

Open Your Class With This Tomorrow *Top Dog*

In chapter 9 of *Top Dog, The 'Roid Rage of Chess* the authors discuss the surprising impact of various hormones including testosterone, cortisol, and oxytocin on competitive fire. The book references a 36 question inventory called *Reading the Mind in the Eyes* developed by University of Cambridge professor Simon Baron-Cohen to measure the ability of individuals to ascertain subtle displays of emotions in the facial expressions of others. The test includes 36 photos of eyes and asks participants to determine from four choices what emotion is being displayed. Research reveals that individuals who are given an injection of the hormone oxytocin prior to taking the *Reading the Mind in the Eyes* test score much higher. Oxytocin often referred to as the love hormone is known to be associated with bonding and love, but new studies reveal that it also has a role in improving performance in competition possibly by helping individuals recognize the intent of their opponents in their facial expressions and body language. Oxytocin helps competitors identify others as either part of their in-group who they are then driven to protect.

The following links offer different versions of the test which students can take for free as a quick introduction to units on motivation, emotion, stress, cognition, or intelligence.

<http://glennrowe.net/baroncohen/faces/eyetest.aspx>

<http://kgajos.eecs.harvard.edu/mite/>

<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/03/well-quiz-the-mind-behind-the-eyes/>