

香港資優教育學院  
The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

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## Factsheet

### TEACHING AND LEARNING IDEAS IN A NUTSHELL – MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

#### Definition

This theory of human intelligence, developed by psychologist Howard Gardner, suggests there are at least seven ways that people have of perceiving and understanding the world. Gardner labels each of these ways a distinct "intelligence"--in other words, a set of skills allowing individuals to find and resolve genuine problems they face.

#### Discussion

Gardner defines an "intelligence" as a group of abilities that:

- Is somewhat autonomous from other human capacities
- Has a core set of information-processing operations
- Has a distinct history in the stages of development we each pass through
- Has plausible roots in evolutionary history

While Gardner suggests his list of intelligences may not be exhaustive, he identifies the following seven:

**Verbal-Linguistic** - The ability to use words and language

**Logical-Mathematical** - The capacity for inductive and deductive thinking and reasoning, as well as the use of numbers and the recognition of abstract patterns

**Visual-Spatial** - The ability to visualize objects and spatial dimensions, and create internal images and pictures  
**Body-Kinesthetic** - The wisdom of the body and the ability to control physical motion

**Musical-Rhythmic** - The ability to recognize tonal patterns and sounds, as well as sensitivity to rhythms and beats

**Interpersonal** - The capacity for person-to-person communications and relationships

**Intrapersonal** - The spiritual, inner states of being, self-reflection, and awareness

#### How Multiple Intelligences Impact on Learning

##### Curriculum

Traditional schooling heavily favors the verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. Gardner suggests a more balanced curriculum that incorporates the arts, self-awareness, communication, and physical education.

##### Teaching

Gardner advocates teaching methods that appeal to all the intelligences, including role playing, musical performance, cooperative learning, reflection, visualization, story telling, and so on.

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### Assessment

This theory calls for assessment methods that take into account the diversity of intelligences, as well as self-assessment tools that help students understand their intelligences.

### Reading

Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books, 1983

Gardner, Howard. *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory Into Practice*. New York: Basic Books, 1993

Gardner, Howard. *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*. New York: Basic Books, 1999

Willingham, Daniel T. *Check the Facts: Reframing the Mind*. Education Next, 2004