

The Card Flipping Problem

September 20, 2005

1 Results

Results for numbers & vowels group

- None — 1
- E — 5
- 9 — 1
- K — 1
- E & 9 — 4
- E & K — 1
- 4 & K — 2
- 9 & K — 9
- All — 2

Summary

Results for people & drinks group

- 2 said Chris
- 18 said Chris and Dan

	Correct	Incorrect
Letters & Numbers	35%	65%
People & Drinks	90%	10%

Interestingly both groups did better than in past years. This may reflect different wording — in the past I used if-then sentences, as in *If the card has an odd number, then the other side must be a vowel*, rather than only-may sentences such as *Only vowel cards may have an odd number on the other side*. This suggests that it might be more effective to think of a sentence

$$P \rightarrow Q$$

as: Q only if P .

In any case, the results of our pseudo-experiment are consistent with the real experiments psychologists have done. These results seem to show either the power of social intelligence or that we are more used to applying our general intelligence to problems of a social nature than to problems of an abstract nature. For more see the *Ant and the Peacock* by Helen Cronin.