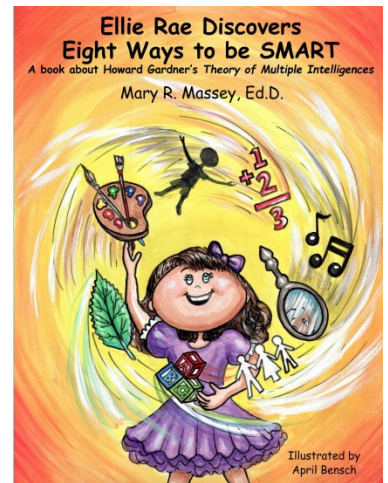


# DISCUSSION GUIDE



A child-friendly introduction to Dr. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Ideal for PreK-5<sup>th</sup>, but effective as an easy to understand presentation of Gardner's theory for all ages.

Before reading the book, ask the following questions and allow time for discussion of answers.

*What does it mean to be smart? Do you think you are smart?*

Read the book aloud, making sure all children can clearly see all illustrations.

## WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

- ~ What did Ellie Rae see when she watched her friends playing ball?
- ~ Do you see any of those same strengths, gifts, smart parts in yourself? In classmates?
- ~ Can we make smart parts stronger? How?
- ~ How many smart parts did Ellie Rae count in her friends? What are they?



Distribute cutouts of the MI icons used in the book. Ask the children to choose which icon represents their dominant intelligence or smartest part. Older children can put the icons in order of their smartest parts. Distribute pictures of characters. Ask children to match the smart part icon with the character in the book.



## Lesson Extensions

Depending on the age of the children, ask them to reflect on multiple intelligences by choosing one of the following:

### WORD SMART

- ~Write a paragraph, defining the theory of multiple intelligences.
- ~List synonyms for the word SMART.
- ~Make up a poem about being SMART.

### ART SMART

- ~Draw a brain and section it off according to your smart parts.
- ~Design your own icons for each smart part.
- ~Draw a picture of yourself using your smartest part/dominant intelligence.

### PEOPLE SMART

- ~In a small group, discuss MI theory.
- ~Sit with a partner and describe your dominant intelligence to one another.
- ~Play Password to guess each of the intelligences.

### SELF SMART

- ~Write in a journal if you think you are smart and why.
- ~List in a journal what makes you feel smart.
- ~Share with a partner a time when you did not feel smart.

### NUMBER SMART

- ~Identify a well-known personality for each of the eight intelligences.
- ~Design a possible inventory to assess intelligence.
- ~After classmates have identified their smart part, calculate the percentage of each smart part to the whole class.

### MUSIC SMART

- ~Write a song about multiple intelligences.
- ~Assign an instrument to each intelligence and perform a piece of music written with icons.
- ~Tap out a rhythm while your classmates move to represent each intelligence.

### BODY SMART

- ~Dance to show your dominant intelligence.
- ~Create a move to describe each of the intelligences.
- ~As a mime, show your dominant intelligence.

### NATURE SMART

- ~List or find pictures of the animals you feel are the smartest in the world.
- ~Sit outside and reflect on the many different aspects of nature and how they interact.
- ~Compare animal and human intelligence.

The students' choices often times are indicative of their own dominant intelligence. I believe Passive Observation is the most authentic assessment. Children want to show us their best self and if we offer them a choice as to how to demonstrate understanding (i.e. draw a picture or sing a song instead of write an explanation), they will do their best work. Certainly, there are times when the assignment method must be dictated, however, there is always room to expand our assessment inventories.