

Discussion Questions

Dr. Gates and the Nature of the Universe

Part One: Learn about Dr. Sylvester James Gates, Jr.

1. What was happening in the country when Dr. Gates was a young child? How about when he was a teenager?
2. How did Dr. Gates become interested in physics?
3. What challenges did Gates face to becoming a theoretical physicist?
4. How did Gates respond to assumptions other people made of him based on his race?

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Part Two: What is String Theory?

1. What role does imagination play in doing physics?
2. String theory is still fairly controversial and not accepted by some physicists. Why is that?
3. How does string theory fit with other fields of physics?
4. What is supersymmetry?
5. What are the four forces of nature? Why did physicists such as Einstein and Gates pursue a “unified field theory”?
6. What is the potential of string theory to fulfill Einstein’s quest for a unified theory?