

## Level C

### Voodoo and Mice

Numerous studies have been done to determine how sound affects brain function and intelligence. In 1982, Dr. Harvey Bird and Dr. Gervasia Shrekenberg at Farleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey performed one such experiment with three groups of mice. A control group was raised from birth in total silence. While a second experimental group grew up listening to Strauss waltzes, a third group was subjected to recordings of ceremonial voodoo drumbeats. Observations of the mice in cages and mazes showed little difference between the control group and those exposed to waltzes. However, the voodoo drum group became extremely aggressive and cannibalistic; consequently the experiment was shortened. The mice were sacrificed and their brain tissue examined under a microscope. As the researchers had predicted, the waltz-raised mice showed increased neural connections and better brain development. Surprising to the scientists, however, was the extremely abnormal and disorganized brain cell growth in the drumbeat mice, some of which appeared to be pathological and potentially cancerous.