

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES IN THE MUSEUM: SLOWING DOWN THE LOOKING PROCESS

The theory of Multiple Intelligences is based on the research of Dr. Howard Gardner, co-director of Harvard's Project Zero. Gardner defines intelligence as "the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings." (Gardner, 1983).

Linguistic intelligence (word smart)

Refers to a person's capacity to use language effectively as a vehicle of expression and communication. Examples: poets and writers.

Logical-mathematical intelligence (number/reasoning smart)

Refers to an individual's capacity to think logically, use numbers effectively, solve problems scientifically, and discern relationships and patterns between concepts and things. Examples: mathematicians and scientists.

Spatial intelligence (picture smart)

Refers to the capacity to think visually and orient oneself spatially. In addition, spatially intelligent people are able to graphically represent their visual and spatial ideas. Examples: artists, decorators, architects, surveyors, inventors, and guides.

Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence (body smart)

Refers to the capacity of using one's own body skillfully as a means of expression or to work skillfully to create or manipulate objects. Examples: dancers, actors, athletes, sculptors, surgeons, mechanics, and craftspeople.

Musical intelligence (music smart)

Refers to the capacity to appreciate a variety of musical forms in addition to using music as a vehicle of expression. Musically intelligent people are sensitive to rhythm, melody, and pitch. Examples: singers, musicians, and composers.

Interpersonal intelligence (people smart)

Refers to the capacity to appropriately and effectively respond to other people and understand their feelings. Examples: salespeople, social directors, travel agents

Intrapersonal intelligence (self smart)

Refers to the capacity to accurately know one's self, including knowledge of one's own strengths, motivations, goals, and feelings. Examples: entrepreneurs and therapists

Naturalist intelligence (nature smart)

Refers to the capacity to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as to be sensitive to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations). Examples: farmers, botanists, chefs.

Gallery Activities Utilizing the Multiple Intelligences

Linguistic intelligence (word smart)

Focus: to explore different perspectives through creative writing.

Description:

- While viewing a work of art, learner selects one figure or object to characterize.
- Learner writes a letter or a postcard from selected perspective.
- Include the proper date, location from which it is sent, and a closure.

Tips:

- Make certain to include colorful descriptions of what your character experiences.
- Details might include where the characters come from, what they are going to do next, etc.
- Activity can be completely by individuals or in groups.

Extensions:

- After postcard is written, participants can individually identify and draw the most important part of the work on the front of the postcards or as an illustration for the letter.

Logical-mathematical intelligence (number/reasoning smart)

Focus: to promote divergent thinking, looking, and questioning strategies.

Description:

- Select a work of art.
- State an answer which might be derived from viewing it.
- Have audience respond with questions which could lead to the answers.
- Repeat the process in a game show format.

Tips:

- Model the activity before beginning. Start with an obvious answer based on observation, then move to challenging answers which may lead to interpretation and need for content or context.
- Compete for 'art points.'

Extensions:

- After offering learners a more challenging answer, ask each participant or group to create questions.

Spatial intelligence (picture smart)

Focus: To increase observation skills and strengthen attention to detail.

Description:

- Give group a specified amount of time to study a work of art.
- Have participants turn around so they can no longer view the work of art.
- Ask a sequence of specific questions about the painting: What is in the foreground?...the background?...the middle ground? What are the main colors of this part or that part/ how many figures are there and what are they wearing?
- Have the group turn back around.
- Discuss what is remembered and what was not recalled. Why?

Tips:

- Questions can vary from general to very specific.
- Point out the importance of looking carefully at art.

Extensions:

- Repeat with another work of art to demonstrate how the group's observation skills improve.
- Have participants lead the activity.

Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligences (body-smart)

Focus: to recreate figures through emotional and physical movement.

Description:

- Select a work of art with several figures.
- Role-play the figures using physical movements to convey emotion.
- Have the group guess which work of art is being conveyed.
- How would the meaning of the art change if the body language of the figures were different?

Tips:

- Ask participants if artists consider the emotions and gestures of their figures before creating the work of art. Why or why not?
- Pair or group students if works of art include many figures.

Extensions:

- Use abstract and non-objective works of art to enact the emotions conveyed through the elements of art and the principles of design.

Musical intelligence (music smart)

Focus: to explore the variety of sound implied in art.

Description:

- Learners gather in a group as close as possible to a work of art.
- Participants look very closely.
- Identify objects (or shapes, colors, etc) and their potential sounds
- Group brainstorms and models sounds.
- Divide participants into different sound groups.
- Like a conductor, give each group a signal when to start their part of the sound symphony, when to make the sounds louder/quieter, and when to stop the sound symphony.

Tips:

- This is a good activity to start a tour or lesson; it prepares the audience for interactive participation.
- Make sure everyone has a sound to create.

Extensions:

- Use with nonobjective art and have participants create different noises for the different elements and principles of the work.

Interpersonal intelligence (people smart)

Focus: to personify a portrait.

Description:

- Select a work of art, preferably a portrait.
- Ask participants to complete a Personality Profile based on the work of art (name, age, who are you? Where do you live, where are you going? What are you thinking?...see worksheet for details)
- Present profiles and discuss.
- Support your answers with visual clues.

Tips:

- This activity works best in a gallery with portraits of figures in the work. You may choose one image to have the whole group work with, or allow them to select the work of art on their own.
- You may choose to have the audience work in pairs.
- Prompts can be adapted to suit individual needs or interests.

Extensions:

- Have audience write biographies or newspaper articles about their characters and read them to the group.
- Select other works of art the characters might want to have as friends.

Intrapersonal intelligence (self smart)

Focus: To explore works of art by establishing personal, meaningful connections.

Description:

- Explore a gallery.
- Have each participant select a work of art to be a new friend.
- Why would the work of art be a good friend? Use visual clues for support.
- Participants introduce their new friends, justifying selections.
- Encourage questions like: What makes your friend special? What does your friend like to do?

Tips:

- Discuss the qualities of a good friend. Are these qualities related to what we look for in a work of art? Why or why not?
- Subject matter can include non-figurative works of art.

Extensions:

- Write a letter to the new friend. What do you want to know about your friend? What questions would you ask? Trade letters. Ask participants to assume the perspective of the selected work of art and respond to the questions.

Naturalist intelligence (nature smart)

Focus: to explore landscapes by imagining what would have been seen, hear, felt, tasted, and smelled if one were in the place shown.

Description:

Explore a gallery.

- Find a painting that you would like to visit.
- If you could visit the place shown, what would you see?...hear?...feel?...taste?...smell? What is the weather like? What time of day is it? How do you know? Etc.
- Share your landscape and visit with the rest of the class.

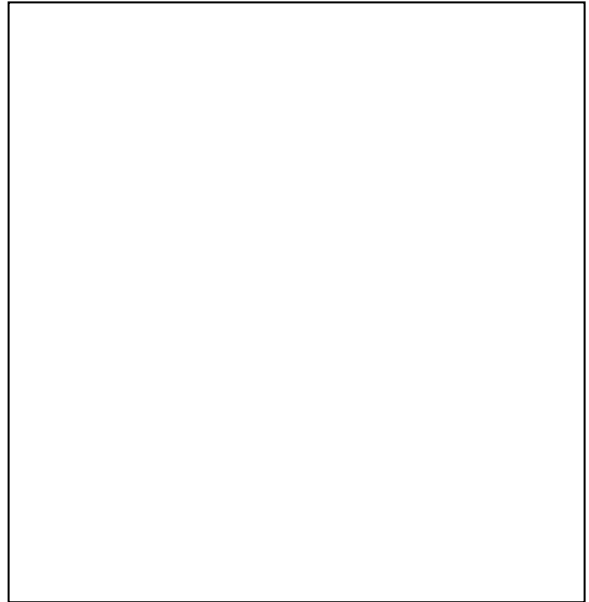
Tips:

- Students can work individually or in pairs.

Extensions:

- Write a poem or short story about your visit to the landscape.

PERSONALITY PROFILE WORKSHEET



Title of Portrait:

Artist:

Date:

Directions: Draw the selected portrait in the box above. Then fill out the information below as if you are the person in the selected portrait.

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Favorite color: _____

My last meal was: _____

Last book read: _____

Favorite type of transportation: _____

Favorite quote: _____

I believe in: _____

My hero is: _____

Behind my back people say I am: _____

People like me because: _____

My most valued possession is: _____