Self revelation strategy analysis

As a parting gift from u/Economy_Echo_8500/Echonomy

Analysed and formatted by myself.

Colour chart:

FSIQ + intelligence
EI + SI + psychology
AC + adaptability
Thinking + reasoning
Planning + strategy + judgement
Sensory + Foresight
Deception + Manipulation

Notes:

Although Light Yagami has a lot of good feats during self revelation especially in emotional management and perception, this analysis will still obviously focus on L's feats.

Goal: Bring Light onto the investigation whilst determining if he's actually Kira.

Self Revelation formulation

After failing to find anything suspicious upon Light during his surveillance, L hypothesises that Light is acting 'too perfect'. So to better determine whether Light is kira or not, L decides to directly interact with him up close. With self revelation, L is able to achieve two goals simultaneously. Firstly, if Light really is Kira, the sheer amount of pressure L would place on Light would make him break, revealing Light to be Kira. However, if he isn't Kira, Light would still be a valuable resource to track down who Kira may actually be.

Even if Light isn't Kira, L knows about Light's intellect. Throughout the probing of the NPA, L definitely would've run a background check on Light, and this would be especially probable after narrowing down the suspect pool to only 8 individuals. This background check would reveal Light's intelligence, Soichiro himself confirms Light's intelligence.



This is beneficial for L. Because he can utilise Light's intelligence to hunt down Kira, allowing him to gain more momentum in the Kira case after the detrimental loss of the 12 FBI agents and nearly the entirety of the NPA. He formulates this scheme quickly after surveilling Light through the cameras and not seeing anything blatantly suspicious.

This demonstrates his adaptability, recognising the resources he has and the major blow that Kira had dealt. With the scheme, he can either gain a valuable resource to bring himself closer to Kira, or catch Light as Kira instead. The fact that he's targeting Light directly also shows his inferences and intuition.

(PSI + FRI, fluid intelligence, EM, leadership, situational adaptability, critical thinking, deductive + abductive + inductive reasoning, planning acclimation, strategy flexibility + orchestration + logistics, decision making, intuition + perception, foresight horizon, logical manipulation)

Pressuring Light Yagami

For the university entrance exams, L understands that anyone would be nervous about it, however he would also recognise Light's intelligence and gauge that Light wouldn't struggle too much on the exams. Therefore, L decides to apply pressure onto Light in person.

L's understanding of Light here is subtle. He knows that light isn't bothered much by the exams. He purposefully enters the entrance exams and sits in a weird position that would draw attention to him by the invigilator. He predicts that Light would look at him. This is because, if Light was a normal student, Light wouldn't have cared about who the invigilator was talking to and focus on his exams. But L knows that Light isn't focusing on his exams, and indirectly manipulates Light to look at him. The method of the manipulation is key as it doesn't outright disqualify L from the exams and thus, allows him to carry out the next stages of his scheme. Furthermore, L isn't doing anything suspicious for Light to suspect him being L.This is evident through the panel shown, where Light looks back at L, and L is already looking at him. Whilst this, the other students don't care and are focusing on their exams.



L makes sure to engrave his presence into Light's mind. He ensures he makes eye contact with him, and understands that the way he's sitting would be socially deemed as 'unusual',

indicating his social intelligence. Light recognises L in the later chapters. The point of L's first tactic here is to pressure Light indirectly and impress his presence unto him. This achieves Light feeling uneasy, and also makes Light remember him so the impact of his next tactic would be more effective.

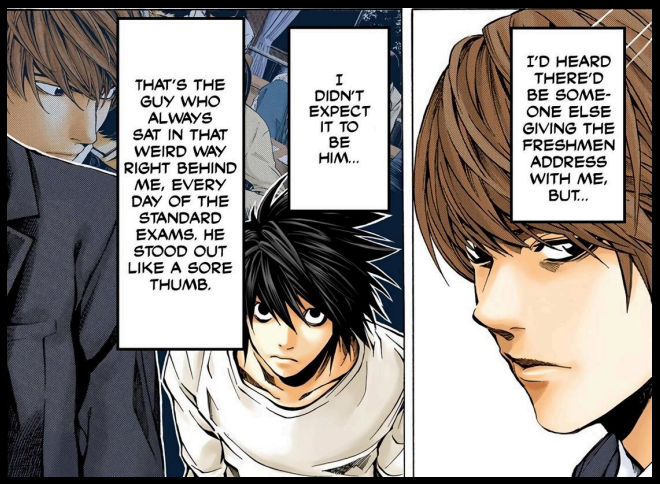
L is multi-tasking here by pressuring Light subtly and completing the exam. This is actually a stressful situation for L, although he's fine doing the entrance exams, the stress comes from the risk of being close proximity to Light, who he's confirming if he's Kira. Whilst this, L is definitely observing Light throughout the exams to try identify anything that may be suspicious.

Another thing I want to outline is L's social assimilation (an index I use which basically combines integration + awareness). L is a 25 year old who is sitting entrance exams for a university amongst mostly 18 year olds. L, although having no background information about himself available, basically infiltrated the exams and secured a seat behind Light. This is very impressive, hinting at L preparing fabricative measures to allow himself to smoothly assimilate into the Toho university exams.

(PSI + WMI, EP + EM + EU + EE, social assimilation + leadership, psychological warfare, stress tolerance + multi-tasking, situational adaptability, critical + divergent thinking, strategy alignment + orchestration + logistics, caution, observation, foresight scope + horizon, acting skills + fabrication, logical + indirect manipulation)

Revelation

At the entrance ceremony, L follows Light closely and observes him, making sure that he's surveying Light at every possible moment. The effect of his previous tactic works perfectly as now Light is confused on who this individual is, this actually lowers his guard even further, making the next tactic even more powerful.



L understands social perception, knowing that he looks rather eccentric which he purposefully does, especially when right next to Light the difference is stark. Even whilst giving the freshmen address, he holds the paper in a bizarre manner to draw more attention onto him. Light and literally the entire assembly hall thinks he's weird, which allows him to

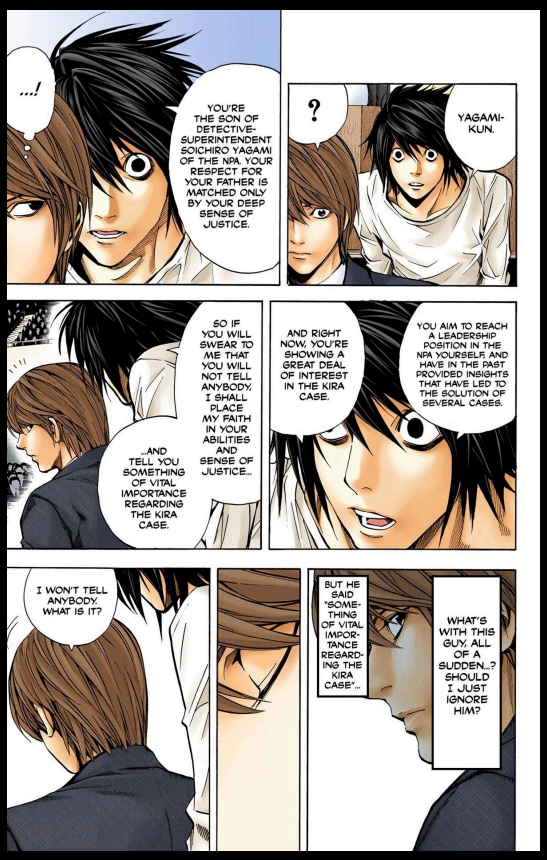
pass off as just an unusual person. L is effectively mind reading everyone here, whilst also maintaining his focus on Light and emotionally perceiving his thoughts and feelings of confusion/avoidance. L is aware socially that his self presentation doesn't match the professionalism during the event, and deliberately plays on this act, scratching his head and looking clueless. Which again, lowers Light's guard. L is controlling the execution of his strategy here perfectly.



Just as they came up to the podium, whilst leaving L stayed behind Light. L utilises this moment as the two are far away from eavesdroppers and suddenly starts talking, giving his psychoanalysis of Light but deliberately holding back key pieces of information so that Light doesn't suspect L as L the detective. This is because during the broadcast trap, it was obvious how much L had psychologically profiled Light. So, L withholds some of his psychoanalysis, and just comes across as an unusual person, whilst effectively observing Light closely to detect any indicators that Light is Kira. L also states Light's goals here, which is an incredible prediction. Let me explain.

Light is Kira. However, Light obviously needs to act like he isn't Kira, and currently he has ties with the police force. He originally didn't plan on taking the lead over the NPA, however does so after L self reveals himself. L literally predicts the public image that Light will eventually create of himself before Light even thinks of the plan, demonstrating just how precise and deep L's reading of Light is here. Emotionally perceiving and understanding Light's goals that align with his public image, demonstrating how far L is predicting Light's actions. As obviously, after L's death, Light took over the leadership role of the NPA.

L knows how to catch Light's attention, evident through his previous tactics, which shows how he's leading the conversation and letting Light unsuspectingly fall into his trap verbally.



L reveals to Light that he's L the detective. Light Yagami is obviously caught majorly off guard by this. On the surface, it's obvious that L wouldn't reveal to a potential Kira suspect that he's L, L understands and uses reverse psychology to pressure Light. The mind games here are intense because the stakes are high. Light realises how observant L is, thinking that he shouldn't lose his cool, because if he does then L would be able to deduce that Light is Kira. L states his first intention, which is to judge whether Light is suitable for the Kira investigation, however the second intention is clear, that being L suspects Light as Kira. Light understands this, and L also mind reads that Light is mind reading L's true intention of revealing himself as L the detective.

Light turns around and commends L, and L accepts it. L knows that this singular tactic is extremely impactful and destructive, as it totally psychologically corners Light (if he's kira).



L's thought process here reveals how he's deconstructing the situation and thinking in reference to the system of Kira. He's thinking holistically about the environment and his own tactic, recognising the potency of it and how it would affect Light, he's viewing himself as the detective whilst Light as Kira. L is effectively mind reading Light throughout this entire interaction, literally emotionally perceiving the distress and pressure Light is under right now.

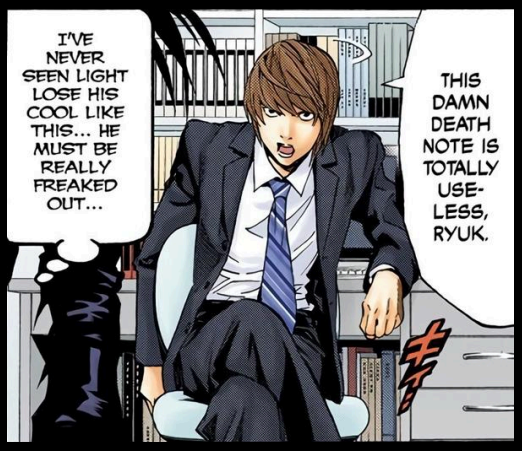
L recognises his own reputation as L the detective and using his experience of dealing with Kira before, he understands how much of a disruption this revelation would be.

This singular tactic is what the entire strategy pivots on, it seems simple but it's actually quite layered. L would understand how detrimental this tactic is to Light if he was Kira, and it's obvious that he foresaw all of Light's thought processes in response to this sudden information.

Firstly, if Light kills L here, it's likely that L has revealed himself to Soichiro, this would immediately put Light under immense suspicion. Secondly, L himself has a 'conspicuously fake name' which is Hideki Ryuga. This shows that L abductively reasoned out that Kira needs a name alongside a face. So if Light tries to kill L, there's a huge chance he would accidentally kill the real, pop idol, Hideki Ryuga, which would allow L to infer that Light is Kira. Thirdly, it's not even confirmed that this person claiming to be L is actually even L in the first place. The strategy's infrastructure is very complex and well shielded in multiple angles.

Let's dissect this strategy even further. L utilises reverse psychology expertly to corner Light. Light originally concealed his involvement during the L isolation strategy, however he didn't suspect that L would directly interact with him. L knows this, which is why he reveals himself, to add further pressure on Light. Understanding Light's thought process, L's action is literally insane and unpredictable. Despite this, it's a risky play for L due to potentially being in close proximity to the most wanted and dangerous criminal, Kira. This showcases L's emotional management and engagement, displaying his emotional investment within solving the Kira case, literally risking his life for it.

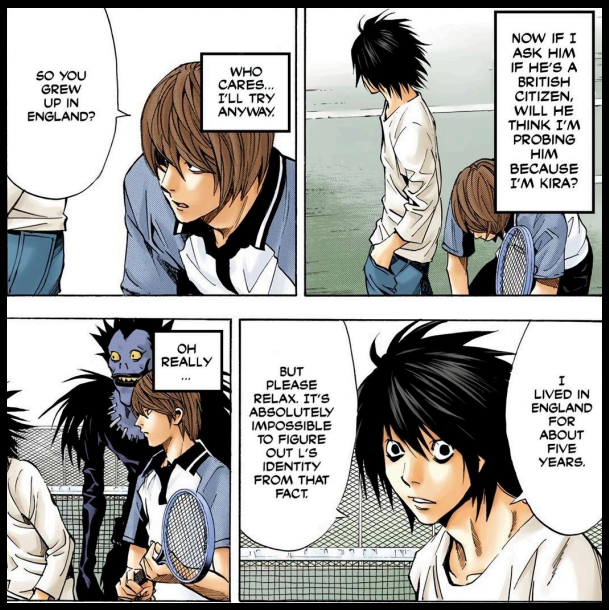
After seeing L off, Light goes home and genuinely crashes out. This shows L's emotional impact on Light, again underscoring how effective L's strategy is. Even Ryuk is shocked by how Light is acting.



(PSI + WMI + VCI + FRI, Emotional Intelligence, social assimilation + leadership, reverse psychology + psychological warfare + psychoanalysis, Adversity Capacity, situational adaptability, thinking, inductive + abductive + abstractive reasoning, planning intricacies, strategy alignment + complexity + resilience + logistics + shielding, decision making, observation + intuition, foresight scope + horizon + setting up traps, acting skills + concealment + unpredictability, logical + emotional manipulation)

Tennis match reading

The next day, Light and L prepare to play a tennis match. L says he used to be a British junior champion. Light thinks that if he asks L about it, would that make Light himself suspicious of trying to probe L? When asked, L tells him to relax as it wouldn't determine L's identity concretely, suggesting that L is mind reading Light here, reasoning out why he asked about L's background.



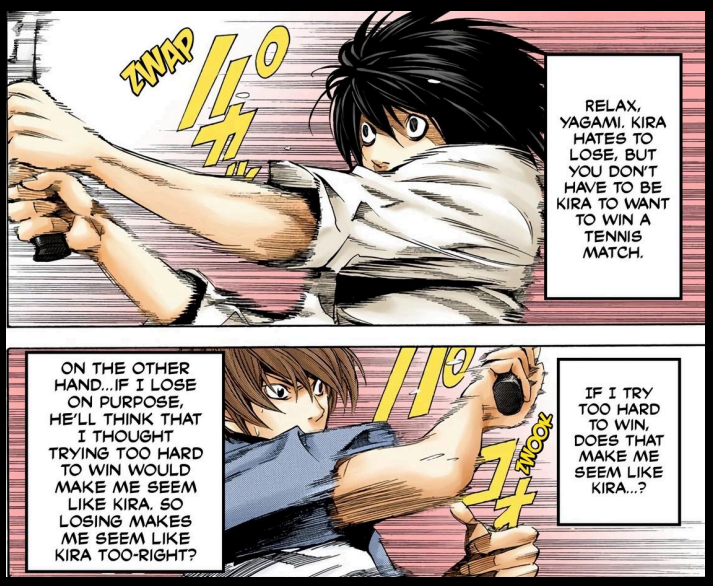
If Light pushes on to investigate L under the guise of being a normal conversation, as a kira suspect, this makes him more suspicious. However, because he is already suspicious, would he deliberately ask a question that would put more suspicion onto himself? But if Light really is Kira, suggested by L's previous deductions and general intuition, is he utilising his social image to have a normal conversation and probe L? L sees through this attempt at Light making small talk, and also sees through Light wondering if the question would make him more suspicious. L telling him to relax serves 2 purposes, firstly to relax about figuring out his background, which would put him off allowing L's identity to still be ambiguous, and secondly to relax because his question isn't suspicious. But his question is actually suspicious, light knows this and L knows this however L deliberately conceals his true thoughts.

Light thinks that L wouldn't psychoanalyse him off a tennis match, however L does exactly that. L knows that Kira hates losing, so doing a play which would put Light in a losing position would allow him to gather more information on Light and see if he truly matches the profile of Kira. If Light is Kira, then Light would be preoccupied by the guise of the 'simple tennis match', indirectly and logically manipulating Light into believing that this tennis match holds no significance. If Light truly isn't Kira, then he wouldn't exert a lot of effort to recover his loss. However, if Light isn't Kira, then there's also a possibility of him playing to his optimal level just for the game, but at the same time, that would loop back around to the first premise, 'Kira hates losing'. If Light does play at his optimal level, what reason would he

have for that? As Kira, is he matching L's optimal play for no other reason than to match L, or is he thinking to match L's performance because he is Kira.

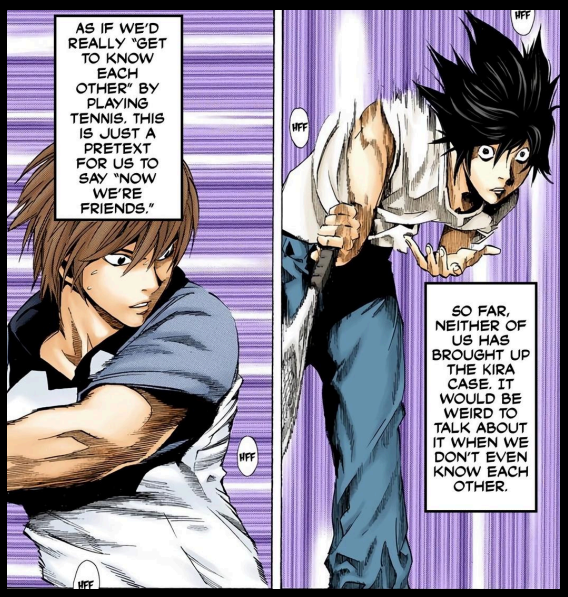
-> Kira hates to lose -> If Light doesn't want to lose, is it because he's Kira? -> If he isn't Kira, then why would he match L's performance -> Or is he actually Kira, and he's matching L's performance to act like he's unaware of L's psychoanalysis on him?

L deliberately serves the ball hard, catching Light off guard. The point of the tennis match was to restrict Light Yagami regardless of the outcome of the match, due to his suspicion on him and to observe him more closely in the future. L reads Light's effort to win the match, because Kira hates to lose. But Light would also know this premise, so him actively trying to win is multi-layered reverse psychology. Because if he loses, then L would read it as Light intentionally losing to appear normal, so back tracking on that to actually win would make Light seem normal. But L sees through this, hence in his monologue he's asking Light to relax. It's basically a mind reading match between the two. Each person is reading the other trying to determine if the other really is who they claim to be. Light is reading whether L is actually L the detective, whilst L is reading whether Light is Kira. Hence the reverse psychology that both L and Light deploy here. Because L recognises that if he follows too closely to Light's intentions (trying to win/lose) then that would make Light suspect that L is suspecting him solely as Kira.

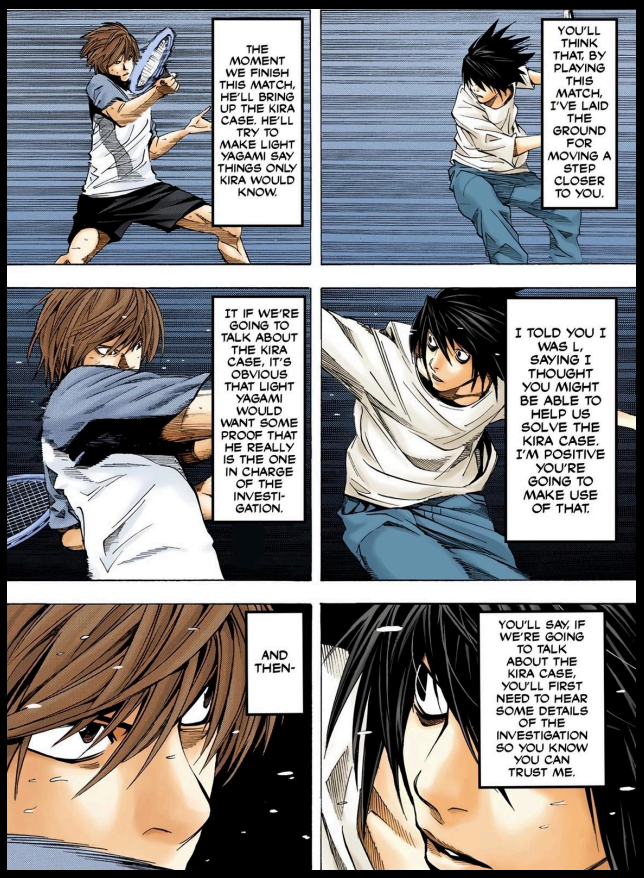


This tactic actually distresses Light psychologically, which pushes him to win the tennis match against L. L has to see through Light's intentions during the tennis match, seeing through just how far Light has thought through on whether to lose or to win, and if he even thought that far in the first place. Because Light has no incentive to think so far ahead over a simple tennis game, unless he's being psychoanalysed by L. And L sees through the fact that Light is seeing through L profiling him.

Because of the constant emotional perception and seeing through each other's intentions, L manipulated Light through facilitating his drive to win to avoid coming off as Kira. Both L and Light know the surface reason of the tennis match, and that's to break the ice between them so they can get closer and work on the Kira case together.



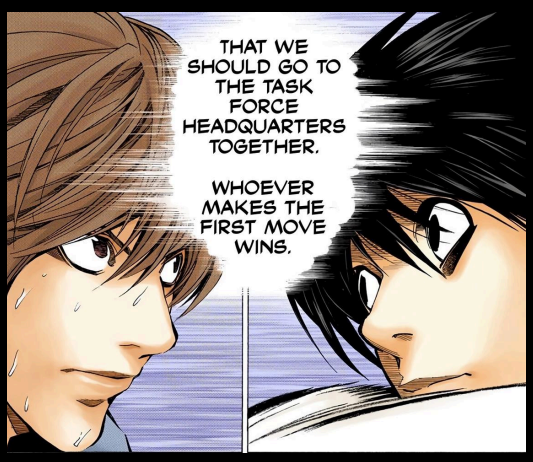
L literally mind reads Light here, seeing through that Light knows that the purpose of the tennis match is to break the ice, “You’ll think that, by playing this tennis match, I’ve laid the ground for moving a step closer to you”. Light predicts that L will bring up the Kira case. L counterpredicts that Light will attempt to bring the Kira case up after the match ends by utilising L’s surface proclamation, that being the reason why L approached Light was for help on the Kira case. The mind reading elevates to a non verbal conversation, as Light knows that L knows that Light will ask if L is actually trust worthy, L knows this, which is why he predicts that Light will probe L for trusted information.



Because that information that Light would receive would subsequently lower the suspicion against him, since, if Light is Kira, Kira would be getting ahold of confirmation about what L knows, which is an advantage since it'll reduce the likelihood of Light saying something only Kira would know.



L knows this, and also knows that if Light moves first, Light would ask a third party to confirm if L is actually L, L predicts that Light will attempt to confirm L's identity by suggesting they go to the headquarters together. This is the product of L's carefully planned tactic, declaring himself as L, allowing leeway for ambiguity and luring Light into that ambiguity.



After the match ends, Light says he wants to ask something. L already knew this, so he indirectly counters by stating that he suspects Light as Kira, effectively nullifying Light's control over the situation and allowing L to lead the situation instead. Light recognises that he's been totally countered, since now he doesn't have the authority to verify L's authenticity due to him being a suspect, obviously L knows that Light sees through his statement of suspecting him of only '1%', because if Light talks out about the suspicious against him, it simply makes him more suspicious.

Light and L effectively emotionally perceive and mind read each other. This developed into a full blown non verbal conversation, allowing L to perfectly see through Light's moves and predict that Light would want to verify his identity, so L counters this smoothly. Furthermore, the fact that L (both, but obviously this is focused on L) was multi-tasking between psychoanalysing Light and mind reading him, and predicting Light's actions, he was also physically playing tennis to a high degree. Both of them are very good tennis players, each pushing each other to their peak performance, to the point where they're both sweating and panting. On top of this, their performance garnered a lot of attention due to the impressive match. L is hyperobserving Light deep into him mentally, emotionally, behaviourally and psychologically, whilst maintaining the impressive match with Light which obviously took a lot of effort and focus. This shows L's adversity capacity, emotional management and engagement, whilst simultaneously buffing his sensory due to the difficult physical and mental conditions the feats were executed in.

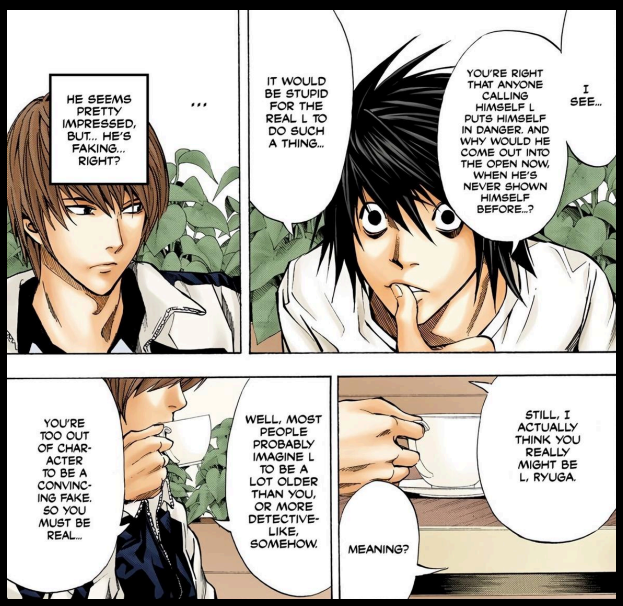
(PSI + WMI + VCI + FRI, fluid intelligence, EP + EU + EF + EM + EE, leadership, psychoanalysis, psychological warfare, reverse, adversity capacity, situational adaptability, thinking, inductive + abductive reasoning, planning recovery, strategy alignment + shielding + resilience, decision making, sensory, foresight scope + setting up traps + trap evasion, acting skills + concealment + logical + indirect manipulation)

Cafe interrogation

L and Light head to a cafe where Light deflects his previous request and instead asks L to clear him out of suspicion, L agrees on the basis of him testing Light's reasoning abilities. The point of this tactic is to strengthen the entire strategy's aim, which is to either pressure Kira who is Light Yagami, or determine Light Yagami as not kira and instead utilise Light's intelligence for the Kira investigation.

L firstly asks Light if revealing himself tells him anything. This underscores that L recognises how unpredictable that singular tactic was. L again, whilst moving forward his test is simultaneously hyperobserving Light in an emotional sense. Trying to perceive if Light feels cornered. Furthermore observing his body language and tone, and lastly to see if Light would let anything slip out accidentally.

L lets Light lead the conversation, this is crucial. L understands by now how socially intelligent Light is, however whenever speaking there's always a possibility of a slip up. Even if it's against someone as cautious as Light, which L also recognises, the possibility is still there and it may change the entire investigation. Light, of his own accord, stated that the possibility of L being L is low. L seems impressed, but it's just him acting impressed.



Because of this, L lures Light to speak up during the silence, which increases the likelihood of Light slipping up if he were Kira. Furthermore, it allows L to further match Light Yagami's profile with Kira's to see if it aligns. Light is smart. L knows that Light is smart. Light knows that L knows that Light is smart. L is smart. Light knows that L is smart. L knows that Light knows that L is smart. Kira is smart. Both Light and L know that Kira is smart. However, Light is forced to carefully manoeuvre through this specific interaction to try to balance his intelligence and present himself as just a genius student whose father is within the NPA and not as Kira. If Light acts too stupid, it would be obvious that he's intentionally playing dumb so L wouldn't suspect him of being Kira. However, that would also make Light lose out the opportunity of being on the task force with L. If he were Kira, he would seize this opportunity, but he can't display his intelligence to the fullest degree due to L possibly inferring that Light is Kira.

L pulls out a list of the order of the 12 FBI agents receiving the file and their deaths. He also pulls out the three prisoner notes that initially misdirected him during the L isolation strategy (check out my analysis on that to understand it better). Firstly, showing these papers could push Light, who might be Kira, psychologically into a corner. It's a modification of a technique that officers and detectives actually use. Detectives/Officers bring suspects to a crime scene to evoke overwhelming feelings which would cause the suspect to break down and confess that they're the criminal. L instead uses these papers which carry a different intensity, that being this information is confidential from the public. Therefore, Light Yagami doesn't know about the existence of these papers. If Light suddenly had a change in behaviour, or casually talked about the papers without asking what these papers actually are, it points to him being Kira as it would indicate that he knows what this evidence is.



L explains to him about the papers. They move onto the 3 notes the prisoners left behind, which is another multi-layered trap set up by L. I want to state that in the original Japanese, these notes would've been easier to understand, due to the direct translation from Japanese to English, the 4 notes trap becomes confusing and seemingly unnecessary. Let me explain.

Kira originally mocked L by misdirecting him with the 3 prisoner notes. These notes were intended to read as 'L did you know Gods of Death love apples?'. If Light had immediately stated this, this would've been suspicious because that's what Kira intended to say, however Light also mentions the print numbers on the back. This gives L more information on how observant Light is. But, Light rearranged the notes to make it actually read as 'L do you know Gods of death who love apples'. But then backtracks, stating that Kira probably didn't want L to read it this way.

Note 1: L did you know
Note 2: Love apples
Note 3: Gods of death

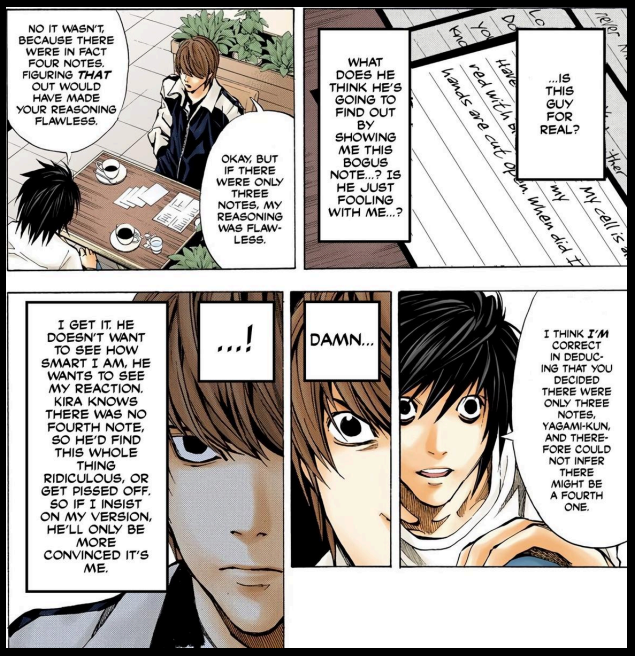
The print numbers make the note structure read as 'L did you know Gods of death who love apples'. Due to the structure of the Japanese language, this order forms an incomplete sentence. It's obvious that something is supposed to come after it. Gods of death who love apples…what about them? However, Light rearranges the notes in the order 1,3,2. Which directly states 'L did you know Gods of Death love apples'. The trap here is that Light failed to consider a 4th note which would've been easier for an average person to find. L cultivates Light's intelligence to backfire, whilst revealing more information that aligns Light as Kira. Because Light only made use of the 3 original notes whilst missing the possibility of the 4th note. The purpose of the 4th note in the 3 notes structure is to finish the actual sentence.

Note 4: have red hands

So if you read the notes in the order of the print numbers, the sentence gets completed and reads as 'L did you know Gods of Death who love apples have red hands.' Light Yagami argues that his deduction was flawless if there were only 3 notes, but because of the introduction of the 4th note, his premises are now very suspicious. If Light had stopped to consider the possibility of the 4th note due to the incomplete sentence that the 3 notes provided by the order of the print numbers, then Light would've been able to evade this trap.

Because Kira knows there were only 3 notes, the fact that someone as smart as Light only reached so far and failed to infer a 4th note indicates that he might be Kira.

The other purpose of this interrogation is to see if Light's behaviour changes. If Light was adamant that there were only 3 notes and not a 4th, it would increase the suspicion around him. This being under the guise of L attempting to test Light's reasoning skills. L knows that Kira knows that a 4th note didn't originally exist, so the introduction of it may disorient Kira. So if Light pushes on his interpretation of the 3 notes only presented to him, that would make him suspicious.



L asks what Light would do if he were L and trying to determine someone as Kira, Light instantly responds that he would try to make that person say things that weren't reported in the news, things only Kira would know. This inadvertently makes L more suspicious of him due to how cognitively superior Light is in comparison to other detectives. L later bluffs, stating that he isn't the only person going around calling himself L, which fortifies his strategy by adding more ambiguity to his identity. With this, L states that he wants Light on the Kira investigation, as it would benefit L greatly. Someone as smart as Light would aid in the investigation, and if he were Kira, there are many more chances of him slipping up.

Light then talks about how he isn't Kira, and how L's identity is unverifiable, therefore Light wants a third party to verify the authenticity of L's identity. Light digs his grave a little more, because L reveals that he never denied Light of meeting the members of the task force. Due to L's actions up until now, it subtly manipulated Light into believing that L is totally closing him off, when this isn't the case.

They both get a phone call regarding Soichiro's heart attack.

The cafe interrogation is very complex when considering all layers and just how many traps L laid out here. Although Light succeeded in evading most of the traps, he ultimately got ensnared by the 4 notes trap. L is observing every reaction of Light, because if Light

expressed any feelings of irritation and was resolute in his previous premise of being 3 notes instead of 4, it would be suspicious.

(PSI + VCI + FRI, fluid intelligence, EP + EU + EM, leadership + social skills, psychoanalysis + psychological warfare, multi-tasking, situational adaptability, critical + divergent + decompositional + systems thinking, inductive + abductive + abstractive reasoning, planning intricacies, strategy resilience + shielding + complexity + alignment, observation, setting up traps, acting skills + concealment + misdirection + sophistry + fabrication + bluffing + unpredictability, logical + emotional manipulation)

Review

Overall, the strategy was very efficient and effective, as it pivoted on 4 main tactics. The depth of these tactics, especially his mind reading of Light in the tennis match and the multi-layered trap in the cafe, allowed L to better gauge Light psychologically and try to match Light's profile with Kira's. Furthermore, the entire strategy is incredibly offensive which forces Light to constantly be on the defensive during the execution of it, which is impressive considering how Light was previously very offensive in his L isolation strategy. On top of this, L was at a huge disadvantage after Light isolated him, so him being able to regain an advantage over Light after his initial surveillance of Light adds onto his overall emotional investment in the case.

Thank you for reading.