

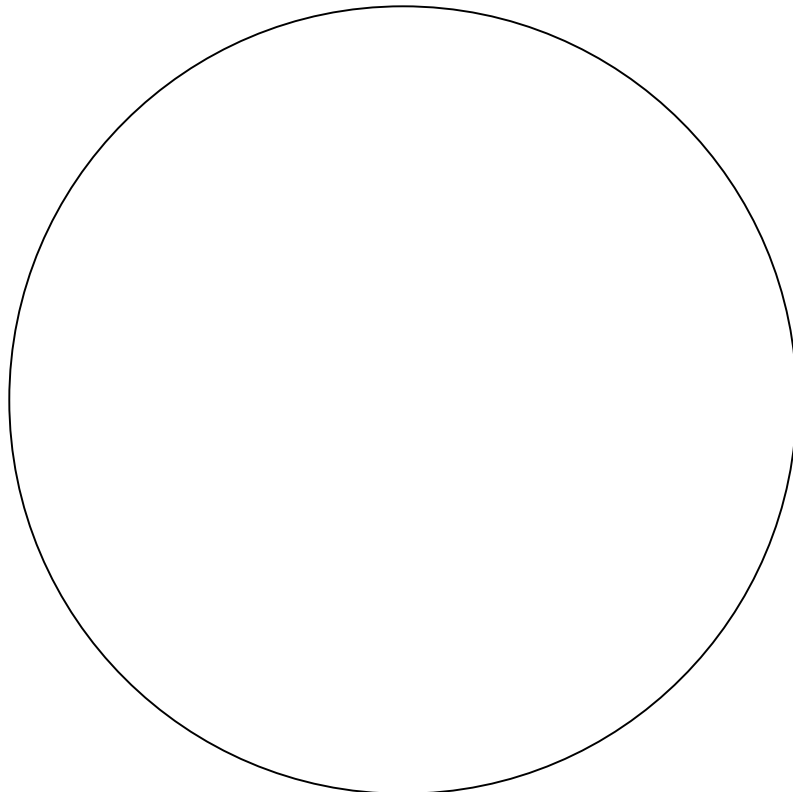
Fremont-Elizabeth City High School
Staff Training and Development
Term 1 1998

Learning Styles, Modalities, Multiple Intelligences

For as long as people have taught, there have been theories of how people learn. Within the last 60 or 70 years there have been theories developed around learning styles, modalities, levels of learning, theories about processing and more recently theories like multiple intelligences - often referred to as MI or 7 ways of knowing. Whatever the theory, the 'bottom line' is - we all develop different ways to learn in varying circumstances.

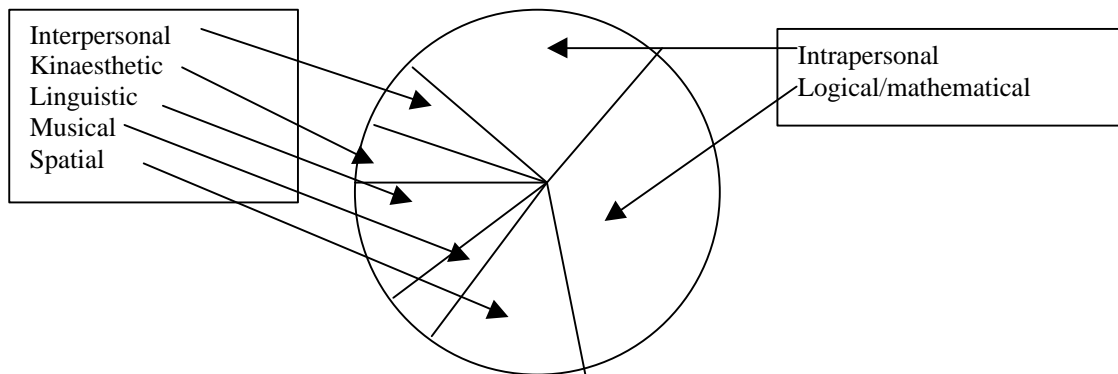
It is very difficult for teachers to see beyond their own preferred learning styles, modalities or intelligences, when planning their teaching strategies. The teacher's preferred way of knowing often comes out in activities or methods, which the teacher is more comfortable with. This creates a problem for a whole host of students who can learn better in other ways. The issue for the teacher then, is to widen awareness about different ways of learning and include these in the considerations for planning lessons, topics, and courses.

Learning to recognise learning styles, modalities or multiple intelligences, is a matter of enlarging our mental focus, zooming in and zooming out, to include wide possibilities for methods of learning. One person may never fully experience all intelligences, but can acknowledge their existence and validate the students who learn in ways other than the predominant logical/mathematical, and linguistic ways.



Using the circle on the previous page, place a dot in the middle and draw out radii, making sectors of various angle spans representing the importance of each of the 7 intelligences for your learning. Label them or use shading to show which is which. To help, use the grid provided with this material to get pointers on what they are.

Here is an example below



Compare yours with other people. Does feedback from others indicate that you should make some sectors bigger or smaller?

Imagine that you have all the students in a class do this and you could look at all the diagrams.

If you set a task: Look at the picture of the sunset and write a paragraph about it. Who would find it easy? Who would find it hard?

If the goal of the lesson was learning about the sunset (rather than a specific writing task), could they also do?

- Read this paragraph and draw a picture of the sunset
- Look at this picture of the sunset and think of all the kinds of mathematical or scientific principles which apply.
- Read this description and create a musical composition which conveys aspects of a sunset.