

The Intelligences, in Gardner's Words

Linguistic intelligence is the capacity to use language, your native language, and perhaps other languages, to express what's on your mind and to understand other people. Poets really specialize in linguistic intelligence, but any type of writer, orator, speaker, lawyer, or a person for whom language is an important stock in trade highlights linguistic intelligence.

People with a highly developed **logical-mathematical intelligence** understand the underlying principles of some kind of a causal system, the way a scientist or a logician does; or can manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations, the way a mathematician does.

Spatial intelligence refers to the ability to represent the spatial world in your mind -- the way a sailor or airplane pilot navigates the large spatial world, or the way a chess player or sculptor represents a more circumscribed spatial world. Spatial intelligence can be used in the arts or in the sciences. If you are spatially intelligent and oriented toward the arts, you are more likely to become a painter or a sculptor or an architect than, say, a musician or a writer. Similarly, certain sciences like anatomy or topology emphasize spatial intelligence.

Bodily kinesthetic intelligence is the capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body -- your hand, your fingers, your arms -- to solve a problem, make something, or put on some kind of production. The most evident examples are people in athletics or the performing arts, particularly dance or acting.

Musical intelligence is the capacity to think in music, to be able to hear patterns, recognize them, remember them, and perhaps manipulate them. People who have a strong musical intelligence don't just remember music easily -- they can't get it out of their minds, it's so omnipresent. Now, some people will say, "Yes, music is important, but it's a talent, not an intelligence." And I say, "Fine, let's call it a talent." But, then we have to leave the word *intelligent* out of *all* discussions of human abilities. You know, Mozart was damned smart!

Interpersonal intelligence is understanding other people. It's an ability we all need, but is at a premium if you are a teacher, clinician, salesperson, or politician. Anybody who deals with other people has to be skilled in the interpersonal sphere.

Intrapersonal intelligence refers to having an understanding of yourself, of knowing who you are, what you can do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward. We are drawn to people who have a good understanding of themselves because those people tend not to screw up. They tend to know what they can do. They tend to know what they can't do. And they tend to know where to go if they need help.

Naturalist intelligence designates the human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations). This ability was clearly of value in our evolutionary past as hunters, gatherers, and farmers; it continues to be central in such roles as botanist or chef. I also speculate that much of our consumer society exploits the naturalist intelligences, which can be mobilized in the discrimination among cars, sneakers, kinds of makeup, and the like. The kind of pattern recognition valued in certain of the sciences may also draw upon naturalist intelligence.

MI CHECKLIST (ADULT)

Check those statements that apply in each intelligence category:

Linguistic Intelligence

- Books are important to me.
- I can hear words in my head before I read, speak, or write them down.
- I get more out of listening to the radio or a spoken-word cassette than I do from television or films.
- I enjoy word games like Scrabble, Anagrams, or Password.
- I enjoy entertaining myself or others with tongue twisters, nonsense rhymes, or puns.
- Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of words I use in my writing and speaking.
- English, social studies, and history were easier for me than math and science.
- When I drive down a freeway, I pay more attention to the words on billboards than to the scenery.
- My conversation includes frequent references to things that I've read about or heard.
- I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or earned me recognition from others.

Other Linguistic Strengths:

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

- I can double or triple a cooking recipe or carpentry measurement without having to put it all down on paper.
- Math and/or science were among my favorite subjects at school.
- I beat my friends in chess, checkers, Go, or other strategy games.
- I like to set up "what if" experiments (for example, "what if I double the amount of water I give my rose bush this week?")
- I've got a mind that sometimes works like a computer.
- I wonder a lot about how things work.
- I believe that most things have a certain rational explanation.
- I sometimes think in clear, abstract, wordless, imageless concepts.
- I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work.
- I feel more comfortable when something has been measured, categorized, analyzed or quantified in some way.

Other Logical-Mathematical Strengths:

Spatial Intelligence

- I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.
- I'm sensitive to color.
- I have a camera or camcorder that I use to record what I see around me.
- I enjoy solving jigsaw puzzles, mazes, or other visual puzzles.
- I have vivid dreams at night.
- I can generally find my way around unfamiliar territory.
- I like to draw or doodle.
- Geometry was easier for me than algebra in school.
- I can comfortably imagine how something might appear if it were looked down upon from directly above in a bird's eye view.
- I prefer looking at reading material that is heavily illustrated.

Other Spatial Strengths:

Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence

- I engage in at least one sport or physical activity on a regular basis.
- I find it difficult to sit still for long periods of time.
- I like working with my hands at some concrete activity such as sewing, weaving, carving, carpentry, model-building or a similar task.
- My best ideas often come to me when I'm out for a long walk, a jog, or some other kind of physical activity.
- I often like to spend my free time outdoors.
- I frequently use hand gestures or other forms of body language when conversing with someone.
- I need to touch things in order to learn more about them.
- I enjoy dare devil amusement rides or similar thrilling physical experiences.
- I would describe myself as well coordinated.
- I need to practice a new skill by doing it rather than simply reading about it or seeing a video that describes it.

Other Bodily-Kinesthetic Strengths:

Musical Intelligence

- I have a good singing voice.
- I can tell when a musical note is off-key.
- I frequently listen to musical selections on radio, records, cassettes, or compact discs.
- I play a musical instrument.
- My life would be poorer if there were no music in it.

- I catch myself sometimes walking down the street with a television jingle or other tune running through my mind.
- I can easily keep time to a piece of music with a simple percussion instrument.
- I know the tunes to many different songs or musical pieces.
- If I hear a musical selection once or twice, I am usually able to sing it back fairly accurately.
- I often make tapping sounds or sing little melodies while working, studying, or learning something new.

Other Musical Strengths:

Interpersonal Intelligence

- I'm considered an individual who people come to for advice and counsel.
- When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to deal with it on my own.
- I have at least three close friends.
- I prefer social pastimes such as playing Monopoly or bridge to individual recreations such as video games or solitaire.
- I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do.
- I consider myself a leader (or others have called me that).
- I feel comfortable in the midst of a crowd.
- I like to get involved in social activities connected with my work, church, or community.
- I prefer group sports like badminton, volleyball, or softball to solo sports such as swimming or jogging.
- I would rather spend my evenings at a lively party than at home alone.

Other Interpersonal Strengths:

Intrapersonal Intelligence

- I regularly spend time alone to meditate, reflect, or think about important life questions.
- I have attended counseling sessions or personal growth seminars to learn more about myself.
- I have unique thoughts about things that others don't seem to understand.
- I consider myself to be strongly willed and fiercely independent.
- I see myself as a loner (or others see me that way).
- I have a special hobby or interest that I pretty much keep to myself.
- I have some important goals for my life that I think about on a regular basis.

- I would prefer to spend a weekend alone in a cabin in the woods rather than in a fancy resort with lots of people around.
- I keep a personal diary or journal to record the events of my inner life.
- I am self-employed or have at least thought seriously about starting my own business.

Other Intrapersonal Strengths:

Naturalistic Intelligence

- I enjoy gardening and working outside in my yard.
- I collect items of nature -- rocks, leaves, butterflies, etc.
- I know the scientific or common name of a wide variety of plants and/or animals.
- I enjoy camping and hiking.
- I keep many houseplants, and they do well.
- I notice weather patterns and can predict weathers changes with some accuracy.
- I have had many pets and enjoy being around animals.
- I enjoy watching documentaries about various aspects of nature.
- I visit natural history museums and other such organizations whenever I have an opportunity.
- I enjoy astronomy and can name and locate several features of the night sky.

Other Naturalistic Strengths:

Source: Linguistic through Intrapersonal Intelligence - From *7 Kinds of Smart* by Thomas Armstrong.
Naturalistic Intelligence - Kay Reat