

# Explain: GATTACA

## That Only Happens in the Movies!!

### PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

While watching the movie, work on questions #1-11 below.

1. List the speaker for each of the following quotes:

Speaker	Quote
a.	There's no gene for fate.
b.	We shed 500 million cells a day.
c.	I got the better end of the deal. I only lent you my body - you lent me your dream.
d.	Son, the only time you're going to see the inside of a space shuttle is if you're cleaning it.
e.	Blood has no nationality.
f.	I'll never understand what possessed my mother to put her faith in God's hands, rather than her local geneticist.
g.	That piece can only be played with twelve
h.	Wanna go dancing?
i.	Oh, I could always walk... I've been faking it.
j.	It's funny, you work so hard, you do everything you can to get away from a place, and when you finally get your chance to leave, you find a reason to stay.

- (13:08) What does Jerome (Vincent) place on the comb at his workstation?
- (16:15) "They used to say that a child conceived in love has a greater chance of...." What?
- (17:10) What is Jerome's (Vincent's) life expectancy?
- (18:00) After Marie's fertilized embryos are screened, how many healthy ones are left?
- (19:25) According to the geneticist, we have enough of this built in already. What is it?
- (23:15) What is the name given to discriminating against people because of their genetic profile?
- (41:20) What does Jerome (Vincent) leave behind at the murder scene?
- (53:55) The director claims that GATTACA is occasionally forced to accept candidates with "minor shortcomings", but nothing that would prevent them from working in what field?
- (56:50) Why is it unlikely that Irene will travel into space?
- (1:18:40) What does Irene leave behind at the club where she and Jerome are dancing?

## **ANALYSIS**

**Answer the following questions in your notebook using complete sentences.**

1. The writers of GATTACA used some of the characters' names in interesting ways:
  - a) Why do you think Vincent's father changed Vincent's name from "Anton" to "Vincent Anton" at the last minute?
  - b) What significance might the name "Eugene" have? (check for closely related words in the dictionary or look back over your vocab list for some clues...)
2. Name at least two things Vincent did each day to pass as Jerome Morrow and explain how what he did enabled him to pretend to be somebody else.
3. What evidence pointed towards an "in-valid" as the murder suspect?
4. If you have a child someday, would you choose the gender and/or some of the traits for your child if you could? Explain why or why not.
5. At the end of the film, we find out the doctor knew about Vincent all along.
  - a) Why didn't the doctor expose Vincent and turn him in? Would you have? Why or why not?
  - b) Who else in the film do you think knew Vincent's identity by the end of the movie?
6. How did Vincent's "genetic profile" affect his growing up as a child?
7. Both Jerome and Anton had "better genes" than Vincent.
  - a) Did Jerome have any weaknesses? Give examples.
  - b) Vincent explained to Anton how he was able to outswim him. What did he say? How do *you* think Vincent beat Anton?
8. During a gala party scene in GATTACA, a woman submits a saliva sample from a recent kiss to screen her potential boyfriend/husband's DNA. Is she violating his rights by doing this without his knowledge? Is this in anyway similar to performing a background check? How much do you think a DNA screen would reveal about someone's personality and intelligence?
9.
  - a. What extra (hidden?) meaning do you think the staircase in Jerome and Vincent's house had?
  - b. The writers used the term "borrowed ladder" in the film. Explain what that phrase means.
10. Do your genes determine who you are? If so, how? If not, what else determines who you are?