

Lesson 4

Multiple Intelligences



Key Terms

bodily/kinesthetic intelligence
intelligence
interpersonal intelligence
intrapersonal intelligence
logical/mathematical intelligence
musical/rhythmical intelligence
naturalist intelligence
verbal/linguistic intelligence
visual/spatial intelligence

What You Will Learn to Do

- Use your intellectual strengths to improve academic performance

Linked Core Abilities

- Build your capacity for lifelong learning
- Apply critical thinking techniques

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Assess Gardner's impact on the understanding of intelligence
- Identify the eight types of intelligence
- Distinguish between inter- and intrapersonal intelligence
- Examine how to strengthen intelligence
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

Key Note Term

intelligence – the capacity to acquire and apply knowledge; the faculty of thought and reason

Introduction

In his book, *Frames of Mind*, Howard Gardner introduced his theory of multiple Intelligences. Almost immediately, his theory took the educational community by storm. There are books, instructional strategies, tests, learning centers, and research studies centered on his theory that each individual is intelligent in a unique way. He asserts there is no single way of being smart and that the question should be “How are you smart?” not “How smart are you?” With that question, he revolutionized the thinking about the definition of **intelligence**.

Note

Howard Gardner holds positions as Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, Adjunct Professor of Neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine, and Chair of the Steering Committee of Project Zero. To learn more about Dr. Gardner, go to <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/PIs/HG.htm>.

Everyone is different from everyone else in appearance, interest, ability, talent, and personality. The brain is no exception. We all have different kinds of minds. We use our different intelligences to solve problems, to choose a profession, and to excel in different aspects of our lives. Some of us are good with language: We talk and write easily, tell good stories, and express our thoughts clearly. Others of us are designers who can decorate a room, design a house, or landscape a yard. Some are artistic and can create songs, draw paintings, play an instrument, or choreograph dances. Others are scientists or inventors who can solve problems, study issues, or do experiments. And some are team players that are good at working with, understanding, and influencing other people.

Eight Kinds of Intelligence

Traditionally, intelligence has been associated with certain standardized tests, such as the IQ test or the SAT; however, these tests only measure verbal and mathematical abilities. Gardner, on the other hand, defines intelligence as the “ability to solve problems or create products that are valued in one or more cultures or communities.” He believes that, among other criteria, intelligence is universal to all human beings, regardless of where you live or your culture.

Gardner has identified eight intelligences:

- **bodily/kinesthetic**
- **visual/spatial**
- **logical/mathematical**
- **verbal/linguistic**
- **musical/rhythmical**

- naturalist
- interpersonal
- intrapersonal

He believes there are more types of intelligence, but only eight have met his stringent criteria for inclusion. You can think of these as “languages” that most people speak and can be understood regardless of cultural, educational, or ability differences.

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence

Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence (see Figure 2.4.1) is the gift of physical prowess, coordination, fitness, and action. It is manifested in the skills of athletic performing, dancing, doing, experiencing, fixing, forming, making, and repairing.

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include acting, body language, choreography, constructing, energizers, experiments, field trips, games, learning centers, manipulating, pantomimes, role-plays, sports, and the use of materials and tools.

Visual/Spatial

Visual/spatial intelligence is the gift of visually representing and appreciating concepts, ideas, and information (visual thinking). People who possess this intelligence like to draw, build, design, and create things.

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include artwork, blueprints, cartoons, designs, drawings, films, graphic organizers, illustrations, layouts, photography, manipulatives, maps, models, murals, posters and charts, props, sculptures, storyboards, and videotapes.

Logical/Mathematical

Logical/mathematical intelligence is the gift of reasoning and thinking in symbols and abstractions. It is manifested in the skills of calculating, computing, problem solving, and logic. If you have strong logical/mathematical intelligence, you are a questioner.



Key Note Terms

bodily/kinesthetic intelligence – the gift of physical prowess, coordination, fitness, and action

visual/spatial intelligence – the gift of visually representing and appreciating concepts, ideas, and information (visual thinking)

Key Note Term

logical/mathematical intelligence – the gift of reasoning and thinking in symbols and abstractions

Figure 2.4.1: Dancing is a form of bodily/kinesthetic intelligence.

Courtesy of Alon Reininger/
Contact Press Images.

Key Note Term

verbal/linguistic intelligence – strong language and literacy skills

Key Note Terms

musical/rhythmical intelligence – the gift of melody, music, rhyme, rhythm, and sound

naturalist intelligence – environmental awareness

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include analogies, computer games, deductive and inductive reasoning, formulas, graphs and information organizers, learning logs, outlines, problem solving, puzzles, statistics, surveys, symbols, and time lines.

Verbal/Linguistic

If you are endowed with **verbal/linguistic intelligence**, you have strong language and literacy skills. You are good at listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include biographies, books, cross-words, debates, dialogues, discussions, e-mail, internet searches, letters, magazines and newspapers, poems, readers' theater, reports, research, short stories, speeches, and storytelling.

Musical/Rhythmical

Musical/rhythmical intelligence (see Figure 2.4.2) is the gift of melody, music, rhyme, rhythm, and sound. It is manifested in the skills of playing an instrument, vocal performance, appreciation of sounds and music, and timing and patterns.

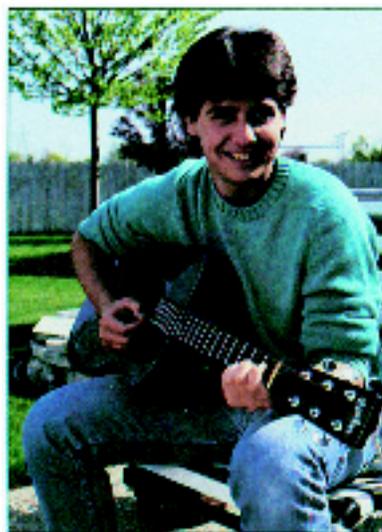
Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include ballads, cheers and chants, choirs, tapping, drumming, folk songs, imitations, jingles, percussions, raps, songs, and sound reproductions.

Naturalist

A **naturalist intelligence** is an environmental awareness. If you have this kind of intelligence, you understand the interrelationships of the natural world. It is manifested in the skills of classifying, observing, appreciating, and understanding nature; recognizing patterns in nature; and identifying the impact and consequences on the environment.

Figure 2.4.2: Playing a musical instrument is a form of Musical/Rhythmical intelligence.

Courtesy of Donald Smetzer/
Tony Stone Worldwide.



Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include astronomy, bird watching, ecology, environmental issues, field studies, gardening, geology, native plants, nature walks, outdoor education, mythologies, pattern identification, recycling, and weather forecasting.

Interpersonal

People with **interpersonal intelligence** (see Figure 2.4.3) are socializers. They have the gift of working with people and understanding the complexities of human relationships. It is manifested in the skills of caring, collaborating, communicating, empathizing, leading, and peacemaking. They like to work in groups.

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include case studies, class discussions, classroom roles and responsibilities, constructivism, cooperative learning, group projects, interviews, jigsaw, pen pals, service learning, shared homework, structured conversations, team building, and tutoring.

Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal intelligence is the gift of inner thought, self-awareness, and self-reflection. It is manifested in the skills of goal setting, self-assessing, and self-regulating. People with intrapersonal intelligence prefer to work alone.

Learning activities that tap into this intelligence include authentic assessments, autobiographies, calendaring, choice theory, diaries, goal setting, independent reading, meditations, metacognition, personal essays, personal planning time, portfolios, quiet or reflection time, reflective or response journals, and rubrics.

Key Note Term

interpersonal intelligence – the gift of working with people and understanding the complexities of human relationships

Key Note Term

intrapersonal intelligence – the gift of inner thought, self-awareness, and self-reflection

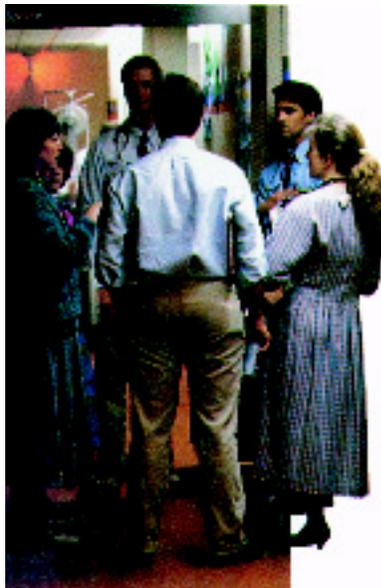


Figure 2.4.3: Socializers demonstrate Interpersonal Intelligence.

Courtesy of Richard Pasley/Stock Boston.

Conclusion

Understanding how your own body works to support the learning process helps you become a more active learner. We all have multiple intelligences; however, some are stronger than others. As you engage in learning activities that are compatible with how your brain takes in, processes, and stores information, learning will occur more naturally, and comprehension and recall will increase. The power to learn quickly and to apply what you've learned is in your hands when you know how the process works.

In the next lesson, you will learn how to read for meaning so you can get the most out of all the materials you read for school, work, and play.

Lesson Review

1. List the eight kinds of intelligence.
2. Which learning activities tap into musical/rhythmical intelligence?
3. Do you possess more interpersonal or intrapersonal intelligence? Why?
4. Define the term *intelligence*.