



an **elt**knowledge download

www.eltknowledge.com



Pavilion Publishing and Media, Rayford House, School Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 5HX
t: 0844 880 5061; e info@eltknowledge.com

© Pavilion Publishing and Media Ltd 2012

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing of the publisher

Multiple Intelligences in action 1

Herbert Puchta
gets personal.

In my article in the last issue of *ETp*, I discussed the nature of the eight intelligences identified by Howard Gardner and I suggested that a strong linguistic intelligence is neither the only key to successful learning and success in life, nor is it a guarantee of such success.

I should like in this article to focus on the inter- and intra-personal intelligences and offer some activities for developing and exploiting these intelligences in the classroom.

The importance of the personal intelligences

The acquisition of social skills largely depends on our students' development of their inter- and intra-personal intelligences (sometimes subsumed under the term 'emotional intelligence'). The sub-skills of these domains include the skill of empathy (the ability to put yourself into other people's shoes and

The acquisition of social skills largely depends on our students' development of their inter- and intra-personal intelligences

thus understand others better), the ability to see and understand the possible consequences of your own behaviour and to adapt and change it in constructive ways, and a growing awareness of your emotional processes and your ability to understand and handle your feelings better. All these are important skills for learners to acquire.

Among a teacher's range of multiple intelligences activities there should be exercises which, while practising language in a sharply-focused way, can, at the same time, make students more aware of their personal dynamics and the consequences of their behaviour for others.

You may like to try out the following set of activities in your classes. They are suitable for students of at least pre-intermediate level.

1 What's fun for me?

- Ask your students to close their eyes. Suggest that they should think of what 'fun' means to them. They should come up with a visual image of fun; this could be a concrete and colourful image, an abstract one in



black and white, a crystal clear and precise picture or a vague and blurred one. The exact nature of the image doesn't matter.

- Suggest to them that they should try to 'play' with the quality of their images as if they were on a TV screen. They may like to do this with their eyes closed. They should make their pictures brighter or darker, move them further away from themselves or bring them closer, get more movement into them or keep them still. Ask them to notice if the changes in the images have any consequences for the quality of fun they perceive from their pictures, eg if

Multiple Intelligences in action 1

moving the picture closer lets them 'feel' fun more strongly.

- Ask them to sit in small groups and talk about their experiences.

Comment:

The ability to focus on one's inner processes usually brings about a better quality of concentration in a class. Understanding the impact of one's mental images on one's emotional processes is an important part of getting to know oneself.

2 Fun for me, fun for others

- Ask the students to work in pairs, A and B. Get each student, working alone, to write a sentence about 'fun' that is true of themselves, one that they think is true of their partner and one they think is neither true of themselves nor their partner, but is true of someone they both know. Tell them that the activity is more interesting if they speculate, rather than simply writing something about their partner that is obvious.
- Ask them to write next to each sentence the name of the person the sentence refers to. Allow two or three minutes and tell them not to show the sentences to each other.
- Ask student A in each pair to read their first sentence slowly to student B. Student A should then give B a little time to reflect on its content and decide whether they think the sentence refers to themselves, to A or to someone else, and, if so, who that person could be. They should silently make notes on a piece of paper.
- Each pair carries on like this until all three of A's sentences have been read. They then they swap roles. Afterwards the students talk about the activity and verify their hypotheses.

Comment:

The ability to switch between one's awareness of self (intra-personal thinking) and awareness of others (inter-personal thinking) is important for living together peacefully. Learning to share one's perceptions with others and reflect on the difference between how we see ourselves and how others see us helps to develop the skill of empathy.

3 Ranking fun

- Write the following list on the board:
 - looking at colours and images*
 - being on my own, having time to think*
 - being in contact with others*
 - telling and listening to stories*
 - thinking mathematically*
 - doing sports*
 - observing things in nature*
 - listening to music*
- Ask the students to work silently and decide for themselves which verb phrase in the list they most associate with 'fun'. Tell them to give eight points to that phrase, and carry on marking the phrases in this way down to one point for the verb phrase they associate the least with 'fun'.
- Get the students to share their observations in pairs, small groups or

in a whole-class discussion and ask them to comment on their choices.

Comment:

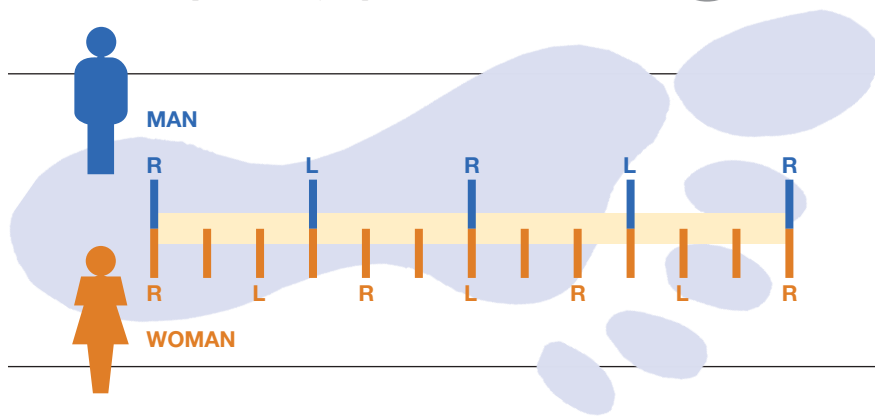
The design of this particular activity invites students to think about themselves (intra-personal intelligence) and share their findings about themselves with others (inter-personal thinking). Ranking items in a list will activate mathematical-logical thinking in many students. Developing the mental skills needed to do this helps with the development of students' critical thinking.

Looking ahead

My third article on MI, in the next issue of ETp, will offer some MI activities for use in the young learners' classroom. Using MI work with primary-age children offers great opportunities to facilitate cognitive development alongside language learning.

Looking back

Several readers have asked for the solution to the logical puzzle that I introduced in my first article (Issue 41). The answer is that the man's and the woman's left feet will never touch the ground again at the same time. As you can see from the graph below, it is their right feet (and not their left) that hit the ground again after some time – and then the pattern repeats itself over and over again. **ETp**



Visit the ETp website!

The ETp website is packed with practical tips, advice, resources, information and selected articles.

You can submit tips or articles, renew your subscription or simply browse the features.

www.etprofessional.com



Herbert Puchta is a teacher trainer and writer of coursebooks and resource books. His latest publication, co-written with Mario Rinvolucri, is *Multiple Intelligences in EFL: Exercises for secondary and adult students*, published by Helbling Languages 2005.

hp@herbertpuchta.com