



Student Development and Implications for the Classroom

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In the following essay I am focusing on models of intelligence and developmental theories in order to convey to parents how they can support their adolescent through the transition from year 6 to year 7 and beyond. With a better understanding of these models of intelligence parents should then be more aware and equipped with a stronger knowledge bank to be able to identify and deal with their child's learning and behaviour. In my first section I am going to examine several methods of developmental learning that will help parents understand the available approaches. In my second section I am going to examine the history of the development of I.Q and it's progression to the Models of Intelligence which help parents to look at their child's learning in a broader range of areas over the coming years

The Bible views students as created in the image of God, they are bearers of God's image (Brummelen, 2009 Walking with God in the classroom). It is the role of all teachers and stewards over their lives to teach them in the right ways of the world through a Biblical perspective. Over the last three hundred years of education the world has developed three main types of education strategies; traditional, process/mastery and experiential that have not led to a strong well rounded education and human development, and this had led to people such as Van Brummelen to come up with a Christian approach to teaching and curriculum. As we know from the Bible in Psalm 8 we honor and reflect Gods majesty by ruling over the works of His hands in responsive ways. The Bible also makes it clear that each person is unique. That every person is able to contribute to life and community in a unique way using their distinctive gifts. Romans 12 4-8 (NIV 1984)

⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us..... let him do it cheerfully."

Therefore our education and developmental theories have to be able to cater to all types of students. Lets look at the three main types. The first type of education orientation is the Traditional orientation, which can be seen in a school whose

developmental stages and learning consists of carefully put together subject matter in the traditional subjects and where the school emphasises hard work, strong ethics and discipline. As Van Brummelen says these types of schools "... Believe that the basic feature of humans is their ability to reason." (Van Brummelen, 2002 p26).

The Process/Mastery and behaviourists focus of developmental learning is geared towards the production of an education that has a predetermined outcome. Knowledge is thought of as being an objective, impersonal, value-free commodity to be sought out in this style of education. Everyday living skills and practical requirements for a student to easily obtain a job later in life are regarded highly. (Van Brummelen, 2002 p26). A strong leader in this area of development was Pavlov.

Experiential developmental stages assume that students are good by birth and that they are masters of their own destiny (Van Brummelen, 2002 p31). This thinking contains large elements of the Constructivism Teaching style that includes the thinking that for learning to be meaningful it requires students to be actively involved and that knowledge is personally or socially put together. The biggest problem as a Christian teacher that I have with Constructivism is "There are no right or wrong answers, but only discrepancies that we help children to resolve" (Van Brummelen, 2002 p35). As mentioned earlier, in Luke 17:1-2 God expects the teachers to teach students the ways that Jesus taught and to impart knowledge that will keep them from sinning. A proponent of this type of learning is Piaget. Van Brummelen doesn't think highly of this theory as "... (it) represents only a small part of the intellectual equipment children bring to making sense of the world and their experience" (Van Brummelen, 2009 p105).

Now that we have looked at the developmental theories for a child going into Year 7 and starting their senior education I would like to examine the history of measuring students intelligence and how it has progressed from I.Q to Models of intelligence. Charles Spearman was an English psychologist in the early 20th century who was the first to offer a tenable definition of intelligence. Spearman proposed the idea that intelligent behaviour is generated by a single quality within the human mind or brain.. Joy Paul Guilford was an American psychologist, who in the mid 20th century was an early proponent of the idea that intelligence is not a single concept as Charles Spearman suggested. Charles explored the multidimensional aspects of the human mind, describing the structure of the human intellect based on a number of different abilities. Guilford first proposed the concept of "divergent thinking" in the

1950s, when he noticed that creative people tend to exhibit this type of thinking more than others. http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/J._P._Guilford

Howard Gardner in the late 20th Century expanded a theory that human beings don't possess just a single intelligence. These take into account linguistic and logical spatial, bodily- kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences." (Gardner 2003) To determine intelligence Gardner came up with three distinct terms for the use of the word intelligence, (Gardner 2003)

- * A quality of all humans
- * A point on which human beings differ
- * The way in which one carries out a task in virtue of one's goals

Gardner further describes intelligence, as "an intelligence is a biological and psychological potential to solve problems and/or create products that are valued in one or more cultural contexts." (Gardner 2003) Armed with this definition and these criteria, Gardner identified eight relatively autonomous capacities that he named the multiple intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily- kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and existential intelligence. (Gardner 2008)

Over the last 30 years humans understanding of intelligence has changed dramatically and today as we look at students education we have to be ready to acknowledge and encourage students as they progress in various areas of intelligence. Gardner also says that several intelligences can come together to help a student progress in an area such as music. (Gardner 2008)

In "Thinking with the Heart", Ian P M Lambert.... Leaves us with a good challenge "Is intelligence ... viewed as something that can be quantified by tests that measure primarily linguistic and logical mathematical abilities? I believe we need to offer a challenge to any who subscribe to a narrow view of intelligence. Our destinies in life are not determined by I.Q." As a student progresses over the coming years we should be looking at their development through many forms of intelligence and teaching from a Christian world view and curriculum that will develop them into well rounded humans that are following in Christs footsteps.

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