



# STUDY SKILLS KICK START

Student Activity Pack

# Honey badgers: the world's most fearless creature?

Who would win a fight between a badger and a lion? Most people would not hesitate to say a lion. However, the honey badger, despite its sweet name, is not your standard badger and gives the 'King of the jungle' a run for its money every time. Weighing in at a small twelve kilograms, this is not the type of animal you would expect extreme aggression from. However, the honey badger is one of the most feared creatures across southern Africa, Southwest Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

## **Strength and resistance.**

Honey badgers are notoriously strong creatures who can often escape from potentially dangerous situations. The strength of the honey badger is a massive physical advantage, as is its persistence. So strong are honey badgers' claws, that they have been known to burrow through walls and rip up wooden hen houses in order to eat the chickens inside! Another physical advantage that honey badgers possess is that they are much less vulnerable to poison than other creatures: there are examples of honey badgers being bitten by venomous snakes and surviving. Some experts claim it is because they have been exposed to small amounts of venom throughout their lifetime due to the close contact they come into with bees and snakes. As a result, honey badgers are more than happy to take on snakes.

## **Courage**

Commonly viewed as one of the bravest creatures around, honey badgers will take on any animal, big or small if they need to. Indeed, they were listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the 'most fearless' animal in the world. Although they will usually steer clear of potentially dangerous predators, as soon as their own safety is threatened, they will fight back with a serious viciousness. Honey badgers have been known to fight off up to seven lions, just to protect their food. On top of this, their name comes from the fact that they will often raid bees' nests in order to find their favourite food: larvae. They endure the stings of literally thousands of bees, just to source their favourite dinner!

## **Self defence**

As well as being physically very suited to survival, honey badgers also possess certain self defence mechanisms which mean they are not scared of predators. Similar to skunks, they have a small pouch beneath their tail which contains a strong smelling liquid. Although this is normally used to mark the honey badger's territory, when they are faced with danger, they release the liquid, and with it, an absolutely disgusting smell! This puts off potential predators as they instantly move away from such an odour, allowing the honey badger to escape. Their skin is very loose and allows them to move freely, meaning that when they are attacked, they can wriggle into a position where they can fight back by clawing or biting their aggressor. The safest place to grip a honey bear is by its neck, a hold from which it finds it difficult to escape. The skin is not only loose, it is also very thick. Predators find it very difficult to penetrate because some parts of the body are covered by layers as thick as 6mm. It is said that spears and arrows cannot pierce honey badgers' skin and they can withstand multiple bee stings.

So if anyone ever asks you to pick a winner between a lion and a badger, make sure you think twice!

## Dynamic Reading Exercise

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## Note-Making Exercise

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# Mind-Mapping Exercise

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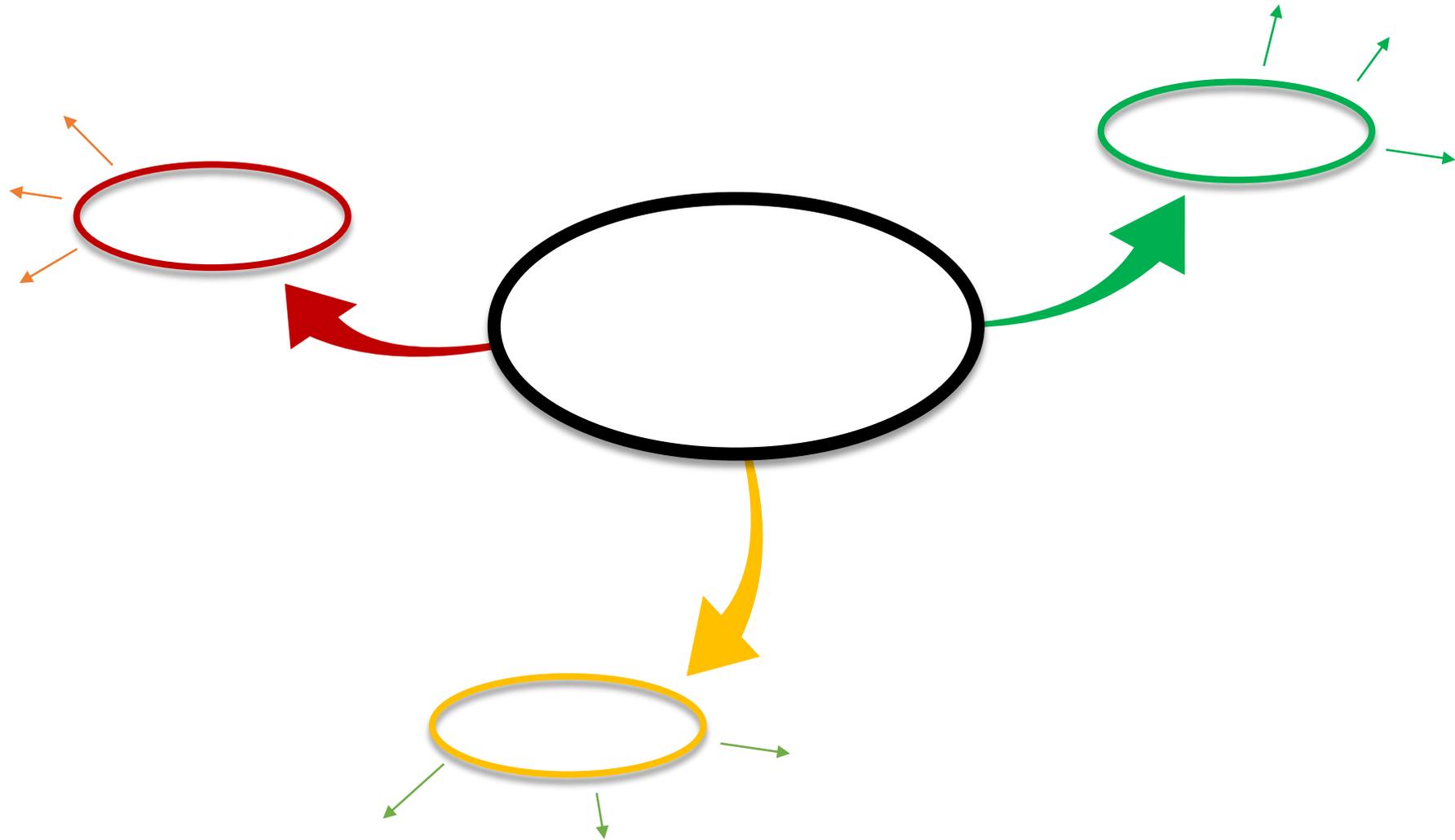
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# Create your own mind-map

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# Article 2: What personality type are you?

Have you ever wondered why you do the things you do? Why you love some things whilst disliking others? Have you wondered why one of your friends always wants to pick an argument with someone, whilst another always sticks up for their friends? Well psychologists say that there is a reason for all of these things happening. They say it is because each of us has a specifically personality type, and this leads us to act in a certain way. They say that there are four main personality types and that if you know someone's personality type you can understand them better and even guess how they will behave. The question is, which personality type are you?

## How to pick a creator

The first personality type is called the "creator" and researchers say 35% of the entire population fall into this category. The creator has a few clear traits, which make it easy to identify if this could be your personality type. First and foremost creators are people that like doing things. They are driven by new sensations and want to experience as many new things as possible. These are the kind of people who if you are going on a road-trip, or plan to do something different or a bit out there like sky diving, they will be the first people to say "yes". Secondly, because creators are so open to new sensations, they are also, just as the name would imply, very creative. These people tend to make great artists. Famous creators include people like Eddie Murphy, Madonna and Bart Simpson.

## How to pick if you are a protector

Our second personality type is the "protector". Researchers say that the majority of the population, 43% of people in fact, fit into this category. We can pick a protector because they also have a number of key traits. The first and main characteristic is that they are very stable people, they like continuity and hate change. When they like something, they will continue liking it. The second characteristic of the protector is that they are very responsible. They are the kind of person who would try and talk you out of going sky diving by explaining each of the risks one by one. Finally, you can pick a protector because they are highly organised, punctual and enjoy routines. They even probably have a really clean room! Famous protectors include the Queen and Monica from Friends.

## How to pick if you are an intellectual

Our third personality type is the "intellectual". This is the smallest category, made up of only 10% of the population. These people are easy to pick, first and foremost because they love to argue. To them an argument isn't a fight, but rather a test of how much you know about a subject. Some of these people will argue for something they don't even believe in, simply to test the other person's knowledge of the subject! We all know someone like that don't we! Intellectuals are also quite hard to offend. They are less sensitive than a lot of people, especially creators and visionaries. Intellectuals are also very good problem solvers. They love solving problems, whether it is a Maths problem or a question of how to tune the TV into the DVD player. Finally intellectuals are very curious people. They love finding out why things happen, lending them to ask a lot of questions. Intellectuals include Bill Gates, Tom Hanks, Gandalf from Lord of the Rings and Mr Burns from the Simpsons.

## How to pick if you are a visionary

Our final personality type is the "visionary". This group makes up 12% of the population. The easiest trait to identify in a visionary is that they are sensitive, caring and compassionate people. The visionary is the person who hates to see someone get picked on in the play-ground. Consequently, they can often be quite sensitive and unlike an intellectual they can be easily upset. The visionary might think the intellectual is rude and the intellectual may think the visionary is super sensitive. The second key characteristic of the visionary is that they are idealistic and support good causes. These are the people who will sponsor a child in Africa, do the 40 Hour Famine etc. Famous visionaries include Johnny Depp, Ben Stiller and Oprah Winfrey.

Now that you have had a chance to look at these personality traits, which personality type do you think you are? Are you a creator, a protector, an intellectual or a visionary? Which personality type would you put your friends into?

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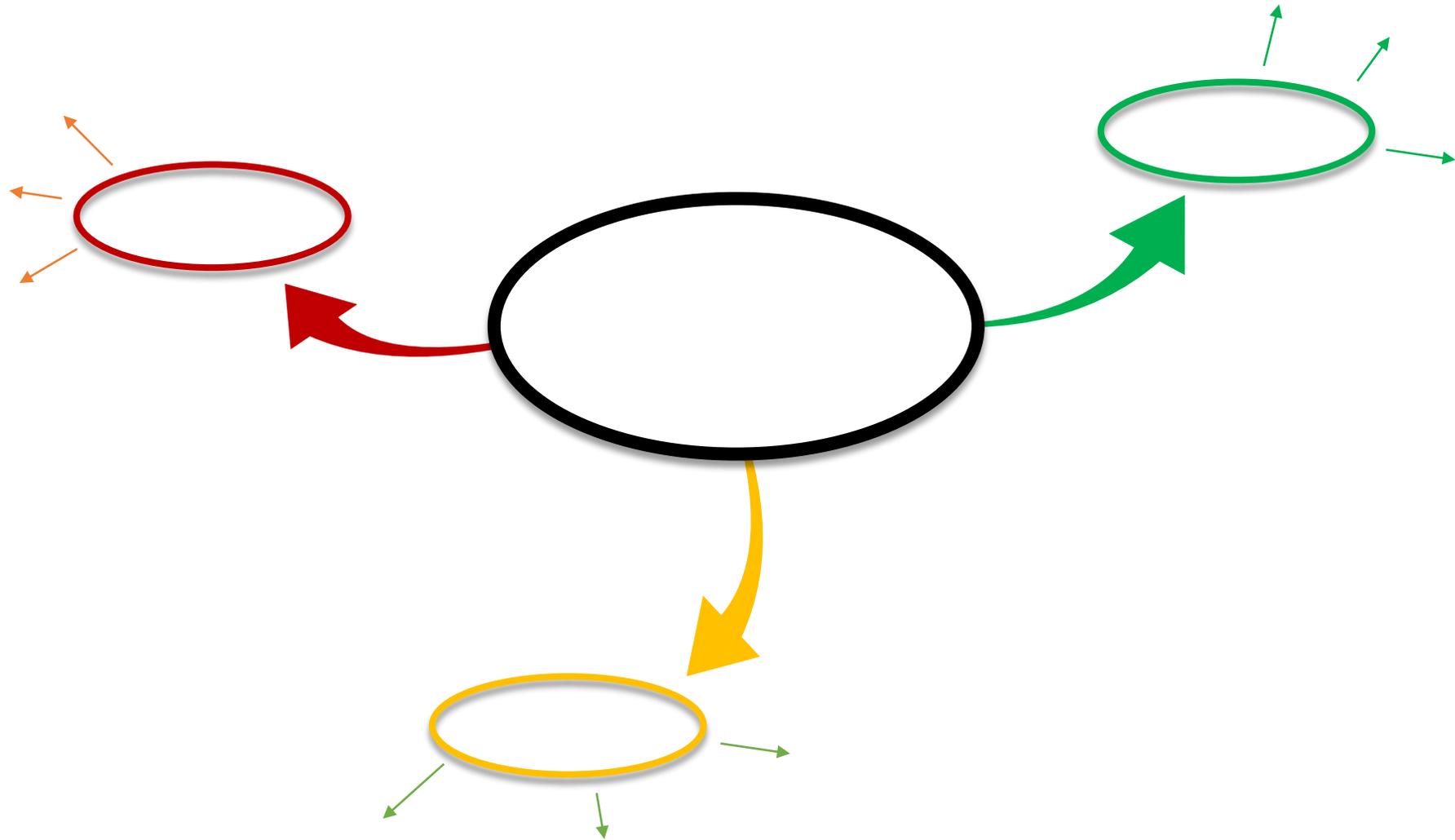
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# Article 3: Explaining the rise of Eminem

Controversial, talented and hugely successful, Eminem is a character who you either love or love to hate. His story, artistically played out in the movie, *'Eight Mile'* is a classic rags to riches tale which is laced with lessons that we can all learn from.

## Goals

Eminem was born in 1976 in Kansas City to a single, unemployed mother. His mother used to move back and forth every 2-3 months between Detroit and Kansas City in search of work. As a result Eminem never ended up settling down. As soon as he began to settle down in a school in one city he was moved again to another city and another school. Each time he moved to a new school he found himself as the "new kid" with no friends. It was at this stage of his life that he found his only real happiness – listening to rap music. He began to rap and after a while realized that he was pretty good at it. It was at this stage that he set himself the goal to become a top selling rapper. This goal was extremely important for two reasons. Firstly it kept Eminem motivated. Because his family was so poor Eminem needed to work long hours just to get the money to scrape by. He used to come home at nights exhausted but instead of simply going to sleep or relaxing he made sure he spent another few hours writing out rhymes and practicing his rapping style. The second reason why his goal was so important was that it kept him focused. Eminem lived in an area where it was extremely easy to get involved in crime and drugs. Had Eminem got involved in this lifestyle and gone to prison you could almost bet that he never would have become the top-selling artist he is today. His goal gave him the focus to keep him out of trouble.

## Action

Having a goal is all well and good but not enough by itself. Without action a goal is just a dream. Eminem took action on his goal by constantly practicing. In fact he used every spare moment he had to practice. One of Eminem's old bosses described how Eminem used to work as a waiter in his hamburger restaurant and how he used to take the customers' orders and then rap them to the chef. Similarly when he was just chilling out with people he would use any opportunity to start rapping, for example he would rap about his friends names, about the weather or about someone that walked by. This constant practice though ensured that his skills always improved. Eminem also took action upon his goal by constantly trying to get noticed. He used to go into clubs and try and get on stage in freestyle battles where two rappers challenge each other in an "off the cuff" duel. It was only by getting himself heard in clubs and on the radio that he managed to come to people's attention and to earn himself his first record deal. Just because he had record deal didn't mean he had achieved his goal. His first album was a failure. It was panned by the critics and hardly sold any copies. It was then that Eminem took action by never giving up. Despite his knocks he continued to take action, refusing to let his failures get him down. It was this action through persistence that eventually bought him to the attention of the biggest producer in LA who signed Eminem and helped him launch his first hit album.

## Stand Out

Finally Eminem realised that he couldn't be like everyone else. He realised that in order to be the best he would need to stand-out. As long as he was just like everyone else he would never achieve his goal. As a result he went to great lengths to make himself different and to make himself stand-out. He started by aiming to stand-out visually. He dyed his hair blonde, got a number of tattoos on his arms and body and would often go on stage wearing a hockey mask. Secondly he aimed to stand-out lyrically. He would intentionally rap about controversial topics or bag out other celebrities such as Christina Aguilera, Moby and 'NSYNC among others. Because he was so different and because he stood out so much, it became much harder for the public to forget about him. The longer people paid attention to him and remembered him, the more records he sold.

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