

The Master Hat

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Are your left brain and right brain the same? No! The two halves of your brain may look similar, but they are not exactly alike. The two halves, known as hemispheres, have functional specialization whereby there is a preference to use one brain region more than others for specific functions. Brain lateralization refers to how some brain functions tend to localize primarily in one half of the brain.

A band of neural fibres, known as the corpus callosum, connects the two brain hemispheres. It allows the two hemispheres to communicate by transmitting information from one half to the other through more than 200 million nerve fibres. Brain lateralization was first identified back in the 1960s through “split-brain” patients who had undergone surgery to cut the corpus callosum to treat severe epilepsy. By testing each hemisphere individually, researchers found that the two halves have different specializations. The left hemisphere is more analytical as it controls the language, logical reasoning, linear processing, science, number skills, and writing. Whereas the right side is more fun and it specializes in imagination, music and art awareness, creativity, and holistic thought.

However, this does not mean that you use one side of your brain more than the other. We use both sides of our brains all the time. The two hemispheres take different approaches to the same problem. Thus, by dividing up the tasks between the two hemispheres to work semi-independently, brain lateralization allows our brain to deal with problems efficiently.

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