Akiyama Shinichi, the protagonist of the manga and anime series "Liar Game," is often regarded as a highly intelligent character, and many fans admire his strategic prowess, analytical mind, and psychological insight. However, some critics and viewers argue that his intellectual portrayal might be somewhat overrated when examined critically. To explore this perspective comprehensively, it's essential to analyze various facets of Akiyama's character, his methods, the series' narrative structure, and the broader context of intelligence depiction in fiction.

1. Overemphasis on Analytical and Mathematical Skills

Akiyama is frequently portrayed as a master strategist with exceptional analytical abilities, particularly in mathematics and logic. While these skills are impressive, some argue that the series tends to overstate their rarity or applicability. In real-world scenarios, strategic success often depends on emotional intelligence, social skills, and adaptability — areas where Akiyama is less emphasized. Critics suggest that the series sometimes simplifies complex human interactions into mere calculations, thereby elevating Akiyama's intellect at the expense of portraying more nuanced forms of intelligence.

2. Limited Demonstration of Creativity and Innovation

While Akiyama exhibits clever tactics, his approaches often rely on existing logical frameworks and psychological manipulation rather than groundbreaking innovation. His strategies tend to be extensions or combinations of known methods rather than genuinely novel ideas. Some viewers feel that this reliance on known tactics diminishes the perception of his intelligence as truly "genius," instead framing him as a resourceful but not necessarily inventive thinker.

3. The Role of the Narrative and Plot Devices

"Liar Game" is a game-centric series where tension and suspense are pivotal. The narrative often places Akiyama in situations that amplify his intelligence, sometimes bordering on contrived scenarios engineered to showcase his skills. This narrative device can lead to an inflated perception of his abilities, as his success hinges on plot conveniences, predetermined

outcomes, or the writers' desire to depict him as superior. Consequently, his intelligence might seem less organic and more a function of storytelling needs rather than a naturally exceptional mind.

4. Underestimation of Other Characters' Abilities

Some critics argue that the series underrepresents or underdevelops other characters' intelligence and ingenuity, thereby elevating Akiyama's role as the sole genius. This creates a narrative imbalance, making Akiyama appear more intellectually superior than perhaps justified. In real competitive or strategic environments, multiple individuals often exhibit comparable or even superior intelligence in different domains; the series tends to focus solely on Akiyama's strengths, which can skew perceptions of his overall intellect.

5. Lack of Real-World Practicality

Akiyama's strategies, while effective within the context of the game, sometimes lack practical applicability outside the series. His reliance on psychological manipulation and mathematical calculations may not translate well into real-world scenarios, where unpredictability, moral considerations, and social complexity play larger roles. Critics might argue that this focus on theoretical or game-specific intelligence over practical wisdom diminishes the depth of his character, making his intelligence seem more superficial or context-dependent.

6. The "Overrated" Label in the Context of Fictional Intelligence

In anime and manga, characters are often elevated to near-superhuman levels of intellect for dramatic effect. This is a common trope, and Akiyama is no exception. However, the critique of being "overrated intellectually" stems from the tendency to perceive such characters as more realistic or universally applicable than they truly are. The series, by emphasizing Akiyama's genius, risks creating a caricature of true intelligence—one that favors cold logic and strategic mastery over emotional insight, moral complexity, and adaptability, which are equally important traits of genuine intelligence.

7. Psychological Manipulation and Moral Ambiguity

Akiyama’s use of psychological tactics can be seen as a reflection of manipulative intelligence rather than pure intellectual brilliance. Critics might interpret that his success depends more on exploiting others’ weaknesses than on innate genius. This focus on manipulation could be viewed as a narrow interpretation of intelligence, emphasizing strategic cunning over holistic cognition, empathy, or moral reasoning.

8. The Limits of the "Overrated" Perspective

It's important to acknowledge that Akiyama’s character is intentionally designed to be a genius within the fictional universe of "Liar Game." The narrative’s focus on his strategic mastery is a core theme, and the series aims to showcase how intelligence can be used in psychological warfare. Thus, labeling him as "overrated" might stem from a comparison with the idealized portrayal of genius, which often overlooks the multifaceted nature of human intelligence.

In summary

, while Akiyama Shinichi is undeniably depicted as a highly intelligent character, some critics believe that his intellectual portrayal is exaggerated or simplified. The overreliance on mathematical, logical, and manipulative strategies, combined with narrative devices and a lack of focus on other forms of intelligence, can contribute to perceptions of overratedness. Moreover, the context-specific nature of his skills, the storytelling choices, and the tendency to elevate strategic prowess above emotional or moral intelligence all play roles in this critique. Recognizing these points doesn't diminish Akiyama’s cleverness but encourages a more nuanced appreciation of what true intelligence entails, both within fiction and real life.