

The gift of gab summary essay



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“ The Gift of Gab” 1. According to the article, the larynx lies behind the back of the tongue in humans. When humans talk, most of the air goes out through their mouth when they decide to speak. As for primates, their larynx is located further up close to the tongue, closer to the back of the nose. The difference in location of the larynx in humans compared to primates can be the reason why humans have the ability to speak.

For the primates, most of their air is exhaled through their nose, which produces sounds through the nose rather than mouth. 2. For humans, the position of the larynx helps us speak through our mouth, just from the location of the larynx. The larynx is positioned lower in humans than it is in other mammals, allowing us to make noise through our mouth opposed to our nose. Also, the larynx houses our vocal chords and is responsible for the sounds we produce.

The larynx is also responsible for managing pitch and volume in the noises we make as well. 3. The research done by Cartmill and his colleagues reveal that an enlarged hypoglossal nerve (which is a nerve that runs from the brain to the back of the tongue) is found in modern day humans, and is over twice the size than it is in chimpanzees. The larger the hypoglossal nerve, the easier it is to control tongue movements, which is utilized for different speech patterns. 4.

The reason why speech abilities were unable to be determined through the finding of brain fossils is because the space in between the brain and the skull was too much. The findings in mammals would yield a “ fuzzy’ result. Also, speech is not controlled by one section of the brain, it is found all

spread out within the brain, making research especially difficult. With these problems at hand, researchers have looked elsewhere for speech abilities. The throat and tongue have been focal points of study for determining if early hominoids had the ability to speak.