THE EIGHT KINDS OF SMART

NUMBER SMART (logical/mathematical intelligence) is most often associated with what we call scientific reasoning. This smart involves the capacity to recognize patterns, work with abstract symbols (such as numbers and geometric shapes), and see relationships or connections between separate pieces of information.

WORD SMART (verbal/linguistic intelligence) centers on understanding and using words, either orally or in writing. This intelligence is responsible for the production of language and all the complex possibilities that follow, including poetry, humor, storytelling, grammar, metaphors, symbolic thinking, reading, and writing.

PICTURE SMART (visual/spatial intelligence) deals with the visual arts (painting, drawing, and sculpting); navigation, mapmaking, and architecture (which involve the use of space and knowing how to get around in it); and games such as chess (which require the ability to visualize objects from different perspectives and angles). The sense of sight is key to this smart, but the ability to form mental images and pictures in the mind is also paramount.

NATURE SMART (naturalist intelligence) involves the ability to discern, comprehend, and appreciate the various flora and fauna of the world of nature as opposed to the world created by human beings.

MUSIC SMART (musical/rhythmic intelligence) includes such capacities as the recognition and the use of rhythmic and tonal patterns, and sensitivity to sounds from the environment, the human voice, and musical instruments.
BODY SMART (bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence) is the ability to use the body to express emotion (as in dance and body language), to play a game (as in sports), and to create a new product (as in invention). Refinement of either or both large and small motor skills are central in this smart.

PEOPLE SMART (interpersonal intelligence) involves the ability to work cooperatively with others in a group as well as the ability to communicate, verbally and nonverbally, with other people. It builds on the capacity to differentiate moods, temperaments, motivation, and intentions.

SELF SMART (intrapersonal intelligence) involves knowledge of the internal aspects of the self, such as knowledge of feelings, the range of emotional responses, thinking processes, and self-reflection. This intelligence allows us to step back from ourselves and watch ourselves as an observer.

- Every person possesses and has a unique blend of all eight intelligences, but some intelligences will be stronger than others in each person.
- Even within one area of intelligence, a child may show a range of strengths and weaknesses. For example in word smart, a child may write well, but be a poor speller.
- Although the intelligences are independent, they do not operate in isolation.
- By acknowledging the wide variety of intelligences, every person has a chance to shine in some areas of their lives.
- Knowing one’s unique blend of intelligences aids in the exploration of careers.
- All occupations involve several intelligences, though one may be the most prevalent.
- Different tasks within an occupation may involve different combinations of smarts.