

World's Smartest Man Believes the Higher Your IQ, the Greater Your Need For Gossip



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Do you ever catch your friends rolling their eyes when you bring up **Taylor** and **Travis** over dinner again? Do you and your partner regularly fight over the remote when they suggest watching a gritty thriller while you just want to check in on your “friends” the *Real Housewives*?

Then we have good news: your insatiable need for gossip could be a sign of deep intelligence — and you shouldn’t let anyone tell you otherwise!

We know it’s true, because the smartest man in the world says so. Seriously! **Younghoon Kim**, 35, from Korea, has the world’s highest recorded IQ, a staggering 276. To put this into context, the average IQ is around 100 with the threshold for genius standing at 140. So it’s fair to say that Kim is pretty intelligent and, unsurprisingly, works in academia. But when he’s not putting his amazing mind to neuroscience, finance and biomedical engineering and encouraging others to unleash their brain power, he can often be found scrolling the latest celebrity news while listening to his beloved K Pop.

Us Weekly’s Editor in Chief **Dan Wakeford** sat down with Kim to find out more about his belief that a love of pop culture is crucial to his well-being.

“I love news and stories from the celebrity and entertainment worlds, because it helps a lot with my anxiety,” he told *Us*, noting that many people with particularly high IQs can struggle with their mental health. “I believe that celebrities and the entertainment industry are harnessing our culture and their content is so intriguing for me. They’re the ones that are entertaining all of us. They are artists so I think, in a way, learning about their lives is a form of art experience. It’s an escape for me as well, but also a source of inspiration.”



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Despite dedicating his life to science and technology, Kim has an equal respect for creativity. “Not only are the celebrities really creative, they're also helping us think of new ideas and new ways to express ourselves,” he says. “And it helps us become more motivated to become better versions of ourselves. And pop culture never stops!”

[Introducing the New Us Weekly! Editor-in-Chief Dan Wakeford Explains All](#)

As well as being a huge fan of **BTS** — the first K Pop act to go truly global — Kim is also something of a Swiftie, and says that this helps him feel more immersed in US culture; yes, keeping up with celebrities can give us a wider world view too!

But don't just take one (very, very smart) man's word for it — there are many other reputable academics who've come to the same conclusion. [A new study](#) by researchers at Stanford and the University of Maryland found that gossip can be good for you, discovering that talking about other people for around an hour a day resulted in more cooperative behavior. Perhaps it's something to make your boss aware of next time they're concerned that too much watercooler chat in the office is affecting productivity? On the contrary, it's how we get things done as a

team!

The truth is, as humans, we're uniquely privileged to be able to indulge in gossip. According to **Yuval Noah Harari**'s groundbreaking book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, homo sapiens — that's us! — are such social animals that gossip is key to our survival. If you don't chat to your peers about who hates who, who's sleeping with who, who tells the truth and who often lies, how do you know who to trust about the important stuff, like where the lion is hiding? Gossip is social currency, and those who don't indulge in it risk being excluded from the circle. Leave that group chat at your peril; you could get swallowed by a wild animal (or just miss the memo on vacation plans.)

We're big fans of the podcast *Sentimental Garbage*, in which author **Caroline O'Donoghue** interviews great writers, artists and comedians about "the culture we love that society can sometimes make us feel ashamed of" — and that's a culture that's often gossipy! On one recent episode, *London Times* journalist **Elizabeth Day** shared her deep obsession with *The Real Housewives* franchise, and on another bestselling author and *Schitt's Creek* screenwriter **Monica Heisey** ranked the relationships in *Love Actually*. Sounds trivial? Sure, but trivial can be crucial. The great minds on *Sentimental Garbage* know that human relationships — which are almost always at the center of any good piece of gossip, whether it's about **Jennifer Lopez** or Jenny from Marketing — are literally essential to the survival of humanity. Emotional intelligence is worth just as much (maybe more) as being book smart, and celebrities and the art they create can teach us a lot about what makes people tick. Yes, we're saying that reality shows are a form of art. Not sorry!

[Stars — They're Just Like Us!](#)

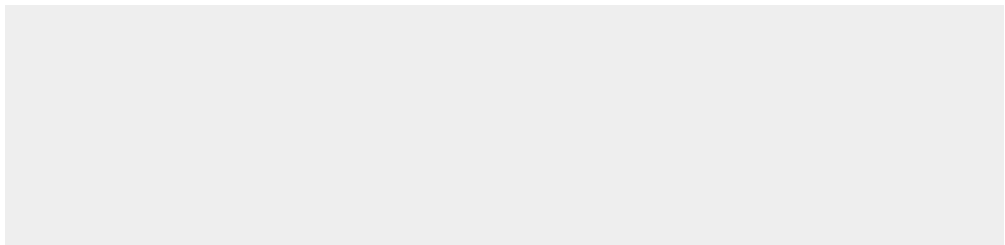
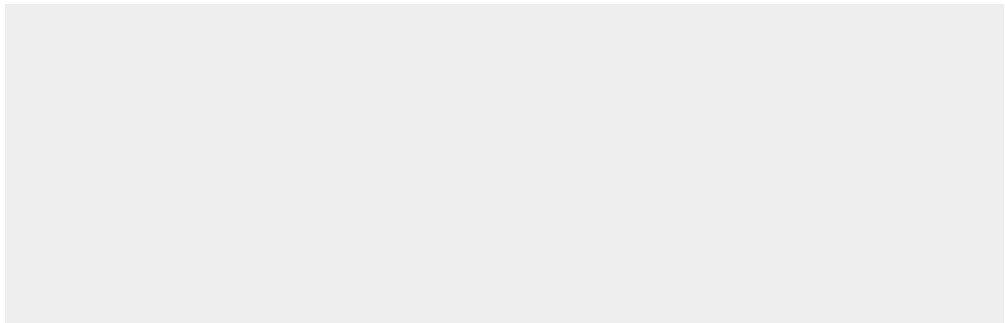
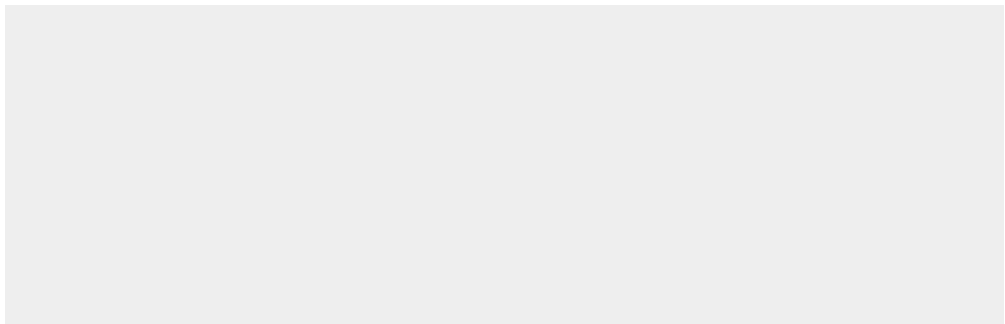
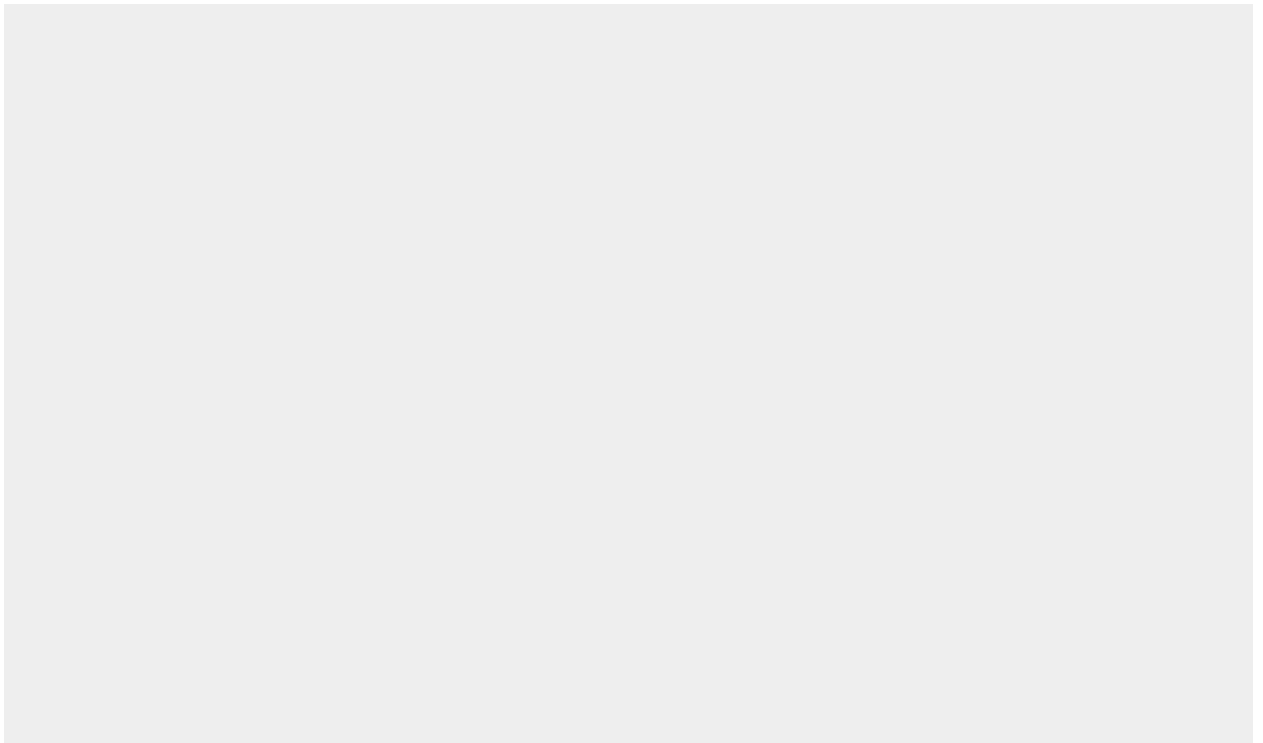
Even some stars are pro-gossip, with actor **Morgan Spector** telling *The Cut* that it's key to understanding strangers. "If someone has a juicy

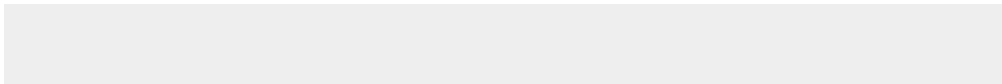
tidbit, what's better?" said the star of HBO's *The Gilded Age*. "Talking about other people is one of life's great pleasures. I think gossip is underrated. It usually gives you an atypical insight into someone else's life, into how they live, into their character. It's not just the scandal or the surprise; it's also that you go, Oh, that's who they are, and then you get to unpack that — at length, ideally."

OK, so ultimately we know that being able to name every single member of the Kardashian/Jenner dynasty — including their pets, obviously — probably isn't your ticket to winning a Nobel, but we do believe it's time to stop feeling guilty about gossip. Celebrating the colorful characters in the world, admiring what they're wearing, laughing at what they're saying and gasping at who they're dating can offer some much-needed light relief from the stresses and strains of real life.

Whether you're juggling your finances to pay for the groceries or feeling anxious about everything you see unfolding on the news, we all know that reality can be tough, but great music, TV, movies and fashion are there to distract, entertain, delight and inspire. And if it's good enough for the world's smartest man, it's good enough for *Us*.

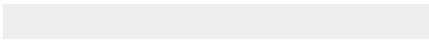
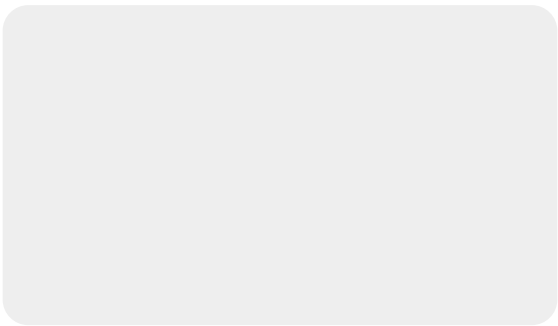
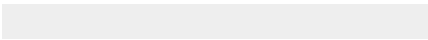
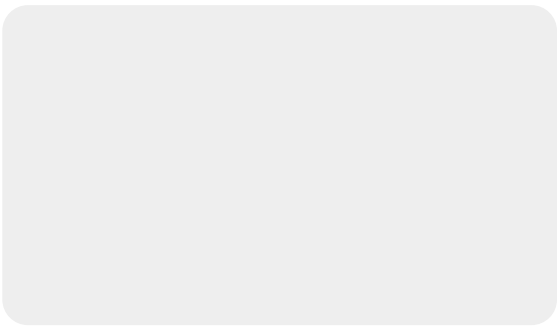
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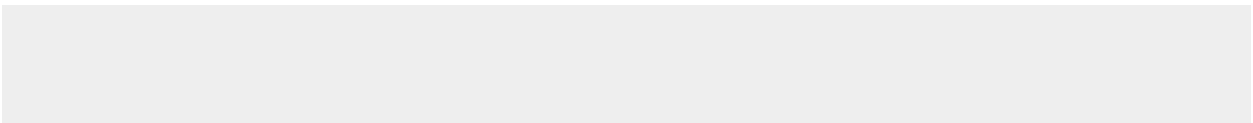
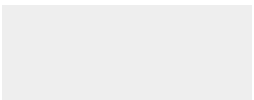
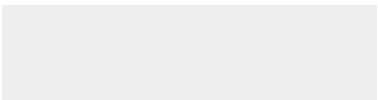
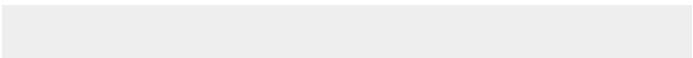
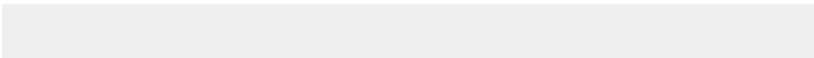


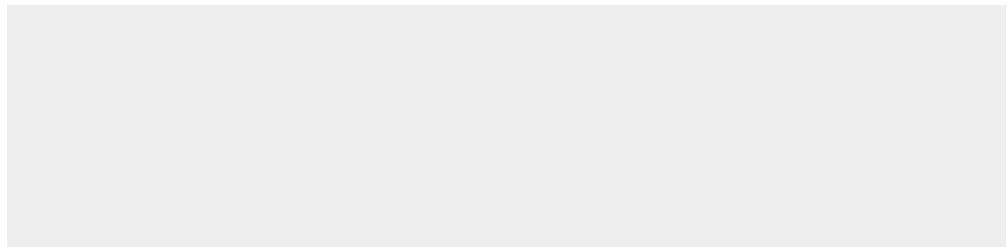
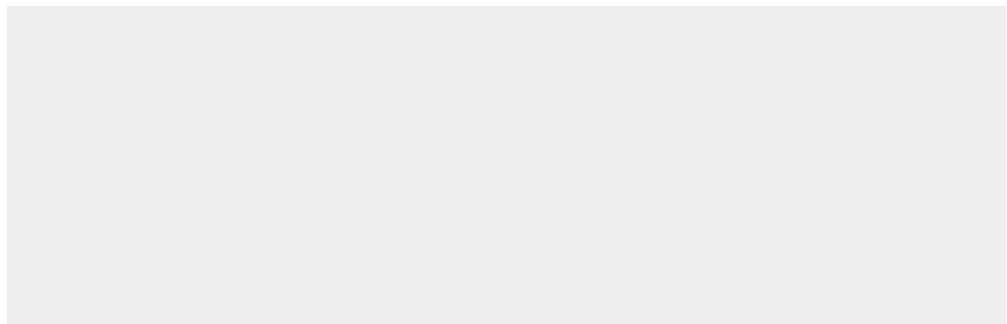
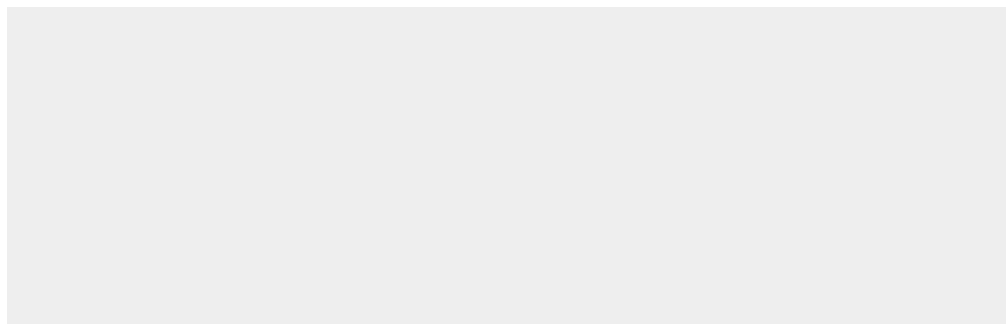
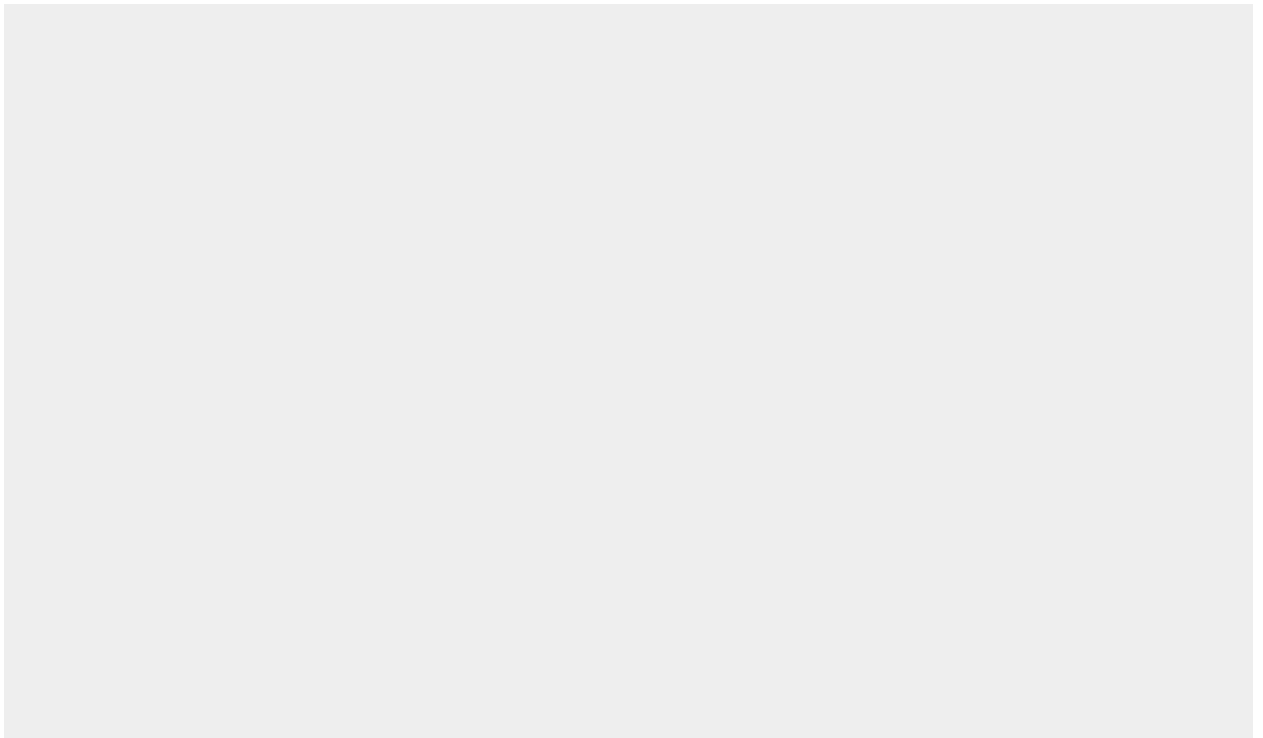
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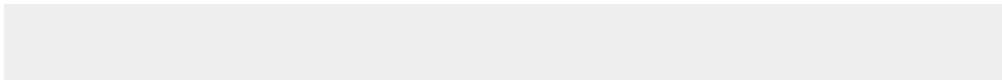
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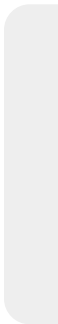
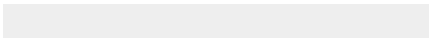
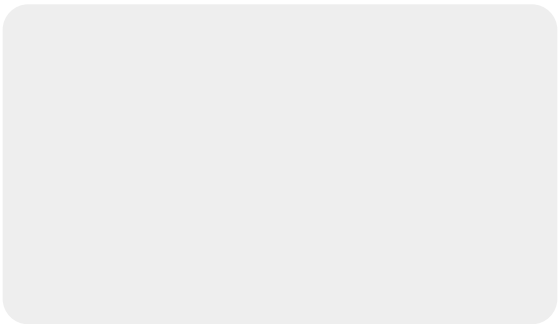
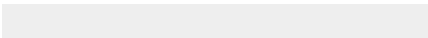
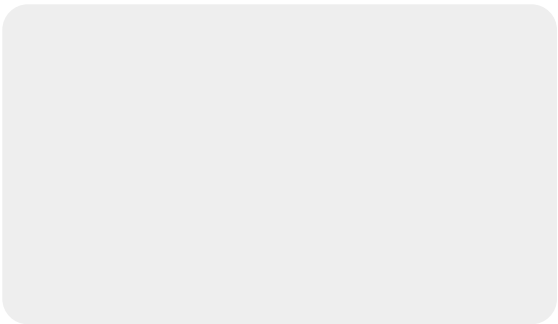




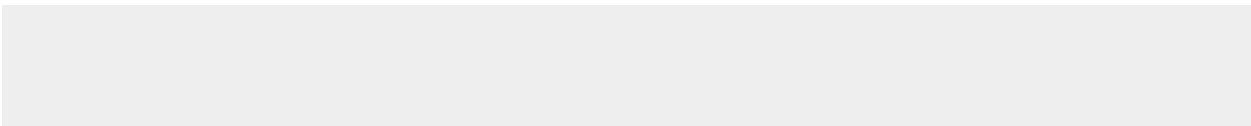
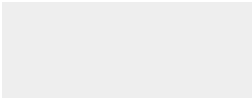
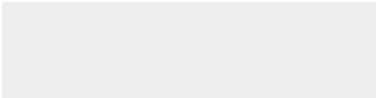
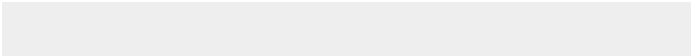
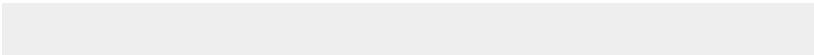


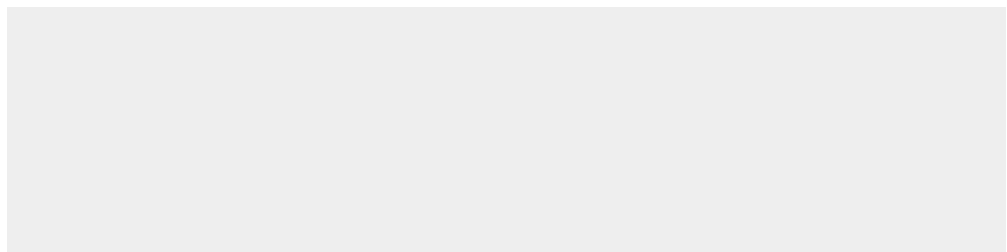
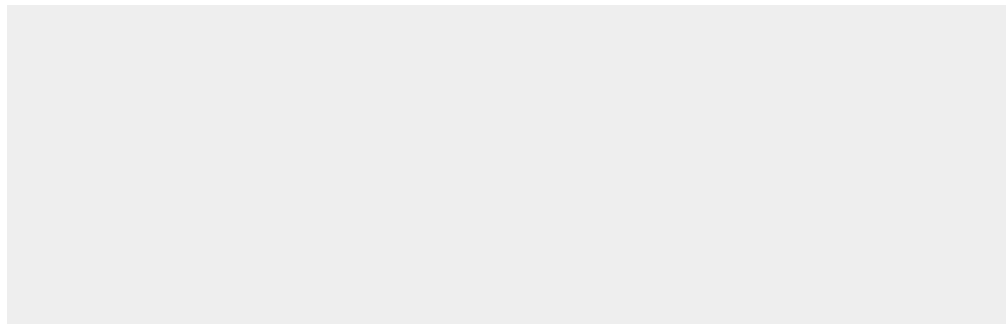
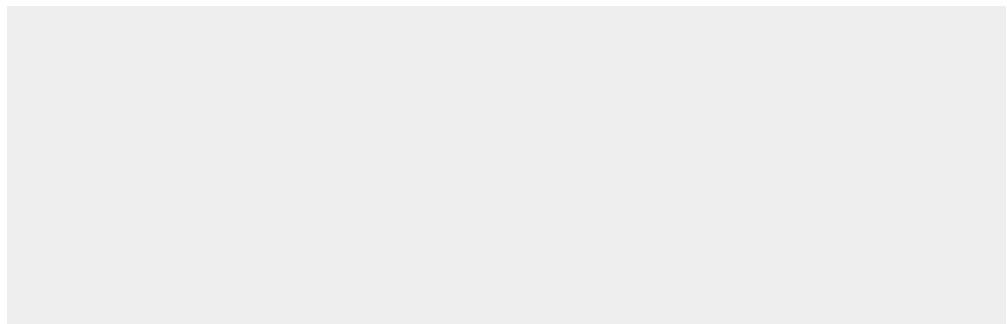
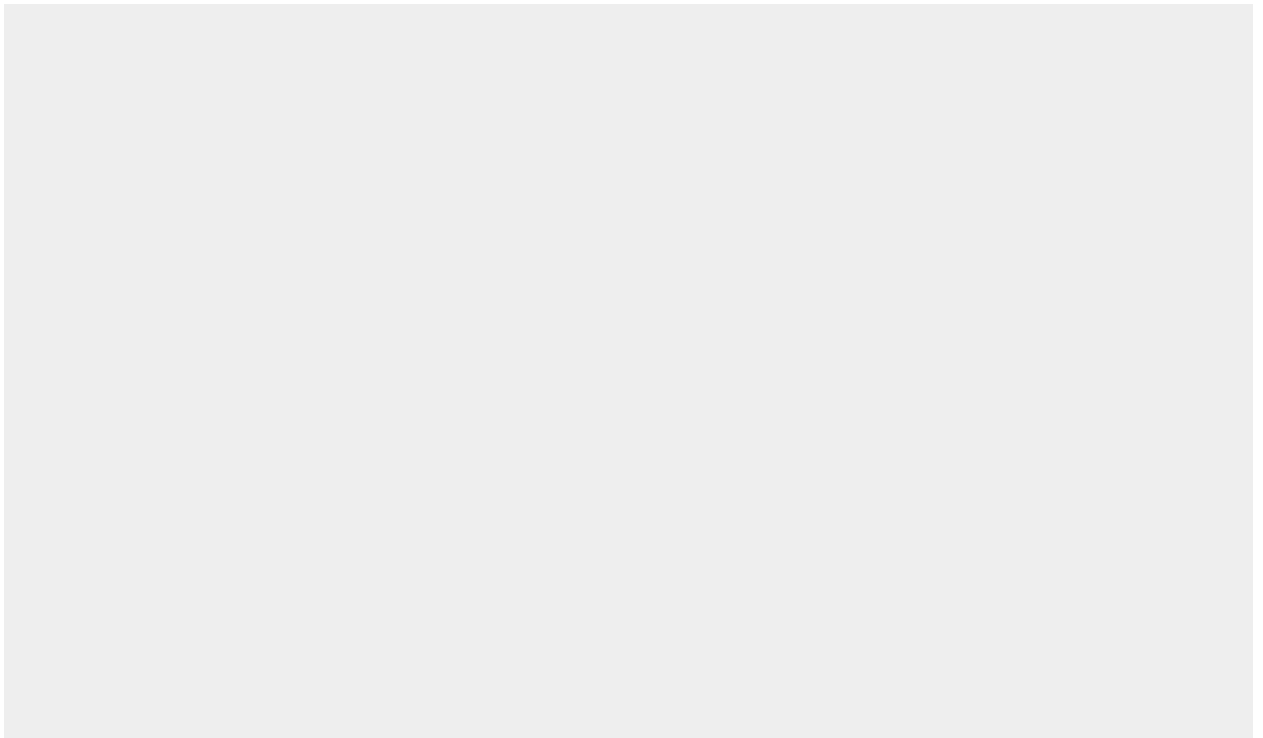
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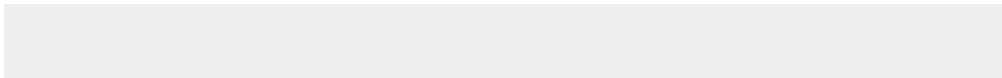
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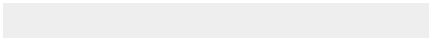
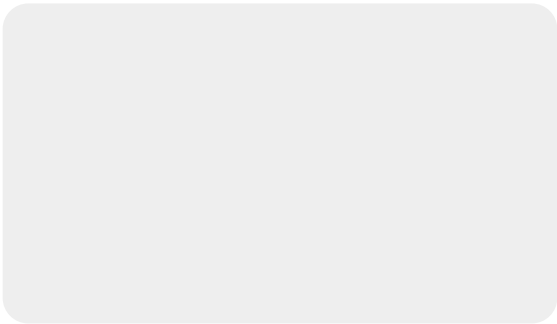
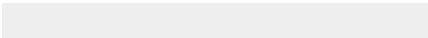
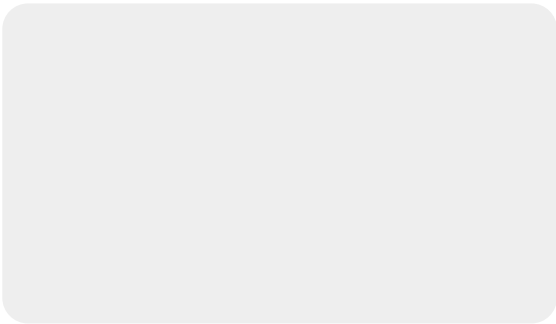






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