

Multiple Intelligence

Multiple Intelligence refers to the variety of ways that people take in and process information. Having an understanding of each of these Intelligences helps us to not only prepare classroom experiences that fully engage our students, but also helps us to discover the Intelligences that we feel most comfortable with and therefore use most in our classrooms.

If we have experiencing classroom management issues or our students don't seem to participate as much as we like, it could be that we are not presenting experiences that speak to their way of learning. Offering a variety of activities that engage different Intelligences creates not only a fun and empowering classroom experience but also build self-esteem by helping the students understand that there are many ways to learn and that we honor all of them.

As classroom facilitators, the more we understand which Multiple Intelligences we are most comfortable with, the more clarity we will have in what experiences we need to add to our lesson plans so that we go beyond our comfort zone and grow and develop right along with the students.

At this point in time there are nine recognized intelligences. Every human being posses all nine intelligences but are generally strongest in three of them. So, each human is a unique blend of intelligences that grow, expand and develop throughout our life times. The Intelligences rarely work alone. They form different patterns and combinations depending upon what we are doing or experiencing. They often enhance each other. We can, at any time, develop a greater understanding of and make greater use of any of the remaining 6 Intelligences that are not our primary strengths. In fact, this is what makes a great facilitator – the desire to grow and learn and to be constantly open to new experiences and ways of being.

As we demonstrate our own willingness to learn more about ourselves and our strengths we become a model for our students, inviting them be self-advocates in their own learning process.

An added benefit is that the more we understand our own particular way of taking in information, the more effective we can be in communicating with others.



Verbal/Linguistic - The Intelligence of WORDS

The ability to express yourself and to understand your world through the use of words, both written and oral.

People who are strong in this Intelligence have well developed verbal skills and are sensitive to the sounds, meanings and rhythms of words. They have the ability to take in information by hearing it. They are also able to use language to express their thoughts and to understand other people orally or in writing.

They tend to be good listeners and speakers and they love to read. They are like to tell stories, use analogies, metaphors and good grammar.

Since the Living Curriculum Philosophy is story based, this Intelligence is present in all of our lessons because “story” can be defined as a life story, video, song, etc...

Additional ways to incorporate the Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- Spin tall tales, tell jokes, poems and stories
- Begin a story and encourage the students to write the rest of it
- Become pen-pals with another church
- Create a classroom newsletter and encourage them to write articles for it
- Play games like Scrabble, Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, crossword puzzles and word search
- Use e-mail or letters to connect with your students

Create a Reading Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Create poems and statements using Magnetic Words & Magnetic White Board
- Explore storybooks from many different cultures
- Play a game of Scrabble
- Have a variety of photos or objects and invite the students to write a story about what it represents to them.

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence...

- Do I like to read?
- Do I like word games, puns and rhymes?
- Do I enjoy verbally communicating my ideas to others?
- Do I enjoy a conversation in general?
- Do I keep a journal of my writing?
- Do I look for opportunities to write, speak and/or share my ideas?



Logical/Mathematical - The Intelligence of NUMBERS & REASONING

The ability to think conceptually and to understand the underlying principles of different systems.

People who are strong in this Intelligence excel at “critical thinking” and inductive and deductive reasoning. They enjoy logical thinking, hypothesizing, testing, drawing conclusions, calculating, and recognizing patterns. These learners like information to be presented logically and systematically. They prefer problem solving approaches and the opportunity to make connections and identify relationships between concepts.

This group of people is also very comfortable with structure and likes to see a logical progression in the things they are working on so having a structure to your lesson plan is helpful to them.

Additional ways to incorporate the Logical/Mathematical Intelligence into the Create Experience:

- Create mind benders, memory and word games based on your lessons
- Encourage the students to develop strategies for coping with specific difficulties
- Do science experiments that relate to your lesson theme
- Create and solve logic games
- Encourage them to help create order and analyze and interpret information.
- Devise experiments to test out things not easily understood

Create a Math & Science Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Math manipulatives that they can play with
- Have puzzles and riddles for them to solve
- Sorting & categorizing activities
- Simple science experiments that they can do on their own

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Logical/Mathematical Intelligence...

- Do I like to make lists, set priorities and make long-range plans?
- Do I enjoy solving puzzles and playing strategy games like checkers and chess?
- Can I analyze numbers quickly?
- Do I routinely use statistical data and higher math routinely?
- Do I like an established routine?
- Do I look for patterns?
- Do I use a graphic organizer?



Spatial/Visual - The Intelligence of PICTURES & IMAGES

The ability to think in pictures and images and the capacity to visualize accurately and abstractly.

People who are strong in this Intelligence tend to think in pictures and learn best from visual presentations such as movies, pictures, videos, and demonstrations using models and props. They need to “see it” in order to comprehend it. They can also be distracted if there is too much visual stimulation in the room.

Creative expression activities that involve art, crafts, clay or other artistic methods are an outlet for those strong in the Spatial/Visual Intelligence. Don't forget to include the teens. Many times we assume that teens not interested in creative activities so we confine our lessons to talking and sharing. By including these and some of the other ideas listed below, we encourage the development of this Intelligence.

Additional ways to incorporate the Spatial/Visual Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- Encourage students to reflect their mood or feelings through drawing, painting or sculpting.
- Encourage daydreaming, imagining and thinking about “what if?”
- Supply journals so they can take notes. They need to see the words on the paper in order to more easily grasp them.
- Create opportunities for the students to develop visual representation of content, concepts and relationships using strategies such as mind-mapping or concept mapping, flow charts and other graphic representations.
- Show video clips that pertain to your lesson.

Create an Art Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Have simple stories or poems printed out and encourage them to draw illustrations for the story.
- Provide photos and supplies and invite them to create a scrapbook page for the youth ministry scrapbook
- Provide a variety of art materials and one word and invite them to create

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Spatial/Visual Intelligence...

- Am I able to picture something that doesn't yet exist?
- Am I interested in colors and patterns and what my environment looks like?
- Do I enjoy tinkering with things?
- Am I good with directions and enjoy looking at maps?
- Are the memories in my head in picture form?
- Do I enjoy doing visual art?
- Am I able to think in three dimensions?



Bodily/Kinesthetic - The Intelligence of the WHOLE BODY & HANDS **The ability to use your whole body or parts of your body to learn and experience your world.**

People who tend to be strong in this Intelligence learn by connecting movement and knowledge. They process information through the sensations they feel in their body. They need to move around frequently and they tend to touch the people they are talking to. They are good at both small and large muscle skills and enjoy physical activities and sports of all kinds.

Since they prefer to receive information through demonstration or modeling, people strong in the Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence need class experiences that allow them to move around and interact with others. They are going to have a difficult time in a classroom that requires them to sit still or in one place for long stretches of time. They are generally the ones that move, twitch, tap, or fidget while sitting.

Additional ways to incorporate the Spatial/Visual Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- By inviting our students to role-play
- Offering open space for movement and drama
- Incorporating games, sports and movement into the lesson
- Using a light shoulder touch to get their attention if they are distracted

Create a Building Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Stock it with Legos and building blocks
- Provide a set of cardboard bricks and encourage them to create
- Provide clay
- Create “rubbings” by adding small 3-D objects, paper and crayons
- Provide a “Brain Gyms” movement guide and encourage them to try some of the different positions
- Provide photos of yoga poses and invite them to try them

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Body/Kinesthetic Intelligence...

- Do I need to “act out” knowledge physically in order to remember?
- Do I enjoy expressing emotions or moods through dance?
- Do I like to be physically active?
- Do I have a hard time sitting through long meetings or lectures without the opportunity to move around?
- Am I accomplished in a specific physical activity?



Interpersonal - The Intelligence of SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

The capacity to detect and respond appropriately to the moods, motivations and desires of others. The ability to understand other people.

People who tend to be strong in this Intelligence enjoy working in groups, learn while interacting and cooperating. This is evident in the person who enjoys friends and social activities of all kinds and is reluctant to be alone. These are the people who often serve as mediators in case of disputes, both in a school situation and at home. This intelligence is at work when we discern and understand the differences in other people's actions, moods and feelings.

The Interpersonal Intelligence can be expressed in our classrooms by allowing students the opportunity to process their information by talking it through and inviting them to work in groups and to collaborate on projects.

Additional ways to incorporate this Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- Encourage the students to debate things
- Pair students up to solve a problem
- Create interview sheets and activities for students to get to know one another
- Offer group bonding activities
- Create scenarios of conflicts that pertain to preteens and teens and encourage them to brainstorm and negotiate solutions
- Encourage group problem solving
- Encourage games and team work that relate to the lesson purpose
- Engage in social activities

Create a Working Together Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Add materials to write love notes to one another
- Create a list of fun and informational questions and invite them to ask each other the questions
- Provide a tape recorder and have them interview one another
- Provide games that two can play, such as cards; dominos; and charades

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Interpersonal Intelligence...

- Can I accurately interpret facial expressions, voices and physical gestures?
- Do I enjoy debating and discussing topics that are important to me?
- Do I need an organized system of communication and staying in touch with friends and co-workers?
- Am I comfortable in social situations, even if I don't know many people?
- Am I interested in making friends and meeting new people?
- Do I process my thoughts as I am talking about them?



Intrapersonal - The Intelligence of SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The capacity to be self-aware and in-tune with your inner feelings, values, beliefs and thinking processes.

People who are strong in this Intelligence have a deep awareness of their inner life. They have an understanding of themselves, their abilities, and their options. They operate through reflection, metacognition (thinking about thinking), self-awareness, a focus on feelings and a sense of spirituality. They generally like to work alone and tend to be independent and self-directed and have strong opinions on controversial subjects.

People strong in the Intrapersonal Intelligence need time to think and can often appear to be introverted. They can also have a difficult time breaking into a conversation or knowing when it is their turn to speak in a group of talkers so we can be more inclusive of this Intelligence in our classrooms when we allow space for thought.

Additional ways to incorporate this Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- Offer an area for private reflection
- Offer some self-directed activities
- Encourage journal writing since they prefer their own private inner world
- Know that SILENCE is OK
- Use informal conversation rather than calling on people
- Allow time for individual processing before going into a group activity
- Encourage meditation - They have a deep awareness of inner feelings, strengths and weaknesses

Create a Personal Work Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Provide journals so the students can self reflect
- The Book About Me... Provide supplies for them to explore who they are and what is important to them
- Provide art supplies and encourage them to create a personal statement

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Intrapersonal Intelligence...

- Do you enjoying working on your own projects?
- Are you able to focus your concentration well?
- Do you enjoy alone time?
- Are you able to step back and observe yourself?
- Do you need some quiet time in order to process your thoughts?
- Do you march to the beat of a different drummer in style of dress, behavior, or general attitude?
- Are you self-motivated to do well on independent study projects?



MUSICAL - The Intelligence of TONE, RHYTHM & TIMBRE

The ability to think in music and to hear patterns. Also the ability to create, communicate, and understand meanings made out of sound.

People who are strong in this Intelligence usually have some ability to compose music, to sing, and/or to keep rhythm. They are sensitive to sounds, environmental as well as musical. They often sing, whistle or hum while engaging in other activities and can sing on key and can remember and vocally reproduce melodies.

Music is an area that can easily be incorporated into your classroom experiences. Encouraging the singing of Joy Songs not only promotes music and fun but is a community bonding experience. Using music to interject a mood or feeling is also a way to help preteens and teens connect. Music videos or favorite songs, (with appropriate lyrics) can also be a source of great classroom discussions.

Additional ways to incorporate this Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- Invite students with musical abilities to lead the class in song
- Invite the students to bring in their favorite songs and discuss the deeper meaning of the lyrics
- Use meditative music to create a mood or feeling
- Invite the students to create a rap that talks about a universal Truth principle
- Use your voice to express emotion – no monotones

Create a Music Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Provide a CD player, headphones and a selection of CDs that they can explore
- Add drawing paper and pastels and invite them to listen to music and draw what they hear
- Provide well know songs and invite them to put new words to them
- Invite them to create their own song
- Provide simple instruments and Invite them to create a song or musical poem about something that is important to them

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Musical Intelligence...

- Can you move rhythmically in time to music?
- Do you enjoy making up rhythms or songs?
- Are you stimulated by music, rhythms, the human voice and environmental sounds?
- Do you frequently tap your hands or feet to music you hear live and/or in your head?
- Are you sensitive to discordant sounds in the environment?
- Do you prefer to have music on when studying or working?



Naturalist - The Intelligence of NATURE & CLASSIFICATION

The ability to recognize and categorize plants, animals and other objects in nature.

People strong in this Intelligence learn through observation and discovery of natural phenomenon and they relate their learning to nature and life. They have a deep need to connect with nature in some way each day. They love to garden and to observe nature in action.

It is very important to people who are strong in the Naturalist Intelligence to have something of nature in their physical environment. Having an area to the classroom dedicated to plants and/or flowers is a wonderful way to incorporate this Intelligence, especially if there are no windows in the classroom.

Additional ways to incorporate this Intelligence into the Creative Experience:

- Allow students to face the window so they can see nature and/or open the windows
- Create analogies to nature, such as: seeds growing into trees to Truth principles
- Go on nature walks, labyrinths, etc
- Bring nature in through rocks, feathers, sticks, a fountain...
- Make art from nature
- Create a litter collage
- Get involved in a planting project (e.g. planting trees, flowers, grass, etc.) either in your own home, or somewhere in your community
- Go for a walk and consciously focus on the impact of the environment on your five senses, on emotions and spiritual awareness

Create a Nature Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Provide interesting rocks and crystals for them to explore
- Provide nature magazines for them to read through
- Provide animal fun facts for them to enjoy

Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Naturalist Intelligence...

- Do I love to be involved in nature?
- Do I have the capacity to recognize and classify various flora and fauna?
- Do I have knowledge of and a deep desire to communion with the natural world?
- Am I drawn to and fascinated by animals and their behavior?
- Do I notice the effect on my mood and sense of well-being when someone brings plants and/or cut flowers into an otherwise sterile, humanly-created environment?
- Do I like to head for "great nature" when I want to relax, "unwind", or find inner renewal?



Existentialist - The Intelligence of SPIRITUALITY

Sensitivity and capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence, such as the meaning of life, why do we die and how did we get here.

People who are strong in this Intelligence understand the claims that individual human beings have full responsibility for creating the meanings of their own lives. These people enjoy pondering abstract ideas and concepts and can easily go from A to Q when processing said concepts. They are able to bring clarity and understanding to the fundamental spiritual and philosophical questions of human existence.

This Intelligence shows up in our classrooms through our metaphysical interpretation and discussions on the stories and events in our lives.

Additional ways to bring the Existentialist Intelligence into the Creative Experiences:

- To encourage discussion of “abstract” ideas and concepts.
- To encourage self exploration of beliefs
- To encourage deep questions
- To make meditation and contemplation a regular part of every lesson experience

Create a Reflection Center in Your Classroom...

Students can work at their own pace and explore.

- Meditation music, headphones, and a pillow - invite the students to sit in meditation
- Photos of the universe, water color paper and water color paints - invite the students to contemplate the photos of the universe and create their image of God
- Provide paper and idea generators such as, “What do I believe about God?” “Why am I here?” and invite them to see what answers come to them

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Questions to ask yourself to see if you are strong in Existentialist Intelligence...

- Do I enjoy philosophy?
- Do I enjoy practicing meditation, the study of koans, the study of Zen stories, and learning about the different types of religion such as Buddhism and Shintoism?
- Do I enjoy exploring such questions as: “Why are we here?” and “What is our role in the world?”