

The Genius Dog Challenge (GDC)

a research project integrated with a social media campaign, aimed to educate the public and recruit subjects

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Dogs can easily learn that words serve as discriminative stimuli for actions, such as "sit" or "down". However, recent research¹ has shown that only a few uniquely Gifted dogs can learn that words serve as object labels. These Gifted dogs can easily learn hundreds of toy names. Until recently, most of the studies on this phenomenon were limited by a small sample size of only 1 or 2 subjects²⁻³. In order to find more of these rare dogs, in 2020 we started broadcasting parts of our experiments. The results of these tests were published in 2021⁴.



Shany Dror & the dog Nalani
Photo by Sonja De Laat Spierings

Methods: Public education is done through sharing accessible science-based content on social media ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)) as well as on the [GDC website](#) blog. Increasing public awareness is done through broadcasting parts of the tests on [YouTube](#).



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3. Pilley, J. W. & Reid, A. K. Border collie comprehends object names as verbal referents. *Behav. Processes* 86, 184–195 (2011).
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