



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2001 Volume VI: Human Intelligence: Theories and Developmental Origins

Multiples Intelligences: The Learning Process in Our Students

Guide for Curriculum Unit 01.06.10
by Yolanda U. Trapp

Western society has always put great stress on intelligence and intellectual development. But what is intelligence? Since the early 1900s, the I.Q. test has been regarded as the best measurement of an individual's potential and possible role in society. Howard Gardner in his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983), puts forth a new and different view of human intellectual competencies. He argues boldly and cogently that we are all born with the potential to develop a multiplicity of intelligences, most of which have been overlooked in our testing society and all of which can be drawn upon to make us competent individuals. The potential for musical accomplishment, bodily mastery, and spatial reasoning, and the capacities to understand ourselves as well as others, are, Gardner argues "the multiple forms of intelligence that we must consider to the conventional and typically tested logical and linguistic skills long called I.Q. Drawing on many years of research in cognitive psychology and neuropsychology, and pulling together information from the widest range of sources, Gardner suggests that the multiple forms of intelligences can be mobilized by society to achieve a greater diversity of ends and to fulfill a wider range of social goals. Teachers can develop their student's intelligence by applying Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, which suggests that approaches other than classroom based education can develop or enhance children's multiple intelligences. Thanks to Howard Gardner we learned that each of us possess at least seven entirely different ways to understand the world and to express ourselves: linguistic, spatial, musical, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, and two kinds of social intelligence, intrapersonal (knowledge of self) and interpersonal (knowledge of others). Each intelligence has its own means and modes for expression. Each represents an area of expertise with a specific body of knowledge, as well as a way of approaching learning in any domain. As teachers we can use this theory stimulating students in all their domains, not typically part of traditional Western Education. Students may experience new ways of expression, helping their individuality, understanding multiple perspectives. No two educators are alike but in one way we are the same: we are all trying to give children the quality of teaching. With these new approaches to the mind of the students in which we want to do things in ways that fall outside the normal practices of the society, this is the way that can open us to diverse intelligences and sets of intelligences with which each of us is equipped.

(Recommended for Language Arts, grades 1-4, and Science, grades 7-12.)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>