

Intelligence is Light

Reading Activities

Read the article about Multiple Intelligence. Look at the jobs below. What kind of intelligence matches each job? (Sometimes there is more than one possible answer)

- A navigator
- A football player
- An architect
- A philosopher
- A composer
- A disc jockey
- A language teacher
- A computer programmer
- A scientist
- A fire-fighter
- A politician
- A salesperson
- A poet
- An artisan

Different kinds of intelligence

What does “intelligence” mean to you? Intelligence is sometimes measured by a person’s IQ (intelligence quotient) which can be obtained through a series of tests. The higher your IQ, the brighter you are. Tests that measure a person’s IQ often consist of a series of logical problems, like this one:

What is the next letter in the sequence? O, T, T, F, F, S, S, E...

But some people argue that this isn’t the whole story. What about a person who can’t answer the above question, but who shines at languages? Or someone who is terrible at maths but who is brilliant at music? Are these people dull because they aren’t logical? Surely we must consider these people intelligent as well. In the 1980s, Howard Gardner wrote Frames of Mind in which he put forward his theory of multiple intelligences. According to Gardner, there are seven different ways to measure intellectual ability.

Linguistic Intelligence

People who have linguistic intelligence think in words rather than pictures. They have good listening skills and often outshine others in learning a language. They can be dazzling speakers.

Visual/Spatial Intelligence

People who have visual/spatial intelligence think in pictures and have a developed ability to visualise things. They are often good at directions, maps and manipulating images. They can be good designers.

Logical/ Mathematical Intelligence

People with this intelligence are good at logic and maths and use reason. They are often curious about the world around them and like to make connections between things. They like to do experiments.

Bodily/Kinaesthetic Intelligence

This refers to the ability to control body movements and handle objects with skill. People with this intelligence often have a good sense of balance and eye-hand coordination.

Musical Intelligence

People who have musical intelligence think in sounds, rhythms and patterns. They immediately respond to music either appreciating or criticizing what they hear. They might get flashes of inspiration listening to different kinds of music.

Interpersonal Intelligence

This refers to the ability to relate to others. Interpersonally bright people sometimes have the ability to detect other people's feelings and motivations. They are great organizers, but can sometimes manipulate people. They often try to keep the peace and encourage cooperation in groups.

Intrapersonal Intelligence

People who have this intelligence understand themselves and the reason that they do things. They know their strengths and weaknesses and can act on these.

What kind of intelligence do you have? If you have access to the Internet, take a test to find out! There are free tests available online at...

www.nedprod.com/Niall_stuff/intelligence_test.html

www.clat.psu.edu/homes/bxb11/mi/MIQuiz.htm

www.ldrc.ca/projects/miinventory/miinventory.php

If you want to find out what your IQ is, you can take a free standard IQ test online at www.funeducation.com/products/iqtest/

Metaphors for Intelligence

In English, intelligence is like a light. The more intelligent someone is, the brighter the light. For example, we can say that someone has a dazzling intellect. In this metaphor we are comparing the effect of strong light with the person's intelligence.

We can also say a dazzling diamond necklace meaning the diamonds show a lot of light. This is a literal meaning

Look back at the article. What metaphors for light can you find that are associated with being intelligent?

Look at the following pairs of sentences. Complete the sentences using only one word. The word is the same for both sentences. Some of the words were in the article on Multiple Intelligences. When you are finished, check with a partner. Do you understand what the word means in each situation?

1. The light was very _____, it hurt my eyes.
2. She is a very _____ student, she always gets good marks.
3. If the sun _____, I'll dry the laundry outside in the garden.
4. Although I am very bad in history and computers, my teacher says I _____ in music class.
5. There was a _____ of light and a huge explosion.
6. The answer came to him in a _____ of inspiration.
7. He is a _____ scholar in the area of chemistry.
8. The _____ afternoon light reflects on the lake.
9. It was a _____, grey day and nobody wanted to go outside.
10. He was always _____ as a boy; he never listened in class and his work was often very bad.

Conversation Questions

Discuss the following questions with other students in the class.

1. Is there someone in your family who everyone says is brilliant? Who and why?
2. Do you know anyone who shines at languages? How do they do it?
3. Some people say they get flashes of inspiration in strange places (in the shower for example). Has this ever happened to you? Do you ever get flashes of inspiration? Where?
4. Can you remember someone from your schooldays who was very dull? What did they do to make you think that?
5. What do you think of Multiple Intelligence Theory? Do you think it is a good way of measuring intelligence? Do you think intelligence can be measured?

Intelligence is a light

by Lindsay Clandfield

This is a vocabulary and idiom lesson for intermediate students and above. The aim is to highlight the metaphorical meanings of several words related to intelligence. The emphasis is on meaning, with an activity to incorporate these expressions into use. The sub aim in this lesson is to encourage students to talk about what they understand by intelligence, and to present Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligence.

Stage One

Get students to sit in groups of three or four. Ask the students "Who is the most intelligent person you know? Why?" Tell them to think about it for a minute, then tell the other people in their group who they were thinking about. Feedback answers as a class. Write on the board "Intelligence is..." and tell students working in groups to finish the definition.

Stage Two

Hand out the reading and tell the students to read it through quickly (set a time limit). Ask them what the article is about. Now tell them to read the first paragraph more slowly. Can they figure out the IQ puzzle? The answer is N (each letter represents the first letter of a number, thus One, Two, Three... the next in the sequence is Nine). If they can't does this mean that they are not intelligent? Tell them to read on about multiple intelligences.

Stage Three

Hand out the reading activities. They must match the job with the corresponding intelligence. Sometimes a particular job might correspond to more than one intelligence. The answers below are intended as a guide:

Answers:

A navigator – visual spatial

A football player – bodily kinaesthetic

An architect – visual spatial

A philosopher - intrapersonal

A composer - musical

A disc jockey – musical

A language teacher - linguistic

A computer programmer – logical mathematical

A scientist – logical mathematical

A fire-fighter - bodily kinaesthetic

A politician – interpersonal/linguistic

A salesperson - interpersonal

A poet - linguistic

An artisan - bodily kinaesthetic

Stage Four

If you have access to computers and the Internet at your school or in the classroom, students can do an online test to discover what their strong intelligences are. If not, this could be set for homework (if students have access to the Internet at home or work). You could do some feedback on this once they have their results, e.g. What do you think? Is it you?

Stage Five

Explain the metaphor note. Students then look through the text for words or expressions that have to do with light.

Answers: *the brighter you are (par.1), who shines at languages (par.2), who is brilliant at music (par.2), are these people dull (par.2), are dazzling speakers (par.3), get flashes of inspiration (par.7), interpersonally bright people (par.8)*

Students can now do the next exercise, which involves filling in the gaps with the same word for each pair of sentences.

Answers: *1&2- bright, 3&4- shines, 5&6- flash, 7&8- brilliant, 9&10- dull*

Feedback answers as a class and check meanings of words. Ask the students if this metaphor exists for intelligence in their language.

Stage Six

These are some conversation questions that you can discuss as a class or in groups. It gives them the chance to personalise the new vocabulary. If students do this activity in groups, conduct a whole-class feedback at the end of the discussion.