

## **A multifaceted view of intelligence**

Many researchers have come to recognise that traditional measures of intelligence such as IQ are limiting and that attempting to measure intelligence in this way makes many children feel like failures. According to Howard Gardner (1993), intelligence should not be seen as a single, fixed, measurable phenomenon. Rather, his research has led him to take a much broader view of intelligence and he asserts that we have a range of eight intelligences with each individual having a different intelligence profile. Gardner stresses that we as educators should be concerned with harnessing the brain's natural potential for learning by fostering the whole range of these intelligences.

Gardner describes intelligence as a set of abilities or skills which can be improved and demonstrates that there are many intelligences common to all cultures. The implication of this for teachers is profound. No longer is intelligence seen as narrow, fixed and inherited. Instead we begin to see intelligence through a multifaceted filter and become aware of the learning potential within every child. The eight intelligence centres within the brain identified by Gardner – linguistic, mathematical/logical, kinaesthetic, visual/spatial, musical, naturalist, interpersonal and intrapersonal – provide the learner with a variety of ways of exploring and making sense of new information. The best learning will occur when as many of the intelligences as possible are stimulated in new learning and also used to allow students to demonstrate or 'show what they know' in a variety of ways.

Another interesting perspective on intelligence comes from Daniel Goleman. In his book 'Emotional Intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ' (1995), he argues, like Gardner, that traditional views of intelligence are too narrow and makes the case for the importance of Emotional Intelligence. Goleman suggests that the ability to manage one's own and others' emotions is much more important for success in life than more traditional measures of intelligence such as IQ. His theory of emotional intelligence, effectively combining Gardner's 'personal' intelligences, highlights the following abilities:

*'Abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope.'*  
(Goleman. 1995. pg34.)

Goleman's book not only acknowledges the importance of self-awareness and relationships with others, but builds on research into the importance of emotions and the role they play in the way the brain functions. He stresses that we as educators should be concerned with harnessing the brain's natural potential for learning by fostering the whole range of these intelligences. In his theory, Goleman delineates 5 elements of what he calls emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill.

Some theories of intelligence focus more on what people can do and seek to validate a broader range of competencies. Sternberg's theory of Successful Intelligence (1997) splits into three types of intelligence: analytical, creative and practical.

These theories, far from being in opposition to each other, are in fact mutually reinforcing: they all argue for a view of intelligence which takes into account individual difference and recognises the impact that experience has on how we make sense of the world and make connections. Our challenge at the UFA is to plan learning experiences which take into account these individual differences and experiment with some of these theories of intelligence, using them as models which can inform our planning.