

“Well, darling, just try to be little bit less Western in your thinking, if you can, please. I mean, you realize, of course, that in Zen terms everything in the universe is just molecules, don't you? Ying and yong, ping and pong... Mmm? You know that, darling? These are my molecules and that's your little clump of molecules over there, sweetie. I mean, in real terms, there's no difference between me and the coffee, me and the table, me and a tree, me and Madonna, for God's sake!”

– Edina Monsoon, *Absolutely Fabulous*, Season 1 Episode 2: Fat, 1992

Absolutely Faaablus

by Owen G. Parry

Absolutely Fabulous, also known as *Ab Fab*, features Jennifer Saunders as Edina Monsoon, a heavy-drinking, drug-abusing PR agent who spends her time chasing bizarre fads in a desperate attempt to stay young and “hip”. Edina is joined in her quest by magazine fashion director Patsy Stone (Joanna Lumley), her best friend and enabler, whose drug abuse, alcohol consumption, and promiscuity far eclipse Edina's comparatively mild self-destructive behaviour. Whether you're a Patsy or an Edina, or whether these characters are relevant to you, I hope you'll find this survey a way to get reacquainted and to dig a bit deeper into this cult classic.

Warmup! Now, it's multiple choice questions.

Are you ready? How many years was Margaret Thatcher Prime Minister?

- a) 900 years.
- b) 3,000 years.
- c) 11 years.

A trick question.

Series 1: Fashion / Fat / France (1993)

1) **Fashion can make you feel fabulous, but it can also be a pressure to conform.**

Is Fashion: (Circle answer)

A Friend

A Foe

I've never felt judged for what I wear

2) **How many drinks is too many drinks?** (circle answer)

1

3

5

depends

3) **At a high-end Fashion Show are you:** (circle answer)

Front row

The model

Shagging the model

1000 miles away

4) **The French Philosopher Michele Foucault invented the concept of Biopolitics to describe the various ways bodies are governed to conform in society through, for instance, regimes of cosmetic beauty.**

In light of this, what does beauty mean to you? (one sentence)

5) The countercultural movement of 60s, 70s and 80s from Hippies to Punks explored freedom through style and attitude. Describe what 'Freedom' means to you. (use three words)

6) The late queer theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick said "Shame is transformative. Shame is performance". Have you experienced shame in relation to any of the following? (Circle answers)

Gender Sexuality Body Class Ethnicity

Other (please specify) _____

7) On a Holiday in France, you need to pop to the shops to buy some bread and milk. How much money do you need? (Circle One)

€300 £3 "I've got cards"

8) What do you want written on your 'epitombe' (aka Gravestone)? (not for you? Move to question 9)

9) The Mile High Club is: (circle one)

A Rooftop bar Sex on a plane A spa resort in Marrakesh A disease

10) How comfortable are you on a scale of 1 to childbirth? (Mark your position)

1 ----- Childbirth

Series 1: Iso Tank / Birthday / Magazine (1993)

1. Come on. Cosmo sex quiz. We'll do it together, we'll do it together. Mum and daughter will do it together. Shall we, sweetie? There it is. It's multiple choice, darling, all right? A, B or C.

A) Is he shaggable? B) Are you shagging? C) Have you shagged?

2. ***What does an Iso Tank mean to you?*** (circle one)

An ice machine A air conditioning cooler

A shallow pool of water A bank account

3. Co-dependency is an excessive emotional or psychological reliance on a partner, friend or family member. Give one example (a sentence)

4. Britain's Empire and colonial history still configure in the British consumerist desire for "knickknacks", "heirlooms" and "gorgeous little things". Give two possible examples

5. "Have you seen this pot?": What does "pot" mean to you? (Circle Answer)

A useful vestibule An ornamental feature Marijuana

6. When was the last time you went to work? (circle one)

Work? Today This week
Last week Last month Last year

11) What's in? And what's out? (give one answer for each)

In: _____

Out: _____

12) Who is sexy? Who is not sexy? (give one answer for each)

Sexy: _____

Not sexy: _____

13) What is your "word du jour"? i.e "moist", "zingy" (one answer)

14) We all have a sob story. What's yours? Have you used it to get your own way, or get ahead? (two answers)

15) Have you tried saying "please"? (circle one)

Yes No

16) "You can never have enough hats, gloves and shoes": What's your catchphrase?

17) It's your Birthday and you've been gifted a lovely set of earrings. Do you like them because: (circle one)

They go well with an outfit

You don't have ear piercing

It's a thoughtful gift

They're Lacroix

18) Morning television is for: (circle one)

Unemployed people Information on latest trends Reliable News

Series 2: Hospital / Death / Morocco (1994)

1) When travelling abroad what are the best ways to get to know the local culture? (circle one)

Guide book Guide Person Attempt to speak the language Irish Bar

2) When was the last time you 'pulled a tantrum'? (Describe your action)

3) Everything was better in the 70s? (circle one)

Yes No

4) **Is there room at the Inn?** (circle one)

Yes No

5) **Have you ever been sold a dud?** (one answer)

6) **Death is a taboo topic** (circle one)

Yes No

7) **You want to buy some art. But you want to make sure it's 'good art'. How can you tell?**

It's done by a reputable artist It's a one off It's at the Tate
It's going to change your life It makes no sense

8) **Humour is a good way to deal with uncomfortable situations** (circle one)

Always Sometimes Rarely Never

9) **The NHS provides free healthcare to everyone in the UK, but the waiting lists are long. In which situation would you consider 'going private'?** (circle one)

Never In an Emergency Depends on the cost I always go private

10) **Have you ever 'made it into the newspaper'?** (if yes, give one answer)

11) **Best Tabloid Headline you remember?** (one answer, or go to question 12)

12) **What does your home tell you about you?** (circle answers)

Clean Busy Lazy Obsessive Exuberant

13) **Is it important to have lovely things around you?** (circle one)

Yes No

14) **Did your life change much after 'Basic Instinct'?**

Yes No Don't know

15) **When is it ok to lie about your age** (circle one or more)

Tinder Date with a younger partner Job Interview Car Insurance
Buying cigarettes or alcohol Never

16) **Have you ever abstained or given something up?** (Circle One)

Yes No

Series 2: New Best Friend / Poor / Birth (1994)

1) **Scottish singer Lulu encouraged everyone to:** (circle one)

Sing Shout Think Pray Study Love

- 2) **Your friends have moved into a new house and re-decorated it in a minimalist style. What do you take them as a gift? (circle one)**
 A bottle of wine A white empty box A hanging mobile Nothing
- 3) **Minimalism is: (circle one)**
 Bright and airy Too serious Homely
 A proto-fascist aesthetic Expensive
- 4) **You see a friend struggling with a baby. Do you: (circle one)**
 Resent them Offer a help in hand Make an excuse
 Do nothing Pretend you didn't see them
- 5) **Your friend is out to lunch with another friend and so you have no one to have lunch with: do you (circle)**
 Ask to Join them Go it alone Get takeout
 Pretend to bump into them Starve
- 6) **Money issues: what are the best ways to save your pennies? (circle two)**
 Stay in Cancel gym membership Cook food for work
 Sugar Daddy Take out a loan Low-cost supermarket
- 7) **Are the rich growing richer and the poor growing poorer? (if yes, explain why).** _____
- 8) **Breaking the law is a criminal offence. What is offensive to you?**

- 9) **Why can't it be more like 'the continent'?** (one answer)

- 10) **Is there more to life than being safe?** (circle one). Yes No
- 11) **Is there a point to all this?** (circle one)
 Yes No
- 12) **Why, oh why, do we pay taxes?** (one answer)

- 13) **Why do they put barricades near traffic lights?** (circle one)
 System of control Suicide prevention scheme
 Aesthetic austerity To make it more difficult to cross the road
- 14) **What 'community service' do you perform?** (once answer)
 Tea maker Pick up rubbish None Hold the door open
 Listen to others problems Volunteer for a charity
- 15) **In the event of a fire at home. What one object would you take? (One answer).** _____

16) **Futon beds are:** (circle one)

Convenient Stylish Uncomfortable No feelings

17) **You're installing a new kitchen at home. What are the most important elements?** (order 1-6)

Cooker Oven Fridge Kitchen Island
Dishwasher Drying rack

18) **Music and Fashion goes around in circles. What's the best 'come back' thing in the last 10 years?** (circle one)

Kappa poppers Skinny Jeans Steps Bum bags
Curtains None

19) **Talking about your sex life with family members is healthy** (Circle one)

Yes No Depends (say why)

20) **Do you know the story about your birth?** (circle one)

Yes No

Series 3: Doorhandle / Happy New Year / Sex (1995)

1) **What's the most ridiculous journey you've made for the most insignificant reason?** (one answer)

2) **Do you prefer to take notes using:** (chose one)

your phone voice message pen & paper memory

3) **Work work work, darling. Neoliberal capitalism has usurped leisure time into worktime. What do you do 'to relax'?** (circle one)

Watch TV Exercise Art Drink
Other (specify) _____

4) **What is the difference between a painting that someone choses to paint like a child, and a child's painting?** (one answer)

5) **Beauty or Utility?** (circle one)

6) **Tit test: Do you ever check your breasts yourself?** (circle one)

Yes No

7) **Grapes?** (circle one)

Seedless Pips

8) **What is a "Frankie Knuckles underground CD Rom dance happening", exactly?** (one answer)

9) This “new year” thing. Am I right in thinking it’s when the year goes “up” one? (Philosophical questions, sweetie)

10) Describe yourself: (5 adjectives)

11) A family member you have not seen in a long time is visiting, but you don’t have a lot of space in your home. Do you offer them (answer one)
Your bed Sofa Blow up mattress A link to lastminute.com

12) Do you have any “new life” resolutions? (one answer)

13) Heterosexual porn is degrading to women? (circle one)

Yes No

14) Do you have sex on the first date? (circle one)

Yes No before the date

15) You’re organizing your dream Orgy. You can invite 4 other people. Who will they be? (4 answers)

Series 3: Jealous / Fear / The End

1) How do you deal with a Nemesis? (Circle one)

Ignore them Copy them Compete Collaborate

2) What kind of a reality has a 13 amp plug at the end of it? (one answer)

3) What do you do when you’re home alone? (circle one)

Cook Dance around Wank Talk on the phone Feel lonely

4) Do you fear change? (circle one)

Yes No

5) The West has often turned to the East for inspiration on healing. Have you ever undertaken an alternative therapy? (circle one)

Yes No

6) Have you ever experienced an existential crisis? (circle one)

No Yes (explain)

7) Is your hair on purpose? (circle one)

Yes No

- 8) Do you have a special place you go to contemplate life? (Circle one)
Yes No

Season 4: Parralox / Fish Farm / Paris / Donkey / Small Opening / Menopause / Gay (2001)

- 1) Surveillance Camera's are useful for (give on example)

- 2) Have you voted Labour again, dear? (circle one)
Obvs Never
- 3) What's a good email address for someone you hate? (give one example)

- 4) Emotional labour is the work of giving care and can be hard work. What measures should a carer take to take care of themselves? (one idea)

- 5) Have you ever made friends/dated someone because of their social status? (circle one)
Yes No
- 6) Duck a La'orange with tangerine accessories is: (circle one)
A look a dinner a toilet cleaner
- 7) What does Paris mean to you? (circle one)
Fashion Good food Innovation Friendly Neither
- 8) Is detoxing a 'fad'? (circle one)
Yes No
- 9) If "God" could be played by anyone you like, who would it be?: (one answer) _____
- 10) How do you deal with a stalker? (circle one)
Cut off their stalk Report them to the Police Enjoy the attention
- 11) Who will play you in the film of your life? (one answer)

- 12) Age gracefully or Age grossfully? (circle one)
- 13) How can you tell if someone is gay these days? (one answer)

- 14) Television healers can cancel out your disease or illness with a swipe of your credit card. (circle one)
True False

- 15) Which is Whoppi Goldberg's best on screen appearance? (circle one)
Sister Act Ghost Ab Fab
The Colour Purple Made in America

Season 5: Cleanin / Book Clubbin / Panickin / Huntin, Shooting and Fishing/ Birthin / Schmoozin / Exploitin / Cold Turkey

- 1) How often do you clean your house? (circle one)
Once a week Once a day Once a month
I have a cleaner
- 2) Have you ever organized, or been a member of a club or society? (circle one)
one) Yes No
- 3) Anxiety is a mood of our time. What do you do to cope? (circle one)
Performance Art Safe Space Exercise
Meditation Nothing
- 4) Hunting is an historical sport. But it's also murder. Should huntin' be banned? (circle one)
Yes No
- 5) The Spice Girls in order of importance (mark 1-5)
Posh Sport Baby Ginger Scary
- 6) What does Schmoozin mean to you? (one answer)
-

- 7) Child acting. Should be: (circle one)
Encouraged from birth Banned Paid Don't care
- 8) Have you ever gone cold Turkey? (circle one)
Yes No
- 9) Christmas is a time for: (circle one)
Family/friends Gifts Shopping Holiday Work
- 10) Who is 'top dog'? (circle one)
Me My partner My boss My mother God
- 11) Is there life after "work"? (circle one)
Yes No

You're Done! Well done, darling. Grab yourself a drink....