

January 2004: Multiple Intelligences

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Publisher's Pen: Multiple Intelligences

"When you lose, don't lose the lesson."

Dalai Lama

The end of January marks the time for standardized testing for 4th and 8th graders in our country, in the area of English Language Arts; what educators call the ELA test. However, as standards have been raised, fewer students are able to pass. Why? The "Board Room" of education in this country has been struggling with these issues. Many task forces, and subsequently, mandates for accountability have been duly served upon our schools. With all of the time, personnel and effort, it seems that the result has been one of each of the "Board Members" trying to pound a square peg into the round hole in the middle of the proverbial school system model.

As Howard Gardner wrote in his book, *Intelligence Reframed* (1999, Basic Books, NY, NY), "We are faced with a stark choice: either to continue with the traditional views of intelligence and how it should be measured, or to come up with a different, and better, way of conceptualizing the human intellect." He presents evidence in his book that we possess a range of capacities and potentials; what he calls "multiple intelligences," that both individually and together, can be put to use productively at school, home, work, or out in our society, to create a world in which we all want to live.

We must help everyone to understand that there are different types of intelligences, and we must develop character so that full potential can be reached. As he says, "after all, a society led by smart people might still blow up itself or the rest of the world." No doubt, achievement is valuable, but so is character in our future world.

So, how do we know where to start? We must start at the ground floor level - with individual schools, their teachers and parents. Many dedicated educators around the country have started turning the wheels already with the "differentiated learning" model of teaching to the varied learning styles in their classrooms. In this issue, we will explore differentiated learning, and how we can all help our kids to achieve their personal best, regardless of whether or not they are the smartest at recalling facts and figures.

May we look to ourselves as the ones to help our future leaders of nations, businesses, schools and families, mining the gold, wherever it may lie.

Smiles,

Elaine

Empowering Parents and Teachers:

What does a Differentiated English Language Arts classroom look like? What are the Multiple Intelligences? Repeated visits will show that a teacher is working to meet the differing needs in the classroom, followed by a table to help parents see the classroom through their child's eyes.

The classroom should:

- Allow for flexible groups
- Foster the students' responsibility for their own learning.
- Provide a mechanism for students to get help when the teacher is busy with other students.
- Display assignment/project schedules, scoring rubrics, general procedures.

Instruction should:

- Be less teacher lecture and more investigation and group sharing
- Be less whole group and more small group or individual.
- Be aimed at different learning styles.
- Allow for a variety of responses.
- Allow for conference time between student and teacher.

Assignments should:

- Vary in content, based on student need.
- Vary in difficulty, based on student readiness.
- Allow for choice based on student interests and strengths.
- Vary in time allotted.
- Vary to reflect student goals.
- Contain directions that are clear and direct enough for student and parents to understand.

To reflect ongoing assessment and evaluation, records should:

- Include a writer's notebook and portfolio for each student.
- Include interest surveys.
- Document readiness for curriculum learning expectations.
- Record individual goal setting.
- Record achievement of goals.
- Allow for scoring one assignment with different scoring rubrics and for scoring a variety of assignments on the same topic.

Tests are tailored to fit the learners by offering items at different levels of difficulty: For example, a test might have the same short-answer questions for every student, but different essay questions for different groups.

Source: Christine Kaiser, English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist, Grosse Pointe Public Schools, 1999. Reproduced by permission.

Multiple Intelligences

Verbal/Linguistic - learns by verbalizing, hearing and seeing words.

- Enjoys playing around with language, thinks in words.
- Expresses self in complete sentences.
- Reads for pleasure.
- Enjoys telling (& writing) stories, jokes, poems.
- Loves word games such as crossword puzzles, Scrabble, anagrams.
- Remembers names, places, dates or trivia.
- Spells words accurately and easily.
- Appreciates nonsense rhymes and tongue twisters, uses appropriate grammar and syntax.

- Has a large vocabulary and has highly developed auditory skills.

Logical/Mathematical – learns by forming concepts & looking for abstract patterns and relationships.

- Thinks conceptually; in teen years, capable of highly abstract forms of thinking.
- Explores patterns, categories and relationships by actively experimenting in an orderly way.
- Computes arithmetic problems quickly, mentally.
- Enjoys using computers and chemistry sets.
- Asks questions like “Where does the universe end?” and “What happens after we die?”
- Likes to play chess, checkers, brain teasers, strategy games.
- Reasons things out logically and clearly.
- Devises experiments to test out things he doesn’t understand.
- Can spend time working on logic puzzles such as Rubik’s cube.
- Creates collections, classifies and categorizes.

Visual/Spatial – learns by an intuitive feel for one’s surroundings and the objects in them.

- Seems to know where everything is located in class
- Thinks in images and pictures.
- Can often find things when lost or misplaced.
- Highly sensitive to change and reacts with joy or dismay
- Loves mazes and jigsaw puzzles.
- Likes to spend free time drawing, designing, building or day-dreaming.
- Frequently fascinated with machines and contraptions, sometimes coming up with original inventions.

Body/Kinesthetic – learns by processing information through body sensations.

- May do well in competitive sports.
- May move, twitch, tap or diget when sitting.
- Engages in physical activities.
- May enjoy scary amusement park rides.

- Needs to touch people when they talk.
- Cleverly mimics people's gestures, mannerisms or behaviors.
- Often has excellent fine motor coordination as well as gross motor coordination.
- Communicates effectively through body language.

Interpersonal – learns through experiences with others, person to person.

- Enjoys whole group instruction and cooperative learning groups.
- Physically energized when around a crowd of people.
- Frequently a good leader.
- Often a good organizer and communicator.
- Learns best by relating, cooperating and dynamically interacting with others.
- Knows what is going on in everyone's life.
- Excels in mediating conflicts between peers.
- Socializes a great deal in class
- Involved in after-school activities.
- Able to look at things from different perspectives.

Intrapersonal – inward-directed, concerned with knowledge about an identity of oneself.

- May shy away from activities instead preferring to “bloom” in isolation.
- Have deep awareness of inner feelings, dreams, ideas.
- May keep a diary.
- May have ongoing projects or hobbies that are semi-secretive in nature.
- May go off on their own toward a goal only they seem to know.
- Displays a sense of independence of strong will.
- Reacts with strong opinions when controversial topics discussed.
- Seems to live in own private world.
- Deep sense of self-confidence, and is self-motivated.

Musical/Rhythmical – learns through ability to notice tones, rhythms, and how they fit together.

- Often sings, hums or whistles to self.
- Often plays instruments or sings in group.
- May simply have musical appreciation, collects CDs.
- Strong opinions about music played.
- Sensitive to nonverbal sounds in the environment.
- Remembers melodies to songs.
- Needs music in order to study.
- Can tell when a note is played off key
- Learns best when using rhyme, rhythm and repetition.

Naturalist – learns through recognition and classification of objects in the environment.

- Distinguishes among, classifies, and uses features of environment.
- Names and describes the features of every make of car
- Immerses self in natural settings
- Sees how many natural patterns they can discern, including colors, sounds, textures, shapes, tastes, etc.
- Gets involved in planting projects.
- Spends special time with a favorite animal.
- Recalls a good deal of information around a scene.

Empowering K.I.D.S. (Kids In Daily Situations):

Can you pick out what is wrong with these written answers given by students? Don't split your sides laughing!

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.

In the Olympic games, Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled biscuits, and threw the java.

Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March murdered him because they thought he was going to be made king. Dying, he gasped out: "Tee hee, Brutus."

Joan of Arc was burnt to a stake and was canonized by Bernard Shaw.

It was an age of great inventions and discoveries. Gutenberg invented movable type and the printing press. Another important invention was the circulation of blood. Sir Walter Raleigh is a historical figure because he invented cigarettes and started smoking.

The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. He was born in the year 1564, supposedly on his birthday. He never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He wrote tragedies, comedies, and histories.

Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote "Don Quixote."

Delegates from the original 13 states formed the Continental Congress. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were two signers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.

Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his own hands. Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves by signing the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln went to the theater and got shot in his seat by one of the actors in a moving picture show. They believe the assassin was John Wilkes Booth, a supposedly insane actor. This ruined Booth's career.

Bach was the most famous composer in the world and so was Handel. Handel was half German, half Italian, and half English. He was very large.

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