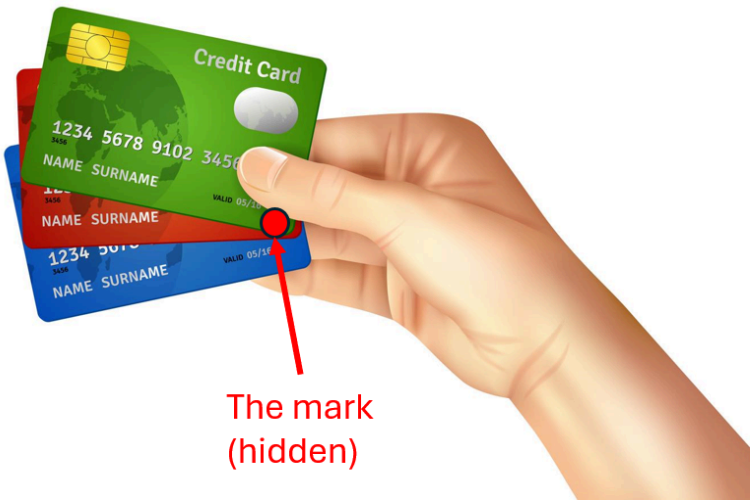
Okay, to clarify first, this test can evaluate Ayanokoji's mental capabilities only under certain highly unlikely conditions, which already renders it practically useless. Secondly, the document implies that Nagumo set the trap so masterfully that Ayanokoji was forced to participate and deceive him. However, Nagumo is fundamentally incapable of controlling the behavior of the first-years, let alone predicting it. For instance, during the game, Ayanokoji could have simply gone to the toilet, and Nagumo would have been forced to play with other first-years. *Or* Koenji could have decided he wanted to play instead of Ayanokoji. *Or* someone could have insisted on continuing the game without substitutions, arguing that it was a responsibility the player had already taken on. *Or* Ayanokoji could have recognized Nagumo's trap but failed to see the mark on the Joker due to poor eyesight. *Or* the other first-years might have played card games before, thus noticing the mark on the Joker and openly calling it out. *Or* Ayanokoji might not have even wanted to figure out the situation at all, simply watching the game without engaging with its essence, or attaching any significance whatsoever to Nagumo's mysterious words before each round. All these factors (and many others not listed here) are utterly prosaic, yet entirely uncontrollable. Or, at the very least, the author has failed to prove that Nagumo actually controlled them. I am especially curious to learn exactly how Nagumo managed to control Ayanokoji's bladder.

Now, as for the mark on the Joker and the claim that Nagumo controlled the entire course of the game. Despite Kinugasa genuinely framing it as such (via Nagumo's predictions before the rounds), reality would look quite different. First and foremost, the marked card (the Joker) must always be positioned in such a way that the intended players can actually notice the mark. Yet, this is fundamentally impossible due to the simple fact that every person holds their cards differently, and the mark could easily be covered by fingers or other cards.



So, exactly how are the players supposed to hold their cards in order to *always* keep that Joker mark visible? Presumably, like this:



Thus, the flow of the game should have become even *less* controllable on Nagumo's end, a reality we conveniently never observe. Why? Because neither Kinugasa nor the scalers have the faintest idea what they are actually writing about.

It is also worth noting that the text is absolutely riddled with repetition, recycling the exact same theses (down to identical phrasing), which makes the document an absolute chore to read. For instance, in the "Nagumo's Traps" section, points 4 and 6 literally just copy-paste one another. This is utterly inexcusable for any author who respects their readers. And now, without further ado, let's get into the analysis of the document.

One of the glaring weaknesses of this document (and, frankly, the other COTE docs) is the blatant substitution of proof with mere assertion. In other words, instead of actually *proving* that, say, Ishikura was faking his surprise, the author simply asserts that Ishikura was faking it rather than being genuinely surprised. There is absolutely no direct textual evidence of any simulation. Consequently, such *ASSUMPTIONS* must be rigorously proven before they can be used as arguments in favor of one's position. Based on this rather elementary piece of logic, one shouldn't even bother analyzing this document. Anyway, let’s dig a little bit more.

Nagumo’s Intentions (Section 1)

Right off the bat, the errors and the blatant substitutions begin.

> The concept of playing Old Maid was constructed by Nagumo in order to find out more about kiyotaka's mental abilities. Nagumo notices how Manabu praises kiyotaka and admires him, something which is abnormal considering Manabu's talent compared to the rest of the school. And if by any chance, Manabu and Kiyotaka team up, it'll end up being bad for Nagumo. Hence, why he constructed the tactic of "Old Maid".

This section purports to reveal the supposed underlying reason Nagumo orchestrated this little test. But this motivation is never actually revealed in the text, nor is there even a hint of it within the text. In other words, the author simply fabricates a non-canonical justification and doesn't even bother to prove it. Furthermore, this so-called "justification" only serves to demonstrate just how utterly disconnected the author is from the actual reality of the story. Why on earth would an alliance between Manabu and Ayanokoji spell trouble for Nagumo? Manabu is graduating in three months. What exactly are Manabu and Ayanokoji supposed to do to a guy from another grade who has already completely controlled his entire year? Moreover, Manabu and Ayanokoji *did* unite (albeit verbally, and yes, Manabu ended up being a cuckold, but still), yet did this have *any* measurable impact on Nagumo whatsoever? Is there a single, solitary line in the text indicating that Nagumo was ever actually afraid of a Manabu-Ayanokoji coalition, if it was supposed to be bad for him? Of course there isn't. But that certainly doesn't stop the scalers from inventing their own entirely baseless explanations out of thin air.

So, why *did* Nagumo do this? Well, an indirect answer is actually provided in the Volume 7.5:

> "Unfortunately, I know all about Horikita-senpai. If that man has seen something in you, then that something definitely exists".
> "You sure know a lot about the student council president".
> "The 'former' student council president, you mean. I'm looking forward to this, Ayanokouji. Once that man graduates, a boring one year awaits me. To fulfill my desires, become my opponent, ok?".

Nagumo likely just wanted to find out what the hell Manabu saw in Ayanokoji. That's it. Period. But the author instead leaps to far grander, entirely unsupported conclusions about Nagumo's motives, completely ignoring the actual context. Yes, the author mentions the evaluation of Ayanokoji's abilities, but completely fabricates the underlying motive without offering a single convincing (in fact, without *any)* explanation.

> Once his traps get touched upon or noticed by the Perceiver, Nagumo would come into a conclusion with solid logical reasoning

For some reason, the author didn't deem it necessary to specify even the approximate narrative boundaries of when the "Perceiver" *can* or *should* notice the trap. Well then, let's do it for him.

Ayanokoji will notice the trap no later than the moment Nagumo invites him to play. This cannot occur any later (say, during the final round), because only a complete idiot would fail to grasp Nagumo's objective: he spoke with Ayanokoji during the holidays, showed up to play but completely ignored Ayanokoji, and then *suddenly* invited him to join. Well, great that we've cleared that up.

Now, let's ask the obvious question: what *exactly* is Nagumo supposed to deduce *before* Ayanokoji even enters the game? Ayanokoji was merely a passive observer; he did absolutely nothing. According to Ayanokoji himself, Nagumo didn't even glance at him once upon entering the room. This means Nagumo can learn absolutely *nothing* about his style or character prior to Ayanokoji actually joining the game. Okay.

> It's like a mouse trap filled with cheese, the cat (Nagumo) would be hidden, waiting for the mouse to step in.

To be correct, *«It's like a mouse trap filled with cheese, the cat (Nagumo) would be **known**, waiting for the **cautious** mouse to step in.»*

Nagumo’s Traps (Section 2)

> The trap isn’t just about catching Kiyotaka it’s about measuring how deeply Kiyotaka can analyze a layered deception. If Koji had openly exposed his knowledge of the marked Joker, Nagumo would have immediately recognized him as a major threat.

What kind of idiot, my dear, would ever tried to openly accuse Nagumo of cheating? I mean, *why*? For what possible purpose?

But let's entertain the absurd possibility for a second that Ayanokoji suddenly became so utterly brain-dead that he decided to openly flaunt his abilities. How exactly is he supposed to prove the fraud? He has absolutely *nothing* but the mark on the Joker. And the author of the document literally admits this themselves later on, stating that Nagumo had preemptively saved himself from accusations in several ways:

> 1. It also gives Nagumo a safety net if someone accuses him of cheating, he can just point to this round and say, “If I could cheat, why would I lose such an easy round?”
>
> 2. Ensures possible denial: If someone accuses Nagumo of cheating, he can simply respond: “I never claimed certainty. I was just making educated guesses based on probability.” This allows him to maintain his deception without being called out
>
> 3. Nagumo has third-year allies (like Ishikura and Tsunoda) to reinforce his illusion of fairness and mask his deception. Koji cannot directly accuse them or dismiss their actions since they blend in naturally with the game

Thus, Ayanokoji won't be able to accuse Nagumo even by showing the mark on the Joker, because every other argument Nagumo has prepared works directly against him. Therefore, from the author's perspective, Nagumo must be counting on Ayanokoji being smart enough to deduce the fraud, yet conveniently stupid enough to announce it to everyone without a shred of proof. Or, alternatively, after Ayanokoji accuses Nagumo, will he suddenly look *so* incredibly smart that Nagumo must perceive him as a threat? Yeah, sure, Nagumo *"would have immediately recognized him as a major threat"*. A threat to the entire sane world, perhaps, because such an idiot urgently needs to be sterilized for the sake of all humanity.

Now, let's move on to a problem that actually has *at least some* textual evidence to back it up.

> 2. Nagumo deliberately avoids looking at Kiyotaka or acknowledging his presence. This creates the illusion that he doesn't see Kiyotaka as a threat or isn't testing him. The act continues until it's time for their one-on-one match, when he finally engages with Kiyotaka. If Nagumo had been observing Kiyotaka early on, it would have alerted him to the fact that he was being analyzed. Kiyotaka might have played more cautiously or even manipulated the game in return. This lowers Kiyotaka's guard, making him less likely to suspect that the game is actually a test directed at him. By the time Kiyotaka realizes the scheme, Nagumo has already gathered valuable information on his thought process <…> Upon entering the room too, he didn't make eye - contact with Kiyotaka.

So, the claim is that Nagumo deliberately ignored Ayanokoji during the game right up until the moment he invited him to join. The analysis here is technically correct and textually supported; however, the *actual method* Nagumo chose is where the problem arises.

In the previous volume, he literally proposed that Ayanokoji become his rival, presumably counting on getting to know him better as a result. Physically, about two weeks have passed between the volumes. And then he walks into the room, completely ignoring Ayanokoji. But *ignoring* someone is not the same thing as being *indifferent* to them. If you are truly indifferent to something, you would treat it exactly the same way you treat a table. *Ignoring* someone is a conscious reaction; *indifference* is unconscious. In other words, if Nagumo truly didn't give a damn about Ayanokoji, he would have treated him exactly the way he treated everyone else in the room (Koenji aside). He would have perceived him on par with the rest of them. But he doesn't.

I repeat: a couple of weeks ago, this very same person approached Ayanokoji directly. And now he consciously ignores him, having supposedly just dropped by to play cards. *Not suspicious at all.*

So, what happens next? Nagumo, who had been ignoring Ayanokoji this whole time, *suddenly* turns his attention to him and invites him to join the game. Just like that, out of nowhere, he personally selects this supposedly random person. He didn't say, "Pick anyone, I don't care", he pointed *directly* at Ayanokoji out of ~10 people. At this exact moment, only a complete idiot would fail to realize that Nagumo engineered this entire scenario on purpose, and it doesn't take a genius to deduce exactly what he's trying to achieve. A completely and utterly failed strategy for concealing his interest, from start to finish.

> 3. (Feigning Lack of Control) In a round where Nagumo had a 50% chance to win, he deliberately loses. Normally, if he were suspected of cheating, he should be able to win easily in a two-card selection. <…> If someone was already suspicious, they now see a contradiction: "If Nagumo was cheating, why did he fail in the simplest round where he had a 50/50 chance?"

Let's clarify this one more time. Nagumo *intentionally* loses in a round where he has a 50% chance of winning. *Again.* A 50% chance to win, yet he loses on purpose. For god's sake. I'm sorry, but in a round with a 50% win rate, Nagumo could just lose by sheer accident, because the chance of winning is only 50%, not a goddamn 100%. Perhaps the author was just being

incredibly sloppy with their wording and actually meant that for a normal player the odds were 50/50. In that case, they should go ahead and write another 38 pages explaining this specific fragment. In any case, Nagumo could have easily lost by accident if the mark on the Joker happened to be obscured by another card.

Now, you might be asking yourself: *How is this possible? Why weren't the third-years surprised right now, but were surprised in the final round?*

I wonder, can this be explained taking into account what I wrote about the cards at the very beginning? Of course it can. This time, the third-years didn't react with surprise because the mark on the Joker was visible to Nagumo, but not to them. In the final round, both they and Nagumo saw the mark, which is exactly why they were baffled by the wrong card being chosen. Granted, this is pure speculation on my part, but, unlike the author, I'm not pretending to know *exactly* what happened and why. So, take this explanation with a healthy grain of salt.

For instance, a question inevitably arises either way: if Kinugasa actually intended this to explain the differing reactions of the third-years, then *why* was Nagumo always able to correctly guess the outcome of the rounds, as if the Joker was perpetually visible to him and his accomplices?

So, could Nagumo have lost on purpose? Of course he could. But the author has failed to provide a single shred of convincing evidence to prove it.

> 4. The third-year students act in ways that help Nagumo control the game's perception: Ishikura's Fake Surprise: When Nagumo fails to guess correctly, Ishikura acts surprised, reinforcing the idea that Nagumo was supposed to win but couldn't. Tsunoda's Role: By playing normally and "randomly" losing or winning against Nagumo, he ensures that Nagumo's manipulation remains hidden. <…> If Nagumo was acting alone, any strange behavior would be more noticeable. Since multiple people are involved, it makes it harder for someone like Kiyotaka to isolate Nagumo's specific tricks. <…> By having others react naturally, it makes his actions seem completely normal within the game

So, the author asserts that Ishikura fabricated his surprise. Naturally, without a shred of evidence. Again.

Apparently, the mere fact that Nagumo gave him a heads-up about the Joker automatically implies that he was dictated his every move and the exact moment to feign surprise. Well, it goddamn doesn't.

But let's entertain the fantasy that it actually is true. What's the glaring problem here? Who exactly guarantees that Ishikura or Tsunoda will actually play their part correctly, or even remember what the hell they're supposed to do? The document implies that the third-years were handed an extensive list of instructions. But the more instructions they have to execute, the higher the probability of a screw-up. The reaction could be delayed, the facial expression could look completely unnatural, or any other number of things could go wrong. And the moment Ayanokoji spots something slightly suspicious, the entire strategy is instantly compromised. Therefore, ordering Ishikura or Tsunoda to actively fake their reactions inherently risks exposing Nagumo's entire deception.

But could Ishikura have just *accidentally* been surprised by Nagumo's mistake? Of course he could, if he was merely informed about the marked card without being briefed on every single detail. In that scenario, watching Nagumo deliberately pick a bad card while knowing about the Joker gives Ishikura a perfectly legitimate reason to be surprised. There is absolutely *nothing* in the novel indicating that the surprise was fake. The author of the document takes a reaction that has every logical reason to be genuine and magically transforms it into yet another meticulously coordinated act, without providing a single explanation.

> When Nagumo misses a prediction or loses, these third years react in a way that reinforces the illusion of fairness

Black is white, and ignorance is strength, such is the creed of the scalers.

Seriously, did you even *read* what Ishikura actually said? He literally pointed out that Nagumo was expected to pick the correct card in an *absolutely randomized game*. A reaction that actually reinforces the illusion of fairness would have been something along the lines of *"Well, your luck had to run out eventually, Nagumo, ha-ha"*... Instead, Ishikura practically blurted out that Nagumo was somehow *supposed* to choose the correct card. In response, Nagumo tried to smooth things over, attempting to downplay the fact that he clearly knew something he shouldn't:

> Nagumo picked the Joker.
> “Now this is unusual. I thought you’d surely be able to pick the right one.”
> Ishikura said so from beside Nagumo.
> “A game of cards ultimately boils down to luck after all. I’ll lose when I lose.”

I can already vividly see how the scalers are going to latch onto this, frantically claiming that Ishikura was deliberately instructed to say that *exactly* so that Ayanokoji would receive yet another convenient clue. And naturally, all of this comes completely without a single shred of evidence.

> A perceptive observer (Kiyotaka) would notice the pattern: "Why does Nagumo always seem to know what’s going to happen?" However, because of the vague wording, there’s no concrete proof that he is cheating. This forces Kiyotaka to actively investigate further, playing into Nagumo’s hands.

Here we stumble upon a fundamental problem with both the document and Nagumo's strategy.

It is simply *taken for granted* that Ayanokoji will inevitably hang onto Nagumo's every word and actively try to unravel this tangled web of lies. But... *why*, exactly? Based on what precise premises does Nagumo know with absolute certainty that Ayanokoji will inevitably dig deeper, or even bother engaging with the game in the first place? If Ayanokoji had simply been in a relaxed state of mind, Nagumo would have learned absolutely *nothing*, because Ayanokoji would have been entirely indistinguishable from any other ordinary player.

> The marking is not obvious, meaning only someone with a high level of observation can catch it. This allows him to track the Joker at all times, giving him full control over the game

As established right from the get-go, this is a gross exaggeration that only serves to demonstrate just how utterly disconnected from the real world both Kinugasa and the author of this document truly are.

> Forces Kiyotaka to engage in deeper reasoning: Once Kiyotaka realizes Nagumo is cheating, he must then identify the method. This forces him to go through multiple layers of deduction, revealing more about his thinking process

A person is perfectly capable of skipping several stages of reasoning and jumping straight to a conclusion. One that might be either correct or completely wrong. Well, roughly in the same way the author of this document did, having conveniently skipped a whole series of vital logical steps and leaped straight to the unproven assertion that Ishikura was faking his surprise. As for the actual situation, Ayanokoji could have simply stumbled upon the mark on the Joker by sheer accident and pieced the whole puzzle together (deducing that Nagumo showed up specifically to test him), all while completely skipping over minor details like the third-years' behavior. The author of the document made zero attempt to consider this scenario.

> 8. In their final confrontation, Nagumo gives Kiyotaka a choice: Pick one of two cards (one of them being the Joker). Before Kiyotaka makes his choice, Nagumo warns him twice to “give it some thought.” This is a direct challenge, subtly pressuring Kiyotaka to reveal what he knows. This Forces Kiyotaka to reveal his reasoning ability: If Kiyotaka figures out the marked Joker, then Nagumo can confirm that he is far more intelligent than he appears. A psychological pressure test: By warning him to “think carefully”, Nagumo is probing how Kiyotaka reacts under pressure. If Kiyotaka hesitates or changes his decision, it might indicate that he has figured out the trick but isn’t sure how to act. A final chance for Kiyotaka to slip up: If Kiyotaka were to directly call out the marked Joker, Nagumo would know that he went through all the logical steps to uncover the scheme

And now we arrive at the central, fatal flaw of the entire document. Nagumo's trap only works under the strict condition that Ayanokoji behaves *out of character* (meaning, he stops being indifferent). If he doesn't, Nagumo is fundamentally incapable of distinguishing between dumb luck and extraordinary ability. And, hilariously enough, the author literally admits this themselves:

> This proves that Kiyotaka is deliberately provoking Nagumo, but in a way that does not reveal his own awareness of the trick. This forces Nagumo to question whether Kiyotaka is truly lucky or if he actually saw through the deception

For instance:

1. Ayanokoji picks the non-Joker. Is this *luck*, did he successfully trace the entire logical chain, or did he simply spot the mark?
2. Ayanokoji picks the Joker. Is this *bad* luck, or did he notice the mark but deliberately pick the Joker just to conceal the fact that he saw it?

Any interpretation here provides absolutely zero guarantees.

Ayanokoji is renowned for his exceptionally flat demeanor. Yet Nagumo's entire gamble hinges on the premise that this will magically change during the game. This is a profoundly unreliable test that relies entirely on the desperate hope that Ayanokoji will suddenly show nervousness, act with unwarranted confidence, or give himself away via some other subtle tell. If no such signals materialize, Nagumo has absolutely *no* reliable means of determining whether Ayanokoji failed to notice the trap in the first place, or whether he noticed it and deliberately concealed the fact that he did.

Another glaring issue is that Nagumo explicitly warned Ayanokoji ("Give it some thought before you pick"). However, we have absolutely zero evidence that Nagumo actually witnessed Ayanokoji's initial choice. It simply does not follow from the text:

> 「考えてもわからないので適当に引かせてもらいます」
> そう言って手を伸ばそうとすると南雲は一度トランプを引っ込めた。
> 「考えてから引いてくれ」

If Nagumo had no idea which card Ayanokoji initially intended to pick, then he only ever saw the final choice. Based on that, he couldn't possibly determine whether Ayanokoji had changed his mind or not. He could only observe that Ayanokoji initially wanted to draw right away, that there was a pause following Nagumo's intervention, and that Ayanokoji subsequently chose the right card. This severely undermines the interpretation that Nagumo could deduce, merely from Ayanokoji's behavior, that he had spotted the mark and adjusted his play accordingly. If the initial choice wasn't visible, then proving a change of mind is fundamentally impossible. Nagumo is left with nothing but pure guesswork: did Ayanokoji hesitate because of the pressure, out of sheer politeness, because he was lost in thought, or because he actually spotted the mark?

That being said, it is technically possible that Nagumo *did* see the initial choice, but this is neither confirmed nor refuted by the text.

Disadvantages (Section 3)

> 2. The Presence of Third-Year Players Nagumo has third-year allies (like Ishikura and Tsunoda) to reinforce his illusion of fairness and mask his deception. Koji cannot directly accuse them or dismiss their actions since they blend in naturally with the game

Why the hell would Ayanokoji accuse Nagumo or the third-years? What exactly does he stand to gain from that? Why is this even a *disadvantage*? He spends every moment actively trying not to draw any more attention to himself than absolutely necessary. Is the fate of humanity at stake in this game, or is it just cooking duty?

> 4. The Risk of Exposure: If Kiyotaka figures everything out too quickly or reacts too sharply, he risks exposing his own intelligence to Nagumo. On the other hand, if he acts too passive, Nagumo might conclude that he is either unintelligent or hiding something, which could lead to further probing

The author has invented a rigid framework of acceptable behavior for Ayanokoji, stepping outside of which is supposedly meant to spell disaster. And what did Ayanokoji actually do? Well, he acted exactly like Ayanokoji. Meaning he was perfectly passive, entirely unresponsive to Nagumo's provocations, and successfully concealed his true capabilities. Consequently, Nagumo failed to grasp the extent of Ayanokoji's abilities (which, incidentally, the author later admits), which is precisely why he had to keep testing him. Okay then.

> 5. Limited Time to Analyze Unlike a typical strategic battle where Ayanokoji can take time to plan countermeasures, this scenario happens in the moment. He must process multiple layers of deception instantly while still playing along naturally

While technically true, it is still a gross exaggeration, though I suppose one should just get used to that by now. Moving on: Ayanokoji observed four full rounds before he even started playing himself. That's roughly a dozen minutes of pure observation, which is more than enough time to conduct a thorough analysis.

> 6. No External Influence or Assistance Since this is a closed environment, Koji has no outside help and must handle the situation alone. He cannot gather information from external sources, making it harder to verify suspicions

If you are going to claim that this is a flaw, then you need to actually demonstrate *what* kind of external assistance is being referred to, and *how* exactly it was supposed to help him in this specific game. But the author completely fails to show that Ayanokoji needed any external help or influence whatsoever. You know, the Japanese government wasn't secretly assisting him in this game either, so I suppose we can just mark that down as yet another fatal disadvantage. Oh dear.

> 7. The Psychological Pressure Nagumo intentionally places pressure on Koji, particularly in their one-on-one match, by warning him to "think carefully." This is a subtle mental trap, forcing Koji to make a critical decision that could reveal his intelligence

As established previously, this entire mechanism only functions if Ayanokoji behaves *completely out of character*. Therefore, Ayanokoji is actually sitting in an invincible safe zone as long as he simply refrains from doing things he never does anyway — like getting visibly nervous or giving away his true hand.

> 8. Forced to Play a Role Kiyotaka is in a difficult position because he must maintain his persona as an average student while also avoiding being manipulated by Nagumo. He cannot act too smart or too ignorant, meaning he has to perfectly balance his responses throughout the game

… So, he just has to behave exactly as he normally does. And *also*, he had to blink. No, seriously, let's just add that to the list of fatal flaws as well.

> 9. The Ambiguous Nature of Nagumo’s Moves Because Nagumo frames his predictions vaguely and creates an illusion of luck and skill, Koji not directly accuse him of cheating without evidence. This forces Kiyotaka to rely on subtle deductions rather than clear-cut proof.

For the third time now, the author claims that Ayanokoji can't accuse Nagumo of cheating, yet still hasn't bothered to show *why the fuck* he would even want to. Oh well, moving on.

Kiyotaka’s EP (Section 4)

> Even when being in a trapped situation, Kiyotaka does not lose his composure. Kiyotaka had many disadvantages during this scene, yet still he :
> - Emotionally perceives Nagumo’s mental capacity.
> - Detected Nagumo’s manipulation of the game.
> - Physically identified the marked joker.
> - Feeling disgust at the rigged system.
> - Understood Nagumo’s psychological tactics.
> - Outsmarted Nagumo while hiding his own intelligence.
>
> This is the text from Year 1 Volume 8 which we will be using to analyse his depth of EP.

This is, without a doubt, the most hilarious part of the entire document. Why? Because it's literally titled "Kiyotaka's EP", yet the author proceeds to list examples that have absolutely *nothing* to do with EP (Emotional Perception).

And yes, in case you somehow weren't aware, simply slapping the word "Emotionally" onto a sentence instantly makes it relevant to EP. Therefore, Ayanokoji "Emotionally perceives Nagumo's mental capacity", even though the author never actually bothered to provide a piece of evidence as to how the word "Emotionally" is even remotely relevant here. Spoiler alert: it isn't. Evaluating another person's intellect is a *cognitive* process, not an emotional one.

Now, let's take a look at exactly what the author actually uses to analyze his "depth of EP":

> Kiyotaka quickly realizes that Nagumo’s predictions about the game’s outcomes are too accurate for a game based on luck

This is statistical analysis, not emotional perception.

> This proves that Kiyotaka deduced Nagumo’s control over the game

The word "deduced" inherently precludes emotional perception.

> Additionally, Kiyotaka understands that Nagumo’s advantage isn’t just based on personal skill but rather on a pre-established trick

This is an understanding of game mechanics, not emotions.

> Kiyotaka’s observational skills allow him to detect that Nagumo marked the joker while dealing

This is visual attentiveness, not emotional perception.

> This proves that Kiyotaka understands when the marking took place during the initial deal meaning Nagumo had planned the deception from the start

This is event reconstruction and logical inference of intent, not emotional perception.

> This is direct proof that Kiyotaka not only theorized about the trick but also physically confirmed it. His ability to notice such a small detail highlights his superior perception

This is a sensory skill (vision), not emotional perception

> This proves that Kiyotaka finds Nagumo's tactics unfair. Despite his usual detached demeanor, he internally reacts negatively to the senior students' trickery. This moment shows that Kiyotaka has personal standards regarding competition

This is an emotional reaction, not emotional perception. And even if we were to count this as part of emotional perception, how exactly does this elevate Ayanokoji?

> This proves that Nagumo is observing Kiyotaka's reaction to see if he falls into hesitation or overconfidence. If Kiyotaka picks too quickly, he may seem too confident. If he hesitates too much, he may seem nervous. Nagumo is deliberately trying to gauge his intelligence

This is emotional management, not emotional perception.

> This proves that Kiyotaka understands the psychological pressure Nagumo is applying. Instead of showing any real emotion, he acts as though he is unsure, preventing Nagumo from reading his true thoughts

Understanding pressure is a cognitive skill, not emotional perception. As for the alleged pretense, that's a gross exaggeration. Ayanokoji wasn't "feigning uncertainty", he just sat there in silence for several seconds.

> Instead of exposing Nagumo's trick outright, Kiyotaka pretends to choose randomly while secretly selecting the correct card:
> Text: "I like the one on the right. I'll take that one."
> Analysis: This proves that Kiyotaka deliberately hides his intelligence by making his choice seem like chance. If he had picked too decisively, Nagumo might have suspected that he saw through the trick

Pretense is not emotional perception. Furthermore, there is absolutely zero textual evidence of any "pretense". He simply said, "I like the right one"

> After winning, he subtly challenges Nagumo without making it obvious:
> Text: "You lost. Huh, Nagumo?"
> Analysis: This proves that Kiyotaka is deliberately provoking Nagumo, but in a way that does not reveal his own awareness of the trick. This forces Nagumo to question whether Kiyotaka is truly lucky or if he actually saw through the deception

This is provocation, not emotional perception. Additionally, there is zero textual indication that this quote even belongs to Ayanokoji. So, that line could have been spoken by someone like Ishikura.

> Kiyotaka also emotionally perceives Nagumo's interest and intentions against Koenji

The author has failed to produce a single quote pointing to any behavioral quirks from Nagumo that would justify a conclusion about "emotional" perception.

> Analysis: This proves that Kiyotaka understands Nagumo’s thinking. He perceives that Nagumo isn’t questioning Kōenji for logical reasons but because of their prior interaction. It suggests that Nagumo is curious about Kōenji or sees him as a challenge.

The author transforms mere probability into absolute certainty. However, no such deductions are actually made by Ayanokoji in the text. Nagumo clearly finds Koenji to be an interesting person. He clearly knows a surprisingly lot about him. He clearly invites him to the Student Council. But none of this implies that some covert operation is afoot. And the claim that Ayanokoji “understands Nagumo’s thinking” is especially unjustified, given that the narrative itself actually preserves a degree of uncertainty.

To sum it all up, the author has failed entirely to provide any evidence for the depth of Ayanokoji's emotional perception during the game. He conflates emotional perception with logical deduction, visual observation, and behavioral management. These are cognitive, analytical, or sensory skills.

But the most hilarious part here is that the author is desperately trying to prove two mutually exclusive things at the same time, creating an absurd "omnipotence on both sides" scenario. On one hand, Nagumo is supposedly a genius puppet master who meticulously briefed the third-years (Ishikura's fake surprise, Tsunoda's natural reactions, the creation of an illusion of "resistance"). All of this was done to ensure Ayanokoji wouldn't suspect a thing. If the camouflage is perfect, then there's simply nothing to read from their behavior. On the other hand, Ayanokoji supposedly used emotional perception to see right through Nagumo's scheme. If Nagumo and the third-years are playing their roles flawlessly (as the author claims), then Ayanokoji's emotional perception has absolutely nothing to latch onto. But if he uses EP to see their true intentions straight through their flawless acting, then they are, by definition, terrible actors. The author cannot simultaneously claim that the trap was flawlessly disguised *and* that Ayanokoji saw right through it specifically via emotional perception.

> 3. Kiyotaka’s Emotional Perception of Nagumo’s Thoughts
> Throughout this exchange, Kiyotaka remains observant but does not react emotionally. However, his internal commentary shows that he perceives Nagumo’s thought process:
> Nagumo is engaging with Kōenji due to their prior encounter.
> Kiyotaka understands that Nagumo is not ignoring Kōenji because he sees him as an unusual element that cannot be easily controlled.
> Nagumo’s invitation is a strategic move.
> Kiyotaka perceives that Nagumo is not just being friendly—he is testing Kōenji and possibly trying to bring him under his influence.
> Nagumo’s reaction to rejection is calculated.
> Instead of showing disappointment, Nagumo keeps the offer open, indicating that he still sees Kōenji as useful.
> Kiyotaka does not explicitly react to Nagumo’s thoughts on Kōenji, but his observational skills allow him to fully grasp Nagumo’s intentions. He sees Nagumo’s curiosity, acknowledgment of talent, and strategic recruitment for what they are.
> Kiyotaka also observes his own group’s reactions and perceives their emotions.
> And that is it.

Well, that is really it. The fact that a character doesn't display emotions only proves his self-control (or emotional coldness); it does absolutely *nothing* to prove that he skillfully perceives the emotions of others. The analysis of the Nagumo-Koenji interaction is purely cognitive analysis and deduction. Ayanokoji isn't "reading" Nagumo's emotions; he is calculating his motives and tactics. To label this "emotional perception" is to completely ignore the actual definition of the word "emotion".

"Kiyo also observes his own group's reactions and perceives their emotions" — NO, HE JUST ACKNOWLEDGED THEIR SHOCK. He isn't analyzing *why* they're shocked, he isn't empathizing with them, and he certainly isn't parsing the nuanced shades of their emotional state. This is basic, everyday observation available to literally any functional human being, not some extraordinary feat of emotional perception.

Which interpretation is more plausible?

Nagumo openly displayed interest in Ayanokoji back in V7.5. Therefore, from Ayanokoji's perspective, his theatrical ignoring of Ayanokoji followed by a direct invitation to play should look like an overwhelmingly obvious, conscious test. Nagumo likely wasn't trying to hide the *fact* that he was testing Ayanokoji or his interest in him. What he was hiding was the *mechanics* of the test (the mark on the Joker and the third-years' involvement). The trap wasn't designed for a clueless Ayanokoji, but rather to test his reaction under conditions where he is already on high alert. Even this interpretation has its flaws, and the fundamental problem of trying to interpret Ayanokoji's behavior when choosing between two cards remains an irreducible defect of Nagumo's trap.

Conclusion

Now, let's sum this all up.

1. Nagumo's attempt to lure Ayanokoji into a trap failed the very second he walked into the room and started ignoring him. And once Nagumo directly invited Ayanokoji to play, his intentions should have been blatantly obvious (regardless of whether Kinugasa conveniently made Ayanokoji immune to hints in this specific episode or not).
2. Nagumo could neither control the flow of the game nor accurately gauge the depth of Ayanokoji's analysis. Therefore, any assumptions or assertions to the contrary are pure speculation, stemming entirely from Kinugasa's and the author's complete disregard for how reality actually works. For lord's sake, try actually reproducing the mechanics of this game with your friends. Stop being armchair theorists.
3. The author has utterly failed to demonstrate the depth of Ayanokoji's emotional perception, or even prove that Ayanokoji utilized emotional perception at all during this game. Furthermore, the document suffers from analytical schizophrenia. *Either* Nagumo's camouflage was flawless, and Ayanokoji saw through it using pure logic and observation, *or* Ayanokoji used EP, but then Nagumo's camouflage was completely useless. The author is desperately trying to have his cake and eat it too, which reduces his analysis to a confused, self-contradictory paper of mutually exclusive compliments thrown at the characters.

4. The document suffers horrifically from bias, overthinking, overinterpretation, misinterpretation, fabrication, exaggeration, and a whole host of other issues.