

Are You Baby Smart?



Take this short quiz, based on the key points in the *Begin With Love* video, to test your knowledge about some of the things you can do to enhance your interactions with your infant. Don't worry if you don't get them all right. You can always watch the *Begin With Love* video to learn more!

- 1) **True or False:** You can't spoil an infant.
- 2) **True or False:** You can never over-stimulate your baby.
- 3) **Good ways to calm a baby include:**
 - A. Changing
 - B. Singing
 - C. Feeding
 - D. Massaging
 - E. Swaddling
 - F. All of the above
- 4) **True or False:** Routines help to lower your baby's stress level.
- 5) **True or False:** Watching TV stimulates your child's development similar to your own talking.
- 6) **True or False:** Babies who are content and comfortable are better learners.
- 7) **True or False:** You should start talking to your baby as soon as he begins to make sounds.
- 8) **You can help a baby experiment with her senses by:**
 - A. Looking into her eyes
 - B. Touching her
 - C. Carrying her
 - D. Swaddling her
 - E. All of the above
- 9) **True or False:** The care you provide your infant shapes the person she will become.
- 10) **True or False:** The care you provide your baby will effect the development of his brain.

Check your answers on the following pages.

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1) You can't spoil an infant.

Answer: True. Unlike older children, infants are too young to understand how to manipulate you with their cries. Therefore, you don't have to worry that answering his cries will spoil him. An infant cries or fusses to let you know that he needs your help to meet his needs. Responding to your infant's cries is important not only because it makes him more comfortable, but also because it teaches him that he can rely on you to take care of him.

2) You can never over-stimulate your baby.

Answer: False. Over-stimulation can be as trying for a baby as under-stimulation. Over-stimulation happens when a baby grows bored of, or unhappy with, an activity or toy. Generally, he will tell you that he is over-stimulated by turning his head or crying. At this point, you should stop the activity and move on to one he likes. If he likes what he is doing, he will be encouraged to learn.

3) Good ways to calm a baby include:

- A. Changing
- B. Singing
- C. Feeding
- D. Massaging
- E. Swaddling
- F. All of the above.

Answer: F. All of the above. Experiment with different activities to determine which are most calming for your baby. Comforting your baby may not always be easy, so you probably will have to try several methods until you figure out what works. Soothing an upset baby is very important. When you answer her cries, she learns that you understand her signals and are going to take care of her needs.

4) Routines help to lower your baby's stress level.

Answer: True. Routines for every day activities like bathing and feeding help to lower your baby's stress level by creating a predictable world for her. Routines allow your baby to know that she can expect certain events to happen and give her a sense of control about her world. They also help her understand that she can trust you to meet her needs.

5) Watching TV stimulates your child's development similar to your own talking.

Answer: False. The "talking" from a television does not offer your baby the same benefits as the sound of your voice since the TV cannot respond to your baby's attempts to interact with you – her smiles, noises or touches. Whether you talk, sing or read, it is the sound of your voice – not just any voice – that will help your baby connect with you and feel the love and affection that she needs to grow and develop.

6) Babies who are content and comfortable are better learners.

Answer: True. A baby's ability to learn is influenced by her emotional well being. By providing your child with a lot of warm and affectionate experiences, you help her to develop trust in her ability to learn about her world and you encourage her to learn more. Also, loving and enriching experiences teach her to feel good about the world.

7) You should start talking to your baby as soon as he begins to make sounds at you.

Answer: False. From the time your baby is born, well before he can make sounds or form words, you should talk, sing and even read to your baby as much as possible. Sounds are the foundation for speech and language. Also, hearing the sound of your voice will help your baby learn about you and connect with you. It does not matter that your baby cannot understand what you say or answer you. Every time you make a sound and he looks at you, you have made an important emotional connection.

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8) You can help a baby experiment with her senses by:

- A. Looking into her eyes
- B. Touching her
- C. Carrying her
- D. Swaddling her
- E. All of the above

Answer: All of the above. Just by giving your baby love and affection you provide her with enriching experiences that go a long way in promoting her development. For example, if you look at her closely when you hold and feed her, you give her a chance to practice focusing on your face. Touching, swaddling or holding a child close help her feel secure, comfortable and happy.

9) The care you provide your infant shapes the person she will become.

Answer: True. The love and attention you share with your baby from her first moments of life will lay the groundwork for the type of adult she will be. Warmth, love and affection encourage her to trust in her ability to learn about the world around her, to feel good about herself and her world and to seek to learn more. From birth, a parent is a child’s link between what she learns about the world and how she feels about it. This process continues throughout a child’s life, and can be endlessly improved upon and enriched. It’s never too late to provide the love and attention a child needs to help her develop into her best possible self.

10) The care you provide your baby will effect the development of his brain.

Answer: True. Just as a baby’s body depends on parents for food to grow, his brain depends on experiences to grow and develop. At birth, a baby’s brain is pretty well formed. But the vital connections between brain cells – in other words, the “wiring” of the brain – are just getting organized. Stimulation through different experiences helps the connections to develop. Since most of your baby’s experiences involve interaction with you, the care you provide plays a critical role in forming the connections.

If you got...

- **8–10 right:** Congratulations – you are definitely “baby smart”!
- **5–7 right:** Your “baby smart” level is pretty high. Keep learning to become a real expert.
- **2–4 right:** Your “baby smart” skills could use some improvement. bornlearning.org can help.
- **0–1 right:** Your “baby smart” skills are just beginning. Keep visiting the Born Learning website at bornlearning.org to improve your knowledge.

Born Learning™ is a public engagement and material distribution campaign that provides important information about what young children need every day to ensure quality early learning. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child’s first teacher, Born Learning materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at bornlearning.org.

