and Richard Woodcock discovered females have a significant advantage over males on timed tests and tasks -- especially among preteens and teens.

"We found very minor differences in overall intelligence," said Camarata. "But if you look at the ability of someone to perform well in a timed situation, females have a big advantage.

"It is very important for teachers to understand this difference in males and females when it comes to assigning work and structuring tests," he added.

In their study, Camarata and Woodcock focused on understanding differences in "processing speed" between males and females -- the ability to effectively, efficiently and accurately complete work that is of moderate difficulty.

They found although males and females showed similar processing speed in kindergarten and preschool, females became much more efficient than males in elementary, middle and high school.

The research will be published in the May-June issue of the journal *Intelligence*.

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