

Teaching Intellectualism

Jessica Manzone and Sandra Kaplan
University of Southern California

The “development of intelligence” is often deemed to be the essential goal related to the identification and services provided to gifted students. The value of intellectualism often is perceived to be an outcome of the development and practice of one’s intellect. Of importance is the question: *Does being intelligent mean that one automatically also is an intellectual?* Of importance is the relationship between the concepts of intelligence and intellectualism and the means by which intellectualism is nurtured in conjunction with intelligence.

The concept of intellectualism is the ability to recognize and utilize one’s intelligence; it is the ability to practice and appreciate one’s intellect (abilities, intelligence). The concern confronting educators is the need to facilitate the gifted students’ interest in, satisfaction for, and seeking of opportunities to use intelligence with the understanding of its ramifications leading to “becoming an intellectual.” Intellectualism can be manifested in many and varied ways: intellectual curiosity, intellectual leadership, intellectual energy, etc. A major effort underscoring the development of students’ intelligence is to simultaneously develop their perspectives on the purpose of appreciating and becoming an intellectual. To this end, the following lesson is attached so that educators can initiate the lesson: Intellectualism. Note that the lesson and the materials used to present the lesson follow. The lesson has been taught to students, third to eighth grade.

The lesson has been written in an inquiry-based model of teaching called a Group Investigation. This model uses student-generated questions as the basis for analyzing the content areas and themes connected to the standards. The Group Investigation model provides an opportunity for all students to participate, to make connections to prior knowledge and experiences, and to stimulate their natural curiosity and interests. The lesson on **Intellectualism** can be taught in connection with ANY grade level or subject area content standards. The framework and key components of the lesson have been provided. It is necessary to align with lesson with specific grade-level standards and age-appropriate content. The framework for the lesson is outlined in black font. Teacher notes have been provided in red and represent one interpretation of how the lesson can be enacted with students. There is not “one-way” to teach this lesson – the syntax or sequence of the lesson is fixed, but there is a great deal of flexibility within each step of the lesson.

Please teach the lesson to your students. Take pictures of any charts created. Please feel free to email us your thoughts, reflections, and work samples. We are interested to see all of the many ways that you are developing intellectual thinkers in your classroom.

**Lesson Title:
Intellectualism**

Objective: Students will be able to define and apply the concept of an “intellectual” to fiction and non-fiction excerpts of biographies and autobiographies. They will share their findings in a debate.

Syntax	Activity
Present the Puzzlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the four different scenarios to the students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scenario #1: The student was perplexed over the problem. She decided to research the problem to develop a solution to the problem. ○ Scenario #2: The student was thinking about the problem and said that he would spend time thinking about the solution even though he wanted to practice chess. ○ Scenario #3: The student examined the problem and thought about how to prove with evidence his ideas about solving the problem. ○ Scenario #4: The student wanted to solve the problem with the information she learned about her favorite topic of study – insects. <p style="color: red;">Teacher Notes – The puzzlement can be presented in one of three ways: (a) present students with all four scenarios, (b) present students with a few of the scenarios, or (c) combine the scenarios into one large student description.</p> <p style="color: red;">A combined scenario -- “A student really wanted to learn about her favorite topic of study — the environment and the issue of trash in the ocean. The student examined the problem and thought about how to best learn about her topic. The student decided to research the problem to develop a solution. The student spent lots of time thinking and researching the problem even though all of her friends were outside playing soccer.”</p>
Solicit Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students in the class what questions they have about thinking and learning from the four scenarios that relate to the concept of being a student. • Write the questions on a chart.

	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #e0e0e0; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Our Questions</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <p>Teacher Notes – Create a chart or a place to document students’ questions about thinking and learning based on the scenario. Chart all questions as the students ask them. It is essential that the questions are compiled and saved, as they will be used throughout the lesson as students work to answer them.</p>
<p>Research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct students to work in groups to respond to the total set or individual questions within the set. • Provide excerpts from biographies and/or autobiographies as research materials to answer the questions the students generated about thinking and learning from the scenarios presented to them. <p>Teacher Notes – Introduce students to the characteristics of an Intellectual An intellectual is a person who thinks in a logical way. An intellectual is involved in serious study and thought. An intellectual enjoys thinking about problems and their solutions. An intellectual reflects on their learning. An intellectual thinks about problems in new and creative ways. An intellectual ask questions to learn more about something. An intellectual makes connections to things they already know. An intellectual practices to become better. An intellectual has a great deal of motivation and task commitment. An intellectual takes academic risks and thinks for himself or herself.</p> <p>Break students into small research groups. Assign each research group an excerpt from a biography. Select biographies that are either related to content currently under study or select biographies of individuals that students would find interesting and engaging. Provide each group with the following chart to document the relationship between the person and the dispositions of an intellectual.</p>

I am researching: _____

Is this person an intellectual? _____

	No Evidence	A Little Evidence	A Great Deal of Evidence
Thinks in a logical manner.			
Involved in serious study and thought.			
Enjoys thinking about problems and their solutions.			
Reflects on their learning.			
Thinks about problems in new and creative ways.			
Asks questions to learn more about something.			
Makes connections to things they already know.			
Practices to become better.			
Has lots of motivation and task commitment.			
Takes academic risks and thinks for themselves.			

Jessica Manzone, California Association for the Gifted, 2016

Share and Summarize



- Use the chart to record what groups of students respond to their questions.

Questions	Responses from Group #1	Responses from Group #2	Responses from Group #3

Teachers Notes – The share and summarize section of the lesson is a time for the small groups to discuss and analyze what they have learned during the research section of the lesson. It is important to provide students with a means of documenting the data they collected so that secondary data analysis can be conducted to look for patterns and trends. The following image represents the chart created by the students to document the relationship between several

important figures and the dispositions of an intellectual thinker. Different colored Post-it notes distinguished the various figures studied by each small group.

Create a large chart.
Provide each group (person) with a different color Post-it.
Have then place the Post-it with their evidence on the large class chart.

	No Evidence	A Little Evidence	A Great Deal of Evidence
Thinks in a logical manner.			
Involved in serious study and thought.			
Enjoys thinking about problems and their solutions.			
Reflects on their learning.			
Thinks about problems in new and creative ways.			 
Asks questions to learn more about something.			
Makes connections to things they already know.			
Practices to become better.			
Has lots of motivation and task commitment.			
Takes academic risks and thinks for themselves.			

Jessica Manzone, California Association for the Gifted, 2016

- Use the responses posed by the students to develop summary statements.
 - We think that...
 - We think because...
- Use the summary statements as evidence to identify the characteristics of students that are related to the scenarios and the responses from various groups.
- Ask students to determine the meaning of the following statement:
 - *“Students that share specific characteristics of thinking and learning could be named INTELLECTUALS.”*

Teacher Notes – Bring the discussion to a close by providing students with an opportunity to think about the big idea and summarize what it means to them. Each student was provided with a cut-out of a light bulb on which to write their summary statement. Students then taped their summary statement to the class chart.



Recycle

- Ask students what other questions they have about the nature and the traits/characteristics of an intellectual.

Teacher Notes – An additional activity to the end of the lesson could be the setting of a personal, action-oriented goal. Students were provided an opportunity to answer the following question in their journals: *What is a goal for yourself related to one of the characteristics of intellectuals?* The idea behind the journal entry is for students to select one or more dispositions of intellectual thinkers that they would like to develop or strengthen within themselves.