Based on your reading, (1) language allows—and reflects—the human capacity for (2) reflective consciousness and (3) a shared consciousness.

Which of the 3 do you think best captures the essence of being human? Why? You will have to define what you mean by each of them.

I want you to think beyond the obvious; develop meaty arguments. The following may spur some ideas.

**Summary of survey results & discussion: “What makes us human?” (Day 2)**

Physical

* DNA
* Observable traits such as opposable thumbs
* Unobservable traits such as prefrontal cortex

Emotional

* Emotional complexity
* Emotions to form moral judgments
* Feel sympathy & empathy for others

Moral

* Conscience: a sense of right and wrong
* Weight consequences
* Interpret flaws and mistakes to improve self
* Urge to self-improvement
* Has responsibilities and purpose

Intellectual

* Higher level thinking (pre-frontal cortex)
* Communication and language
* Technology
* Not acting solely on instinct
* Empathy (cognitive aspect of understanding others’ minds and intentions—“theory of mind”)
* Weigh consequences (more general ability to “time-travel”—to imagine the past and future)

Interpersonal

* Communication and language
* Forming non-kin bonds (through communication)
* Emotions that create bonding

Cultural

* Technology (destructive technologies too)
* Responsibility for planet
* Purpose
* Urge to perfect
* Civilization