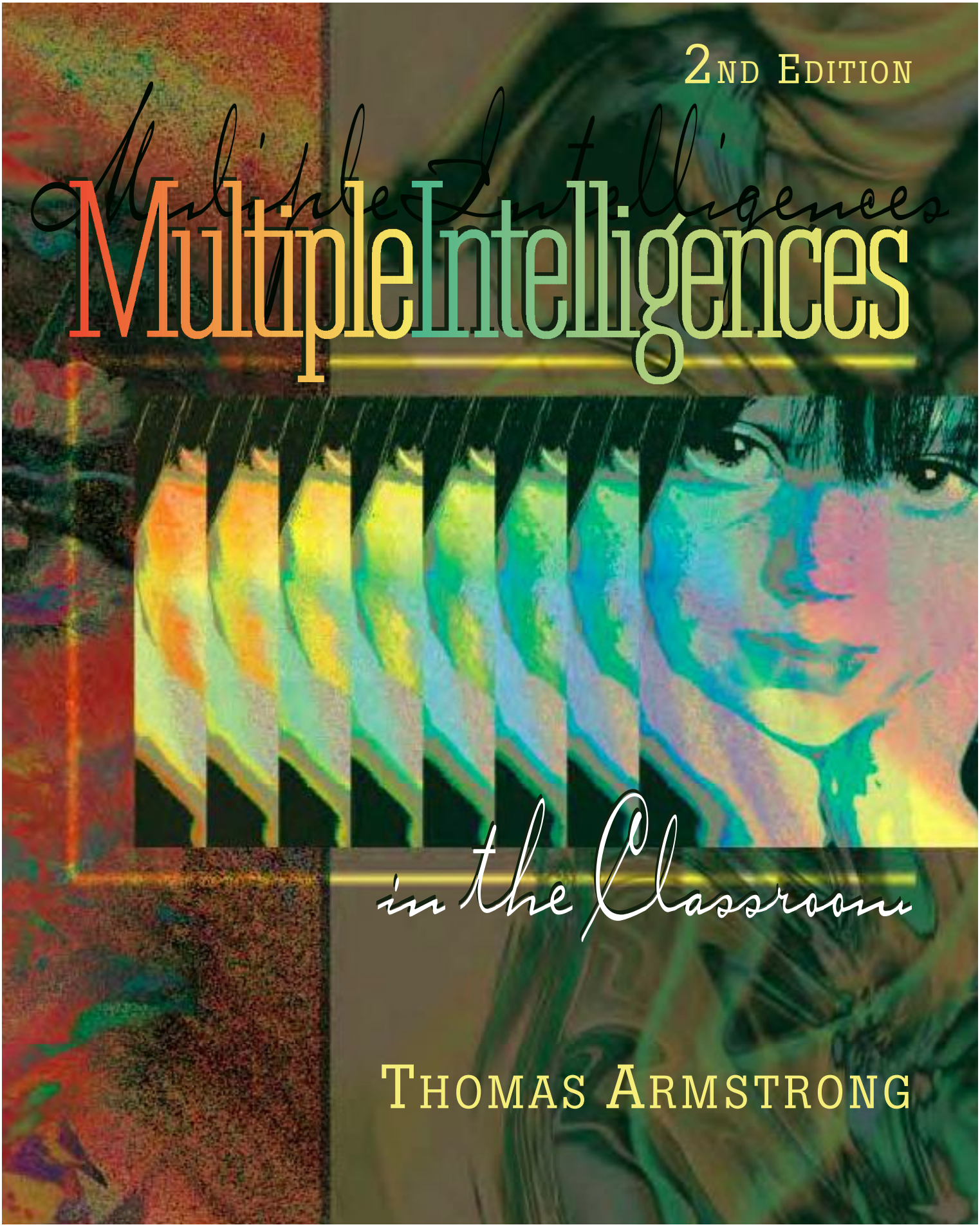
2ND EDITION
Multiple Intelligences
Multiple Intelligences
in the Classroom
THOMAS ARMSTRONG

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in the Classroom

2ND EDITION

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Preface

By Howard Gardner

In addition to my own writings, there are now a number of guides to the theory of multiple intelligences, written by my own associates at Harvard Project Zero and by colleagues in other parts of the country. Coming from a background in special education, Thomas Armstrong was one of the first educators to write about the theory. He has always stood out in my mind because of the accuracy of his accounts, the clarity of his prose, the broad range of his references, and the teacher-friendliness of his tone.

Now he has prepared the book that you hold in your hands for members of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Displaying the Armstrong virtues that I have come to expect, this volume is a reliable and readable account of my work, directed particularly to teachers, administrators, and other educators. Armstrong has also added some nice touches of his own: the notion of a "paralyzing experience," to complement Joseph Walters' and my concept of a "crystallizing experience"; the suggestion to attend to the way that youngsters misbehave as a clue to their intelligences; some informal suggestions about how to involve youngsters in an examination of their own intelligences and how to manage one's classroom in an MI way. He has included several rough-and-ready tools that can allow one to assess one's own intellectual profile, to get a handle on the strengths and proclivities of youngsters under one's charge, and to involve youngsters in games built around MI ideas. He conveys a vivid idea of what MI classes, teaching moves, curricula, and assessments can be like. Each chapter concludes with a set of exercises to help one build on the ideas and practices that one has just read about.

As Armstrong points out in his introduction, I do not believe that there is a single royal road to an implementation of MI ideas in the classroom. I have been encouraged and edified by the wide variety of ways in which educators around the country have made use of my ideas, and I have no problem in saying "Let 100 MI schools bloom." From my perspective, the essence of the theory is to respect the many differences among people, the multiple variations in the ways that they learn, the several modes by which they can

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Howard Gardner is Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education and Co-Director of Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and adjunct professor of neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine. He is the author of *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (Basic Books, 1983/1993), *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (Basic Books, 1993), and *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (Basic Books, 1999).

be assessed, and the almost infinite number of ways in which they can leave a mark on the world. Because Thomas Armstrong shares this vision, I am pleased that he has had the opportunity to present these ideas to you; and I hope that you in turn will be stimulated to extend them in ways that bear your own particular stamp.

Introduction to the 2nd Edition

This book emerged from my work over the past fourteen years in applying Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences to the nuts-and-bolts issues of classroom teaching (Armstrong, 1987b, 1988, 1993). I was initially attracted to MI theory in 1985 when I saw that it provided a language for talking about the inner gifts of children, especially those students who have accumulated labels such as "LD" and "ADD" during their school careers (Armstrong, 1987a). It was as a learning disabilities specialist during the late 1970s and early 1980s that I began to feel the need to depart from what I considered a deficit-oriented paradigm in special education. I wanted to forge a new model based on what I plainly saw were the many gifts of these so-called "disabled" children.

I didn't have to create a new model. Howard Gardner had already done it for me. In 1979, as a Harvard researcher, he was asked by a Dutch philanthropic group, the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, to investigate human potential. This invitation led to the founding of Harvard Project Zero, which has served as the institutional midwife for the theory of multiple intelligences. Although Gardner had been thinking about the notion of "many kinds of minds" since at least the mid-1970s (see Gardner, 1989, p. 96), the publication in 1983 of his book *Frames of Mind* marked the effective birthdate of "MI" theory.

Since that time, awareness among educators about the theory of multiple intelligences has continued to grow steadily. From a model that was originally popular mostly in the field of gifted education and among isolated schools and teachers around the United States in the 1980s, MI theory during the 1990s expanded its reach to include hundreds of school districts, thousands of schools, and tens of thousands of teachers in the United States and in numerous countries across the globe. Educators have applied multiple intelligences concepts to a wide range of settings from early childhood programs (Merrefield, 1997) to community colleges (Diaz-Lefebvre & Finnegan, 1997) and centers for homeless adults (Taylor-King, 1997).

In this book, I present my own particular adaptation of Gardner's model for teachers and other educators. My hope is that people can use the book in several ways to help stimulate continued reforms in education:

- as a practical introduction to the theory of multiple intelligences for individuals new to the model;
- as a supplementary text for teachers in training in schools of education;
- as a study guide for groups of teachers and administrators working in schools that are

implementing reforms; and

• as a resource book for teachers and other educators looking for new ideas to enhance their teaching experience.

Each chapter concludes with a section called "For Further Study" that can help readers integrate the material into their instructional practice. Several appendixes and a list of references alert readers to other materials related to MI theory that can enrich and extend their understanding of the model.

Since the publication of the 1st edition of *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* in 1994, several new developments in MI theory have warranted its revision and expansion in this 2nd edition. First, and most important, is Howard Gardner's addition of an eighth intelligence to his original list of seven intelligences: the naturalist (Gardner, 1999b). The core of this intelligence includes a capacity to discriminate or classify different kinds of fauna and flora or natural formations such as mountains or clouds. Gardner added it to the theory after concluding that it met the same criteria for an intelligence as the original seven (see pages 3–8 of this text for a description of the general criteria, and Gardner, 1999b, pp. 48–52, for an application of the criteria to the naturalist intelligence). I have integrated the naturalist intelligence into all relevant text, strategies, activities, figures, charts, resources, and other aspects of this 2nd edition of *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom*.

Second, Gardner has also begun speaking about the possibility of a ninth intelligence—the existential—or the intelligence of concern with ultimate life issues (Gardner, 1999b, pp. 60–64). I have not integrated the existential intelligence into the body of this revised text, but have written a special chapter for this 2nd edition (Chapter 14, pp. 127–131) that discusses this candidate for a ninth intelligence and its potential applications to the classroom.

Finally, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of books, manuals, training programs, audio- and videotapes, CD-ROMs, and other resources related to the theory of multiple intelligences, and the expanded resources guide (pp. 132–134) reflects this exponential growth.

Increasingly, examples of schools that have successfully followed these principles have been appearing on the educational scene. Hoerr (2000), for example, details in his ASCD book *Becoming a Multiple Intelligences School* the process he and his colleagues went through to implement the principles of MI theory at the New City School in St. Louis, Missouri, where he is headmaster. Similarly, Campbell and Campbell (2000), in their ASCD book *Multiple Intelligences and Student Achievement: Success Stories from Six Schools*, chronicle the application of MI theory at several schools—both elementary and secondary—in Kentucky, Minnesota, Washington, Indiana, and California. Perhaps most significantly, Harvard Project Zero has been engaged in Project SUMIT (Schools Using Multiple Intelligence Theory), which is examining 41 schools nationwide that have been incorporating multiple intelligences into their curriculum. Outcomes thus far include improved test scores, improved discipline, improved parent participation, and improvements for students with the "learning disability" label (Kornhaber, 1999).

Many people have helped make this book possible. First, I thank Howard Gardner, whose support of my work over the years has helped fuel my continued involvement in MI theory. I also thank Mert Hanley, director of the Teaching/Learning Center in the West Irondequoit School District in upstate New York, for providing me with the opportunity to work with several school districts in the Rochester area. Over a period of four years in those districts, I tried out

many of the ideas in this book. Thanks also to the following individuals who helped in different ways to give form to *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom:* Ron Brandt, Sue Teele, David Thornberg, Jo Gusman, Jean Simeone, Pat Kyle, DeLee Lanz, Peggy Buzanski, Dee Dickinson, and my wife, Barbara Turner. I also want to thank the editors, designers, and other members of the program development work group of ASCD for making this 2nd edition of *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* possible. Finally, my special appreciation goes to the thousands of teachers, administrators, and students who responded to the ideas and strategies presented in these pages: This book has been created in recognition of the rich potential that exists in each of you.

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Sonoma County, California
May 2000