

Enjoying God with All Our Mind: Biblical Storytelling & Multiple Intelligences

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Process: How can we approach the story from different directions using our different intelligences?

Content: How does the specific content of the story relate to each of the intelligences?

Examples

Linguistic Intelligence

- ❖ Process—examples:
 - “Chirping” the story (call and response)
 - Looking for verbal threads
 - Defining the meaning of key words
- ❖ Content
 - Identify someone *in the story* who tells a story or otherwise demonstrates having verbal skill, lack of verbal skill, or a change in verbal skill (as with a story about the healing of a person with a speech impediment)

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

- ❖ Process—examples:
 - What is the structure and sequence of the story?
 - Identify the “chunks” of the story and the logic behind their sequence
 - Are the chunks subdivided? How many sentences in each part?
 - Look for numbers in the story
- ❖ Content—examples:
 - In the story of Peter's denial, Peter remembers Jesus saying "Before the cock crows *twice*, you will deny me *three* times."
 - Identify the way a character in the story use logical argumentation or thought

Spatial Intelligence

- ❖ Process—example:
 - Use modeling material, blocks, or clothespins to create figures representing the characters; define geographical areas or features with boxes, cloth or whatever is handy; position the figures in relation to one another at different points in the story
- ❖ Content
 - Identify someone *in the story* who demonstrates spatial intelligence
 - Identify things in the story that are described with some detail as in the vision of Ezekiel in chapter 1 or the vision of John in Revelation

Resources

Armstrong, Thomas. *7 Kinds of Smart: Identifying and Developing Your Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Plume, 1999).

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

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

Stankard, Bernadette T. *How Each Child Learns: Using Multiple Intelligence in Faith Formation* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2003).

The Idea of Multiple Intelligence

- Articulated by Howard Gardner in *Frames of Mind*, 1983
- Human intelligence is “the ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings”
- Several intelligences, relatively independent of one another
- Can be combined in a multiplicity of adaptive ways by individuals and cultures

Linguistic Intelligence: Word Smart

- The ability to use language, learn words, and tell stories
- Can argue, persuade, entertain/instruct with words; enjoy word games, puns, the sounds of language, trivia, tongue twisters
- Homer, Shakespeare
- Journalist, teacher, politician, poet, lawyer, etc.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence: Logic Smart

- The ability to understand numbers, sequence, cause and effect, patterns and predictability
- Can think in terms of cause-and-effect, create hypotheses, look for conceptual regularities or numerical patterns
- Newton, Einstein
- Scientist, accountant, computer programmer, etc.

Spatial Intelligence: Picture Smart

- The ability to perceive, transform, and re-create different aspects of the visual-spatial world
- Can visualize vividly, draw/sketch their ideas and orient themselves in 3D space easily
- Picasso, Frank Lloyd Wright, Michelangelo
- Architects, photographers, artists, pilots, mechanical engineers, etc.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: Body Smart

- Talent in controlling one’s body movements and also in handling objects with skill
- Physical capabilities like coordination, strength, endurance, grace, flexibility, agility
- Athletes, dancers, mechanics, surgeons, actors, carpenters, etc.

Musical Intelligence: Music Smart

- Capacity to perceive appreciate, and produce rhythms and melodies
- Anyone who has a good ear, can sing in tune, keep time to music and listen to different selections with some degree of discernment
- Musicians, singers, composers, conductors, etc.

Interpersonal Intelligence: People Smart

- The ability to understand and work with other people
- Can perceive and be responsive to the moods, intentions, and desires of others
- Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Social workers, administrators, teachers, diplomats, etc.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: Self Smart

- The ability to understand oneself—intelligence of the inner self
- Can easily access their own feelings and discriminate between different kinds of inner emotional states; introspective, independent, goal-directed
- St. Paul, Ignatius of Loyola, John Wesley
- Counselors, theologians, self-employed businesspeople, etc.

Spiritual Intelligence: Spirit Smart

- The ability to perceive movements of the spirit and relationship to God
- “an excellent spirit, knowledge and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles and solve problems is found in this Daniel”
- Daniel, St. Paul, Ignatius of Loyola, John Wesley
- Prophets, spiritual directors, etc.