



MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES OR “SMARTS” THEORY

Traditionally, our schools and society have primarily valued mathematical and linguistic skills. People who do not excel in these areas may feel as if they are “stupid” or “not intelligent.” In the 1980s, Dr. Howard Gardner developed the “multiple intelligences” theory, also called the “smarts” theory. Gardner proposed that there are eight types of intelligences or smarts. This theory is widely utilized in classrooms today. For example, in the past when learning the states and capitals, only the rote method might have been used. Below, read about the different intelligences and how they can be integrated in learning the states and capitals.

8 Types of Intelligences/ Smarts:

1. **Bodily-Kinesthetic/ Body:** Using your body to express your thoughts and feelings. i.e. Trace the states with your fingers or put down a map of the country on the floor and jump on the different states.
2. **Interpersonal/ People:** Understanding how another person is feeling, what he is trying to express, why she is doing something; Involves other people. i.e. Play a geography game with a friend.
3. **Intrapersonal/ Self:** Knowing oneself and making decisions based on this self-knowledge; only involves oneself. i.e. Write about the different states you’ve visited and what you remember about each.
4. **Linguistic/ Word:** Using words effectively both in writing and in speaking. i.e. Make a list of the states and capitals.
5. **Logical-Mathematical/ Logic:** Understanding numbers and logical patterns; being able to follow a long chain of reasoning. i.e. List out the states with the amount of land they have and the population.
6. **Musical/ Music:** Being aware of, understanding and expressing different forms of music, rhythms, and tones. i.e. Learn a song about the states and capitals.
7. **Naturalist/ Nature:** Ability to identify and classify patterns in nature and to use this ability productively as in hunting, farming, or biology. i.e. Learn the state birds and trees.
8. **Spatial-Visual/ Picture:** Viewing visual or spatial items and then being able to transform the observations into reality; recognizing relationships between color, lines and shapes. i.e. Draw a map and put the capitals in the correct locations.

Concepts to ponder:

- We all have multiple intelligences but we tend to be stronger in one or two areas.
- All people, even toddlers, show abilities in specific areas or intelligences. These can grow into interests, hobbies and careers.
- During our lifetime, we may choose to take lessons or courses to strengthen our weaker intelligences – either because we have to or because we want to.
- If we recognize that people have different talents or intelligences, we can better understand, support and encourage each other, especially the children in our lives.
- We need all of the intelligences (and each other) to make our world a more interesting place, and one that functions well.