

irrationality

Lisa attempts to procure a subject for her new experiment at the petstore.

Lisa: I want the most intelligent hamster you've got.

Clerk: OK. [*reaches into a box of hamsters under the counter and randomly selects one*]

Uh, this little guy writes mysteries under the name of J. D. McGregor.

Lisa: How can a hamster write mysteries?

Clerk: Well, he gets the ending first, then he writes backward.

Lisa: Aw, C'mon.

Clerk: Look, kid, just take him before his mother eats him, all right? -- Lisa gets a hamster for her project.

The next morning, Homer goes off to work. Despite his lack of a valid driver's license, we see him at the wheel of his car. Marge tells him to have a good day, and Homer goes off... on Lisa's bike. Nelson passes by, popping a wheelie and laughing in his face. Homer bemoans his fate, but discovers a little ringing bell and enjoys it.

The great experiment begins.

Lisa: [*writing*] I propose to determine the answer to the question: is my brother dumber than a hamster?

Bart: Hey Lis, look what I can do! [*inserts fist into mouth, but discovers he can't retract it*]

Mmmph -- doggone it.

The first test explores the subject's ability to acquire food. In a miniature room filled with dollhouse furniture, Lisa places a hamster food pellet on top of a bookcase. The hamster notices it's out of reach, and drags a couch over. Then he climbs on it and retrieves the pellet. "Remarkable," Lisa observes. Now we repeat the experiment with Bart. In this case, a cupcake is set on the top shelf of the bookcase. (An actual bookcase, silly, not the dollhouse one.) Bart, on his daily rounds, walks by.

Bart: Stupid books -- hey, a cupcake! -- Bart passes by the bookcase.

Bart attempts to climb the bookcase to get it, but the plan fails. The bookcase topples over, pinning Bart. Maggie walks by and, without breaking stride, picks up the cupcake. Lisa notes with glee, "Hamster 1, Bart 0."

Cut to the next experiment, which Lisa is about to explain for us. The food is connected to a mild electrical current. The hamster tries to eat the food, but is promptly zapped. He reels back in fear.

The hamster has learned a valuable lesson: beware the hand of man.

Bart's turn again. A cupcake is connected to the mild electrical current. There's even a sign that says, "Do not touch." Bart sees the cupcake. Bart sees the sign. He tosses it aside and goes for the cupcake. He gets shocked. Imitating Moe (not the bartender) "Wiseguy, eh?". He tries again, and slaps himself like Curly. He tries once more. "Ow." Again. "Ow." Again. "Ow." Lisa once again takes score. "Hamster 2, Bart 0"

There in lies the example of irrationality. The hamster is rational, Bart is not.

If you have an excessive amount of free time, go to the following website that contains amongst other things, transcripts of all Simpson's episodes.

<http://www.snpp.com/>