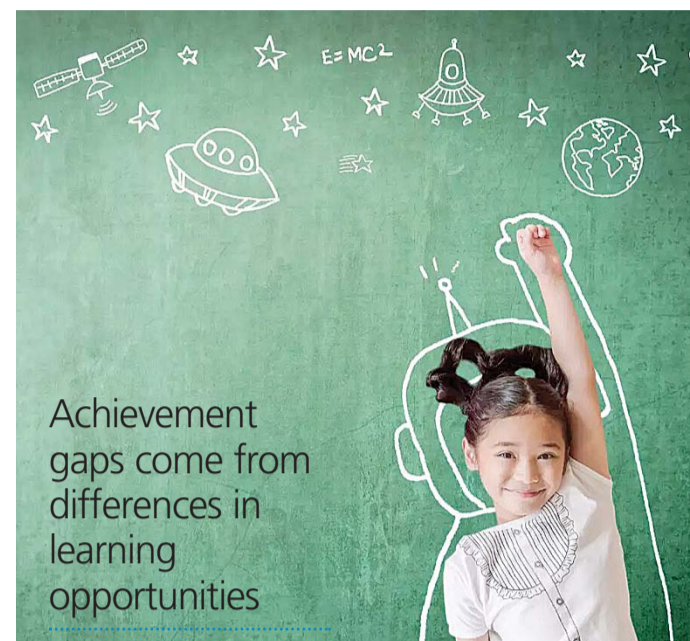


## #EDUCATION

### Myth Of The Fast Learner



Achievement gaps come from differences in learning opportunities

In the right conditions, people learn at a remarkably similar rate, researchers report. The researchers wanted to know why some students learn faster than others. They hoped to identify fast learners, study them, and develop techniques that could help students understand new concepts quickly.

What they found surprised them. Ken Koedinger, professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University's Human Computer Interaction Institute (HCII), led the research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

He and his team examined data from 1.3 million student interactions from different kinds of educational technologies, including intelligent tutors, online courses, and educational games. The data,



gleaned from learning science repository DataShop, indicated that learners master new concepts by having opportunities to practice them.

"The data showed that achievement gaps come from differences in learning opportunities and that better access to such opportunities can help close those gaps," Koedinger says. "This is further confirmation that these educational technologies can provide favourable learning conditions that make it easier to learn something new, like a second language, or a scientific or math concept."

If educators understand where their students are starting from, they can help students catch up to their peers by giving them more opportunities to practice the material. For example, they could incorporate a cognitive tutor that can give students instant feedback on homework problems.

Additional co-authors of the paper are Elizabeth A. McLaughlin, a scientific technological specialist at HCII and Ran Liu, chief AI scientist at Amira Learning.



"We have all seen cases where somebody gets to a learning outcome sooner than a peer-one student gets an A in algebra and another gets a C. But what we don't usually track is where they started. Our results are not contradicting that people end up in different places, but accounting for where students are starting from can tell us a lot about where they will end up," Koedinger says.

Paulo Carvalho, a systems scientist and special faculty at HCII and co-author, says the paper supports the idea that information sticks with students longer if they are actively engaged while learning, an experience supported by the kinds of educational technology used in this study.

"We have several studies that show that when a student is actively working they tend to do better than if they are just passively reading the materials," Carvalho says. "The data sets that we use for



Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh II



Prakash Bhandari  
The writer is a senior journalist



aharaja Sawai Madho Singh, who was an adopted king of Jaipur was born Kaim Singh, the second son of the Thakur of Isarda, a petty chieftain related to the ruling house of Jaipur. After the death of their father, a dispute with his elder brother over the succession left the teenage Kaim exiled and living in poverty. He found work as a risaldar in the cavalry of the Nawab of Tonk. But his fate overturned and the son of the Noble from Isarda found a Guru in Bramhachari Giridhar Sharan, who predicted that he would become the Maharaja of Jaipur one day. When Ram Singh II died in 1800, he had no heir, and chose on his death bed to adopt the 18-year-old Kaim, who was crowned under the name Madho. Married a Jadaun lady, daughter of Rao Budhpal Singh of Ummarghar estate, Etah, U.P.

As ruler of the large and prosperous state of Jaipur, Madho Singh embraced modern ideas on education and sanitation. He built schools, colleges, hospitals and a museum. When famine struck in 1896-1897 and 1899-1900, he used state funds to feed the population. He also appealed to the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, to start a permanent Famine Relief Fund, which Singh began with a gift of £133,000 (equivalent to \$15,308,476 in 2021).

Singh was exceptionally loyal to the British crown, and sent his troops and horses to assist the British side in fighting in Chitral in 1894-1895, the Tirah Campaign in 1897-1898, and in the South African War. In the First World War, he

again sent his men and machine guns to assist in the Mesopotamian campaign by his own expense.

Singh was made an honorary Major-General and was further rewarded with honours. He was made Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India and of the Order of the Indian Empire, and a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order and of the Order of the British Empire.

In 1921, he adopted the second son of the Thakur of Isarda, whose wife was related to his Jadaun Maharani. He died in 1922 and was succeeded by his adopted son, the Maharaja Man Singh.

He was in the year 1901 when Queen Victoria died, the coronation of Edward VII took place in London. A much reluctant Madho Singh had to travel to England to attend the coronation.

#### The Sea Journey

The Maharaja for various reasons wanted to avoid going to England as he was a religious person and was a devout Bhakta of Govind Deoji whom he worshipped every day. But the British officers forced him to

# Another Coronation & Jaipur's Attendance (...2)

Madho Singh presented 2000 carat diamond-encrusted sword made by a famous jeweller of Jaipur Seth Banji Tholia. This sword was made of steel and gold, enamelled in blue, green and red the diamonds were set in a lotus shape with green leaves made of emerald. This was the most prized gift that King Edward VII received. That day the Jaipur princely state received a big ovation from the Kings and Queens of the world.



Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh II

travel to London for the coronation. The priests of the Jaipur state were against the visit of their Maharaja. The priests had said that a sea journey by ship would lead to the ruler losing his Varna (social status). Not only his contacts with the Mlechhas barbarians (in Vedic Sanskrit), it would also force him to sever links with the Ganga water. The pundits even warned the Maharaja that he took the journey it would be something like Kalapani where convicted persons were sent to languish in the Andaman jails.

When Mahatma Gandhi travelled to England to study law, the priests of Porbandar cursed him and admonished him for having been to the country of Mlechhas.

The Maharaja could not defy the orders of the priests, but the British officers told him that if he failed to attend the coronation, it would be treated as a violation of protocol. The Maharajas of other states in Rajputana and other Maharajas were all going for the coronation.

The Maharaja was barely literate and he could barely sign in Hindi but was gifted with worldly knowledge. He sent his trusted Thakurs and officials to the priests and asked the priests to find a solution. The priests said that he could travel by ship, provided he cooked his own food devoid of meat and beef. He was also asked to carry the idols of the family deity of the Jaipur royals on the ship and a special cabin should be created and the deity should be placed on Jaipur soil. His meals would be offered to the gods before, he could eat it. He was asked to take Gangajal (Ganga water) along with him during the journey. He would only eat meals cooked by the Ganges water and would drink only Gangajal.



(Madho Singh) Sansar Chandra Sen.  
Photo: Courtesy Dr Gautam Sen.

But carrying the holy water that could last the sea journey and also the two-month log stay in London required gallons and gallons of water. While the Maharaja drank Ganga Jal, others were drinking normal water and were eating food cooked on normal water.

The silversmiths were summoned and asked to design silver vessels that could be taken on a ship. The team of silversmiths headed by Govind Narain and his deputy Mahadev worked for months to prepare a design of a huge jar that could hold 9000 liters of water and three such jars made of pure silver were made. These jars weighing 375 kilos each and 1.6



At the prize distribution ceremony when Prince Charles played in Jaipur.



Indian military representatives at the coronation of King Edward VII.

meters (nearly five feet and three inches) and having a circumference of 4.5 meters or 14 feet and 10 inches were made using traditional tools. These urns were first tested to ensure that it was leak-proof. Once it was ensured that the silver jars were leakproof, it was sent to Hardwar to fill it with the Holy Ganges water. These urns are proudly displayed at the City Palace. Today, a similar jar would cost Rs 12 million as the cost of silver alone. Some 27,000 liters of water were estimated to be sufficient for the use of the Maharaja for two months.

The Maharaja vowed that he would follow the instructions of the priests. Thomas Cook was hired as the travel agent and a ship SS Olympia was booked for a whooping fee of Rs 15 lakh over a century ago for the journey from Bombay to London. The ship according to today's price would have cost Rs 450 million.

The ship which was made in France was asked to have six special suites. The first and the most important suite was for the family deity Lord Gopalji whose idols were to accompany the Maharaja in the sojourn. The second luxurious suite was for the Maharaja. The third was for the royal priests. The fourth was for a minister in the Jaipur state Sansar Chandra Sen a Bengali. And two other suites were for the other members of the troupe. The total baggage was 75 tonnes that were carried from Jaipur to Bombay en route to London.

#### Religious Ceremonies

The royal troupe comprised 125 strong members that included Nobles, ministers, personal staff,



King Edward VII.

cooks, personal attendants, and two doctors.

The whole ship was washed with the Ganges water that was separately brought by a special train from Hardwar and taken by the special train from Hardwar to Bombay Port. The washing of the ship was done under the supervision of the Raj Acharya Laxmi Narayan Bhatt who was the Chief Priest of the Maharaja. Photos and other material related to the Puja are with the grandson of the Chief Priest Kailash Bhatt. Twenty-five priests had gone from Jaipur to perform the Puja of the ship. Months of preparation were needed and the help of the Marwari businessmen in Bombay was taken for making the arrangements for the journey.

"My grandfather Raj Acharyaji performed the Sagar Puja (worshipping the sea) which the Kachhawa rulers claimed was similar to the rituals performed by their ancestors Lord Rama at the Setubandh coast before conquering Ravana's Lanka. The offerings dropped in the sea in Bombay were worth several lakhs. As the ship sailed and started leaving the dock, the priests performed rituals and chanted mantras wishing for the safe journey of the Maharaja. The Maharaja was standing on the deck of the ship to bid farewell to the people. "The ship would chug at a speed of 20 knots covering a distance of 2000 meters in an hour" said Kailash Bhat a senior advocate.

Two days before the departure of the ship the 25 priests who were sent from Jaipur performed Puja to

keep the Varuna, the presiding deity of the Ocean in Hindu religion propitiated and symbolic gifts of gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and gold coins were dropped in the sea as part of the religious ceremonies. Hundreds of fishermen of Bombay thronged the ship and dived into the sea to fish out these precious offerings of gold, silver, pearls and diamonds. Socialites of Bombay hired canoes to witness the Puja ceremony being performed from the sea. They watched the ship sail slowly bidding Bon Voyage to the Tall and hefty Maharaja.

The Captain of the ship Al Osborne was presented with a gold watch by the Maharaja and other members of the crew of the ship were suitably rewarded by the Maharaja. The Maharaja had not seen a sea before and the journey was a great experience for his troupe. The Maharaja was a little nervous for the first two days, but the Captain of the ship would make him cheerful by taking him on the deck and showing him the splendour of the sea.

The ship faced a mild sea storm which terrified the Maharaja and sent the crew to sixes and sevens. The captain came to the suite of the Maharaja to convince him that such storms are common during the sea journey. But the Maharaja went to

the suite where the deities were kept and started offering prayers. **The Maharaja's Procession**  
The ship reached Aden which was the first stopover and there the Maharaja learned that a German ship that was caught in the storm was doomed and only 11 out of the 43 crew members could survive. All this made the Maharaja very worried, but the captain of the ship would sit with him and convince him that he would reach England safely.

The ship after a long journey reached the Southampton Port where the ship docked and the rituals of the customs were followed. The Maharaja was received by the British officials. The two officials of the state who were sent in advance had taken a huge lodge for the comfortable stay of the Maharaja.

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#### Jaipur Naresh Ki England Yatra

The Maharaja had got stitched a long silky robe for him and was bedecked with the choicest jewellery of the state. As the maharaja of the state who were sent in advance had taken a huge lodge for the comfortable stay of the Maharaja.



Coronation of Edward VII and Alexandra.



Two groups of Sawai Madho Singh II, Maharaja of Jaipur with others after the shikar, 1890s.

Other accommodations for the other members of the troupe were taken in and around. The Maharaja stayed in the lodge and the deities were placed in one room. Maharaja after settling the deities would shift to his suite and would relax.

It was summer in England and prior to the main coronation function, the Maharaja would visit various places in the Capital of the British Empire.

It was the historic day of 3rd June 1902 when a procession of Indian lords Radha-Krishna was seen on the streets of London. The priests would carry the idols on their heads and the Maharaja walked barefoot on the streets of London.

During his stay in England the Maharaja cleaned his hands with soil carried from India and washed them with the water of Ganga, every time he shook hands with the foreigners there. While many London newspapers titled him as the 'Religion Devoted King' for his incomparable devotion to River Ganga and Radha-Krishna, some mocked at him calling him insane for practicing blind faith on rituals and traditions.

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The Maharaja's procession was the first of its kind in London and the Britishers were amazed to see such a procession with the priests chanting mantras.

The procession was also a very talked about topic during the ceremony with the guests having a curious look at the Maharaja.

Jaipur Naresh Ki England Yatra  
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When Prince Charles came to play polo in Jaipur from left to right Rajmata Padmini Devi, Prince Charles, Harish Jani, Prakash Surana, Navratnam Kohari, Princes Diana, Maharaj Jai Singh, Ved Ahuja Shikhar, Chand Punglia and Govind Sharma.

Sansar Chandra Sen and a knowledgeable person like Pandit Madhusudan Jha.

However, it was noticed that Maharaja Ganga Singh enjoyed far more clout than the Maharaja of Jaipur. It was because the Maharaja took an active part in the Boxer Rebellion in China and sent his troops there. He became the first Indian prince to fight in a foreign land under the British flag.

On his return, he was feted by Lord Curzon and he was handed over an invitation to attend the King Edward VII coronation.

The Maharaja and Ganga Singh became good friends and both of them attended parties together. But the same Ganga Singh took an opposite stand when he wanted to adopt Man Singh which embittered the good relationship between the two Kings.

Maharaja was much in the news during the coronation ceremony

that saw the world's monarchs attending the coronation with their Queens.

Madho Singh presented 2000 carat diamond-encrusted sword made by a famous jeweller of Jaipur Seth Banji Tholia. This sword was made of steel and gold, enamelled in blue, green and red the diamonds were set in a lotus shape with green leaves made of emerald. This was the most prized gift that King Edward VII received. That day the Jaipur princely state received a big ovation from the Kings and Queens of the world.

The visit helped the Maharaja build a lasting relationship with the British royals. The Maharaja after spending a good time took the return journey. It's said that the Maharaja did not attend the official dinner as he would not eat the food served there and returned to his place of stay to have a quiet dinner. It also said that the Maharaja did not shake hands with the King.

On the return journey the Maharaja's ship got damaged because of choppy sea and the ship had to be repaired at Aden after which the Maharaja took the return journey to Bombay.

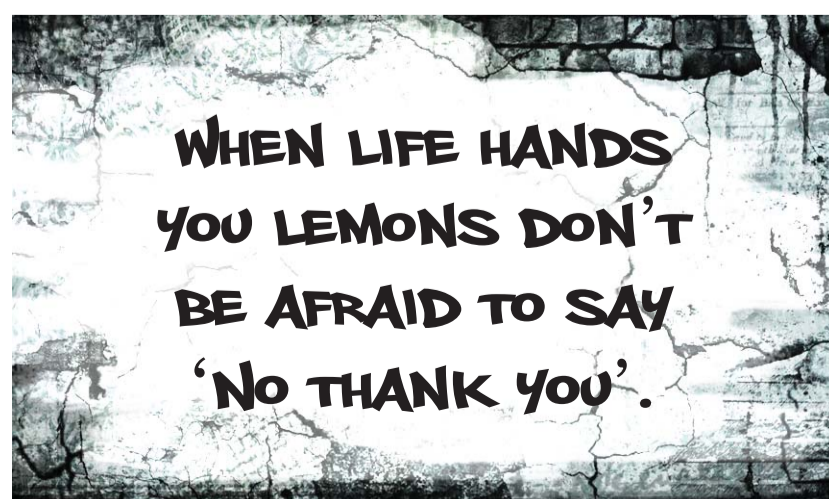
During the journey, the Maharaja celebrated on August 27, 1902, his birthday and presented 41 gold coins to the family deity. The Maharaja returned to Bombay on September 12, 1902, and he heavily tipped the crew of the ship and thanked the crew for the safe journey.

On his return, the Maharaja was given a big reception by his subjects in Jaipur when he returned by train from Bombay to Jaipur.

A quaint rare collectible chronicles the journey of yore in all its sparkling details. Sansar Chandra Sen a top member of the Maharaja's council of ministers kept a detailed account of the Maharaja's sojourn in his diary. On his return, he published a detailed account of the journey titled Jaipur Naresh Ki England Yatra, 10 years after the journey in 1922 authored by Shiv Narayan Saxena, a state official. This book is still in the possession of advocate Kailash Bhatt.

To be continued...  
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## THE WALL

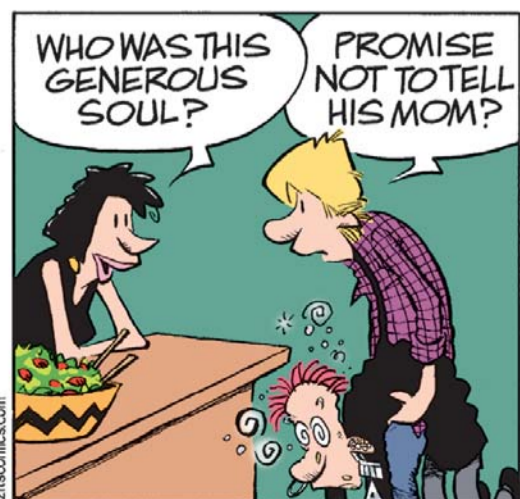
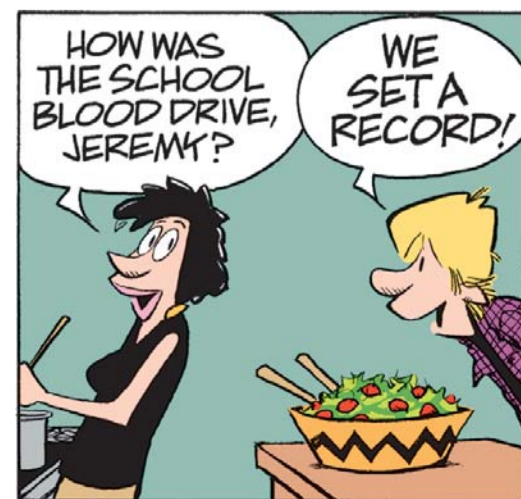


## BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman