

## Every Child is Smart! Thinking with the 8 Great Smarts

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Every adult and child was created by a generous God with 8 great smarts: word, logic, picture, music, body, nature, people, and self.

One of the best ways for children to discover the power of their eight intelligences is to think about one topic with all of them. Their understandings will be much more complete. Using all eight smarts usually increases motivation, too.

Think about it in terms of adding power to their studying:

Word – power of language – talking

Logic – power of questions – asking

Picture – power of observation – seeing

Music – power of sound and music – hearing

Body – power of movement – doing

Nature – power of patterns – collecting

People – power of people – relating

Self – power of quiet – reflecting

Here's an example. Get a pine cone from the park or the next time you go for a walk. Think about it with all eight smarts. Even doing just some of these activities or having some of these discussions will enrich your children's experience with the pine cone. They'll spend more time with it and learn much! (If you don't live where there are pine cones, you can apply these suggestions to other objects.)

**Word:** Why isn't "pine cone" a compound word? Are there rules that explain why some words are compounds and some aren't? If you had named it would you have called it something different? What? What are the individual pieces called that look kind of like scales?

**Logic:** Do pine cones fall off trees in windstorms or do trees drop them when they're finished growing? Why are some pine cones what I call "open" and some "closed"? Other than craft projects or spreading peanut butter in them to make bird feeders, do they serve any purpose? Do any animals eat them for food?

**Picture:** How many different shades of brown do the pine cones have? How different do they look in different shades of light? If you dipped a pine cone in paint and used it like a brush, what would the design look like?

**Music:** If you blow on it or into it, can you get it to make sounds? Could you break off the pieces and put them in something to make a type of maraca?

**Body:** What game could you make up to play with your sister if you just have one pine cone? What if you had five? How does throwing a pine cone compare to throwing a baseball? How do you have to adjust your body if you want them to go the same distance?

**Nature:** Do all pine cones have the same number of rows of scales? Are pine cones from different types of pine trees different? How? Are pine cones the seeds from pine trees? Are they what cause new trees to grow? (Okay, if no other question has made you curious, I want you to be curious about this one. Find the answer. It's very interesting!)

**People:** Ask your grandparents what memories of pine cones they have from when they were your age. Did they pick them up in parks and at lakes like you like to? Share what you've learned or the games you made up with one of your cousins or friends.

**Self:** What new use for pine cones can you think of? If you were going to collect pine cones, like some people do, why would you and where would you display them?

What could you come up with for other common things? You can challenge your children to approach their favorite toys and food this way. Imagine relating in intelligence detail to waffles, ice cream, Cheerios, kites, soccer balls, their iPod, or an interesting character from a favorite book, television show, or movie. Try it!