Learning Theories and Teaching Approaches in Early Years

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TECHNICAL EXPERT- ECD

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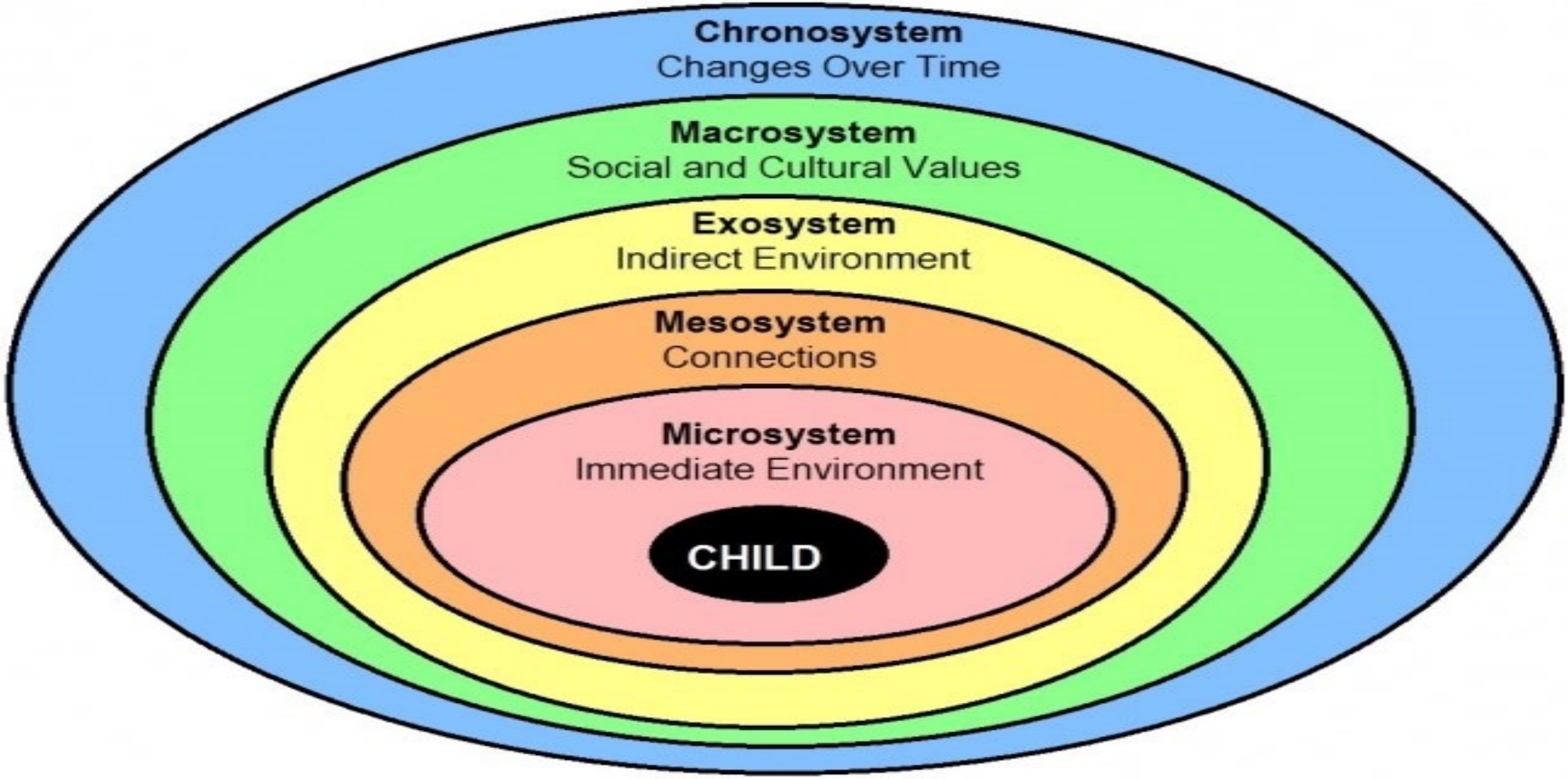
BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Child Development

Urie Bronfenbrenner

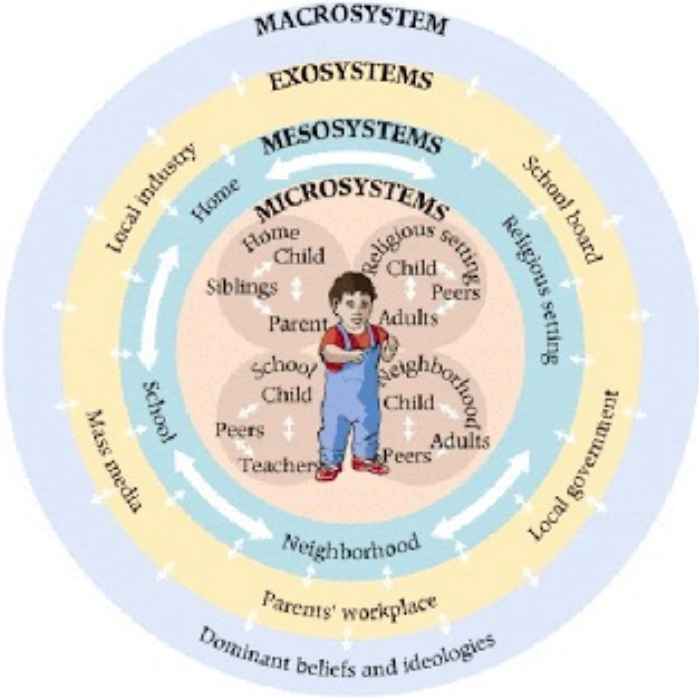
- (1917 –2005) was a Russian-born American psychologist who is most known for his Ecological Systems Theory.
- Bronfenbrenner (1977) suggested that the environment of the child is a nested arrangement of structures, each contained within the next.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Child Development



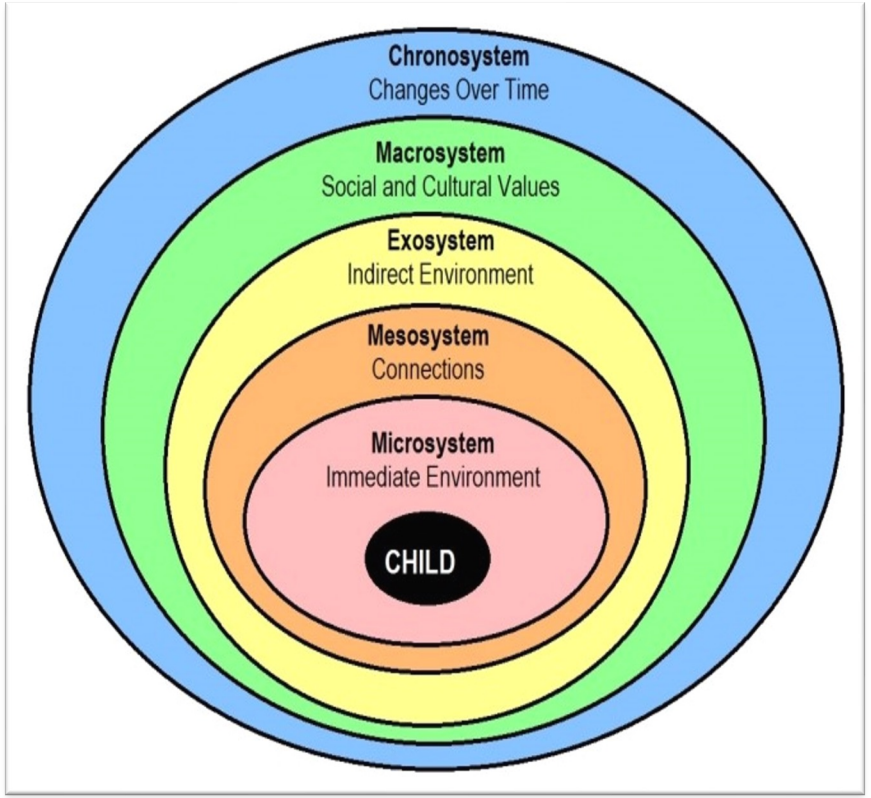
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Child Development

Bronfenbrenner's theory suggests that Child Development is a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment (Ecological Systems); from immediate settings of family and school to broad cultural values, laws, and customs.



1. Microsystem (Cont..)

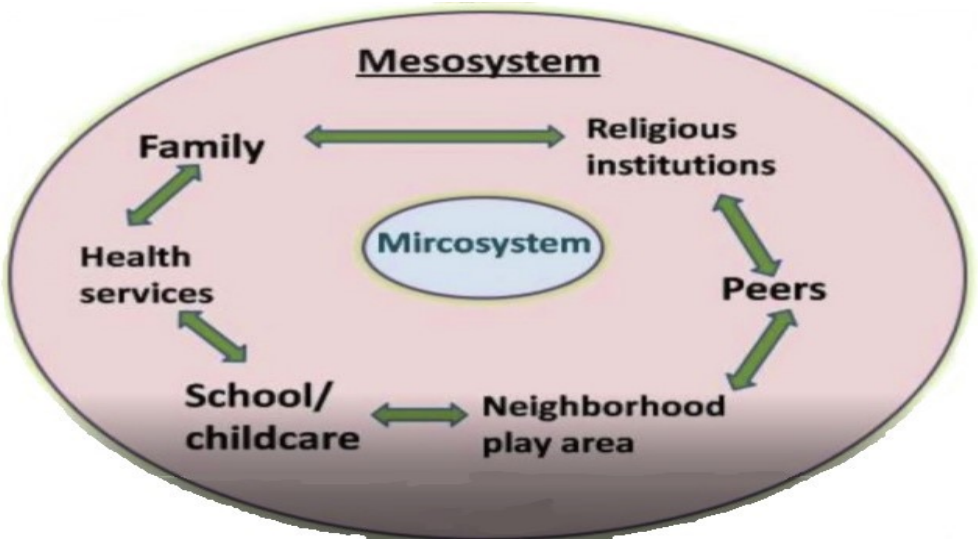
- The interactions within Microsystems are often very personal and are crucial for fostering and supporting the child's development.
- If a child has a strong nurturing relationship with his/her parents, it has a positive effect on the child. Whereas, distant and unaffectionate parents will have a negative effects on the child.

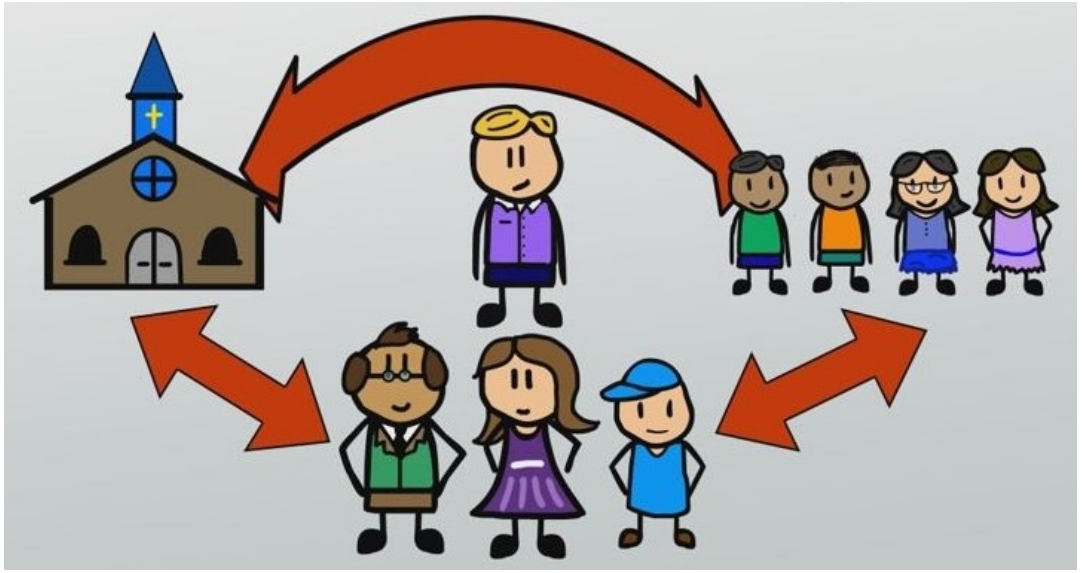


2. Mesosystem

- This system encompasses the interactions between the child's microsystems, such as the interactions between child's parents and teachers, or between school peers and siblings.

- The Mesosystem is where a person's individual microsystems do not function independently, but are interconnected and assert influence upon one another.

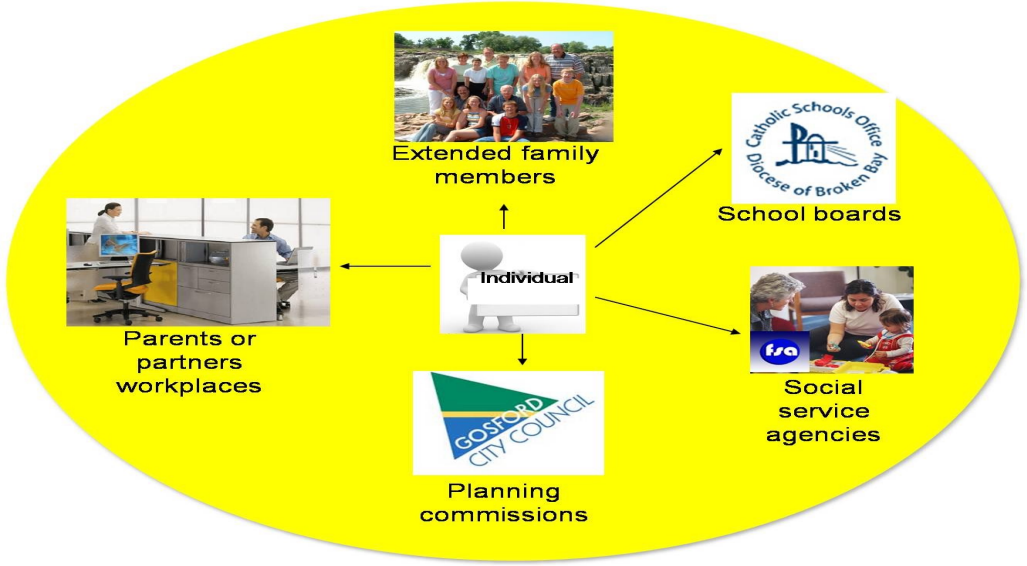


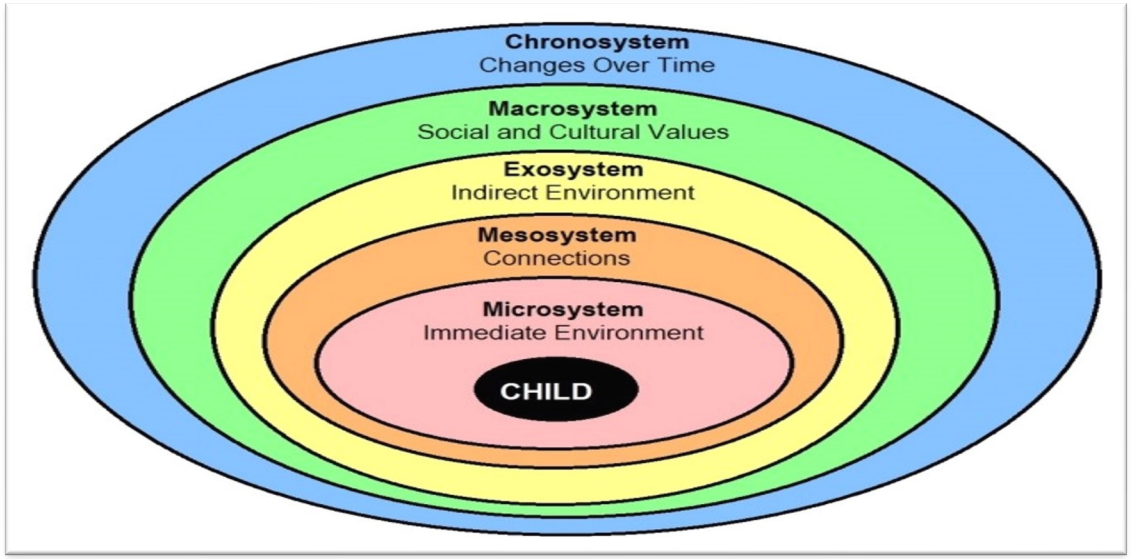


3. Exosystem

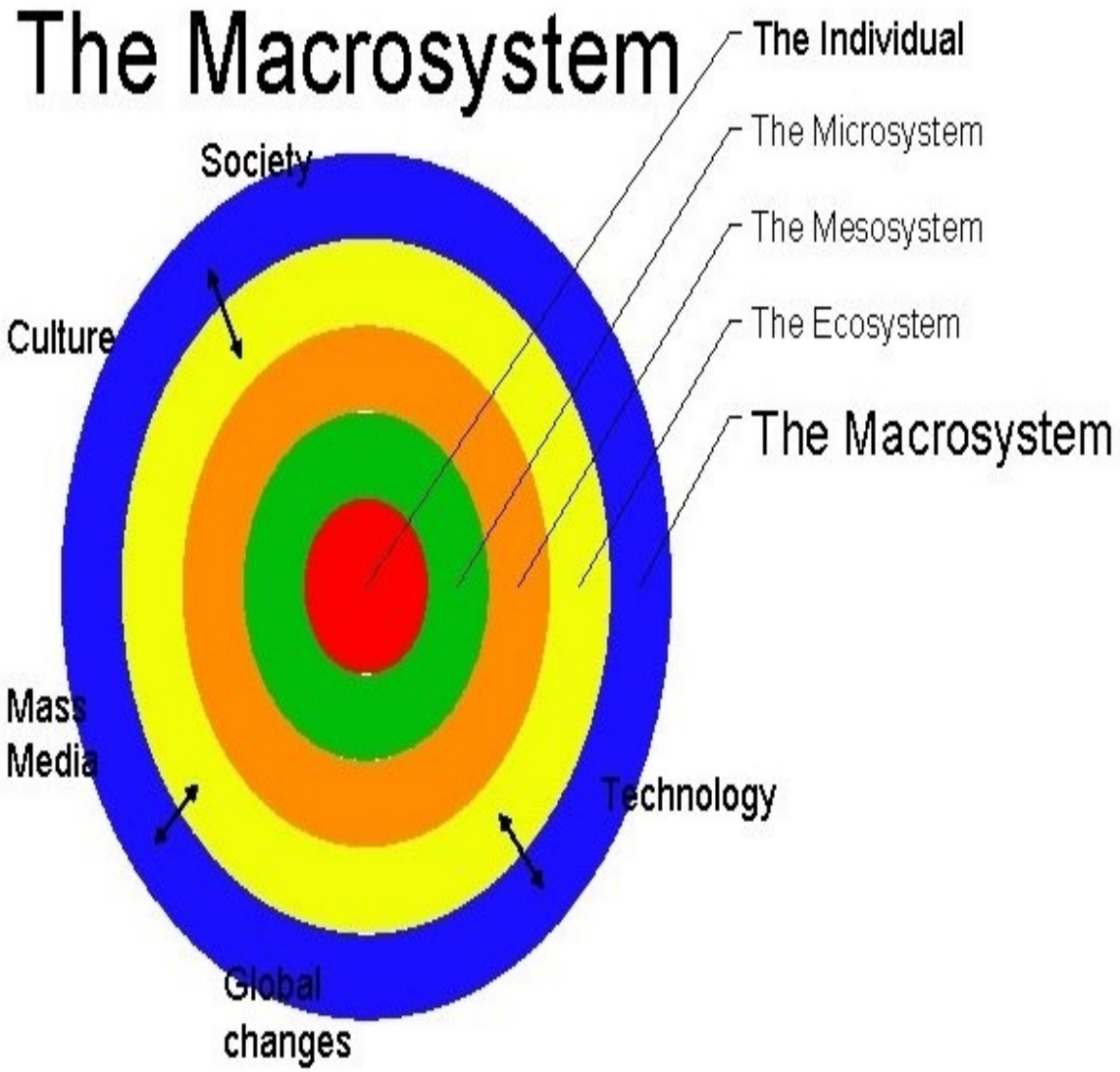
- It incorporates all other formal and informal social structures which indirectly influences the child as they affect one of the microsystems of the child.

- Examples of Exosystems include the neighbourhood, parent's workplaces, parent's friends and the mass media. These are environments in which children are not directly involved and are external to their experience, but nonetheless, affects them anyway.





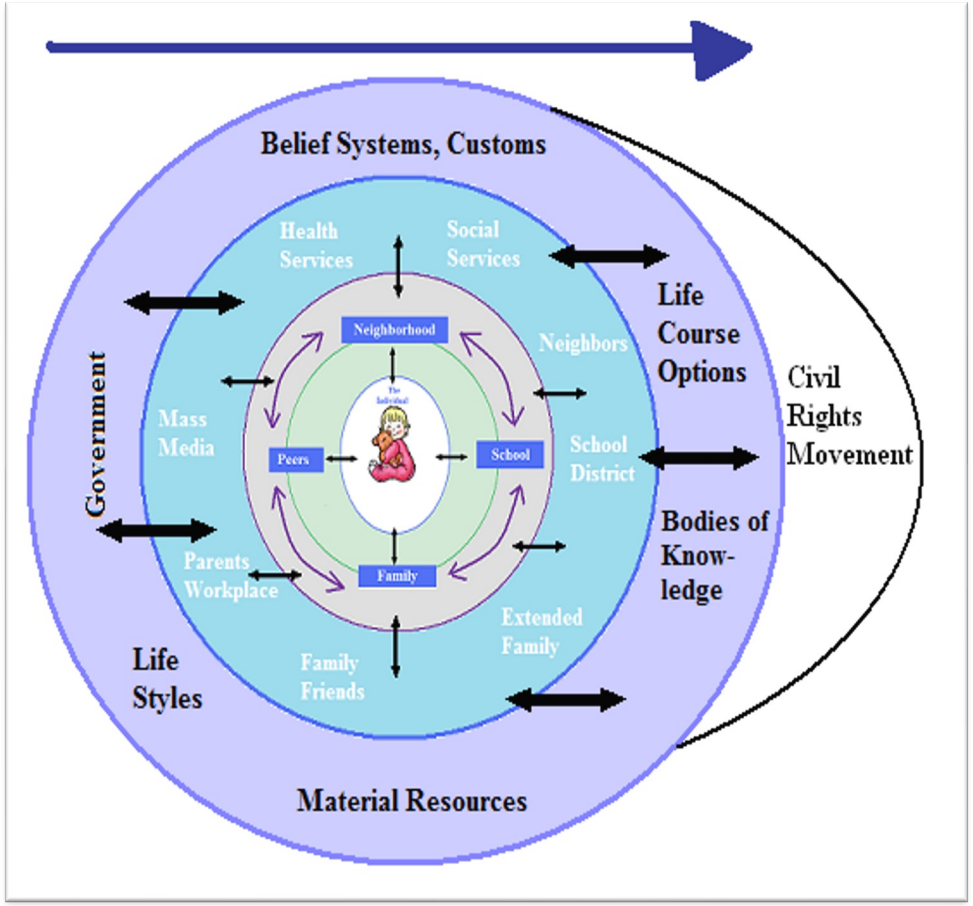
4. Macrosystem



- This focuses on how cultural elements affect child development, such as socioeconomic status, wealth, poverty, and ethnicity.
- Thus, culture that individuals are immersed within may influence their beliefs and perceptions about events that transpire in life.

5. Chrono system

- This system consists of all of the environmental changes that occur over the lifetime which influence child development; including major life transitions and historical events.
- These can include normal life transitions such as starting school, but can also include life transitions such as parents' sudden death, natural disaster and emergency situation in the country or having to move to a new house. Etc.



Classroom Application of this Theory

- The Ecological Systems Theory has been used to link psychological and educational theory to early educational curricula and practice.
- At the center of the theory is the developing child, and all that occurs within and between the five Ecological Systems.
- To strengthen the development between the Ecological Systems in educational practice according to the theory, teachers and parents should keep good communication with each other and work together to benefit the child.

Classroom Application of this Theory (Cont..)

- Teachers should also be understanding the situations their students' families may be experiencing, including social and economic factors that are part of the various systems.

- According to the theory, if parents and teachers have a good relationship, this should shape child's development in a positive way.

- Likewise, the child must also be active in their learning, engaged both academically and socially. They must work as a team with their peers and get involved in meaningful learning experiences to enable positive development (Evans, 2012).

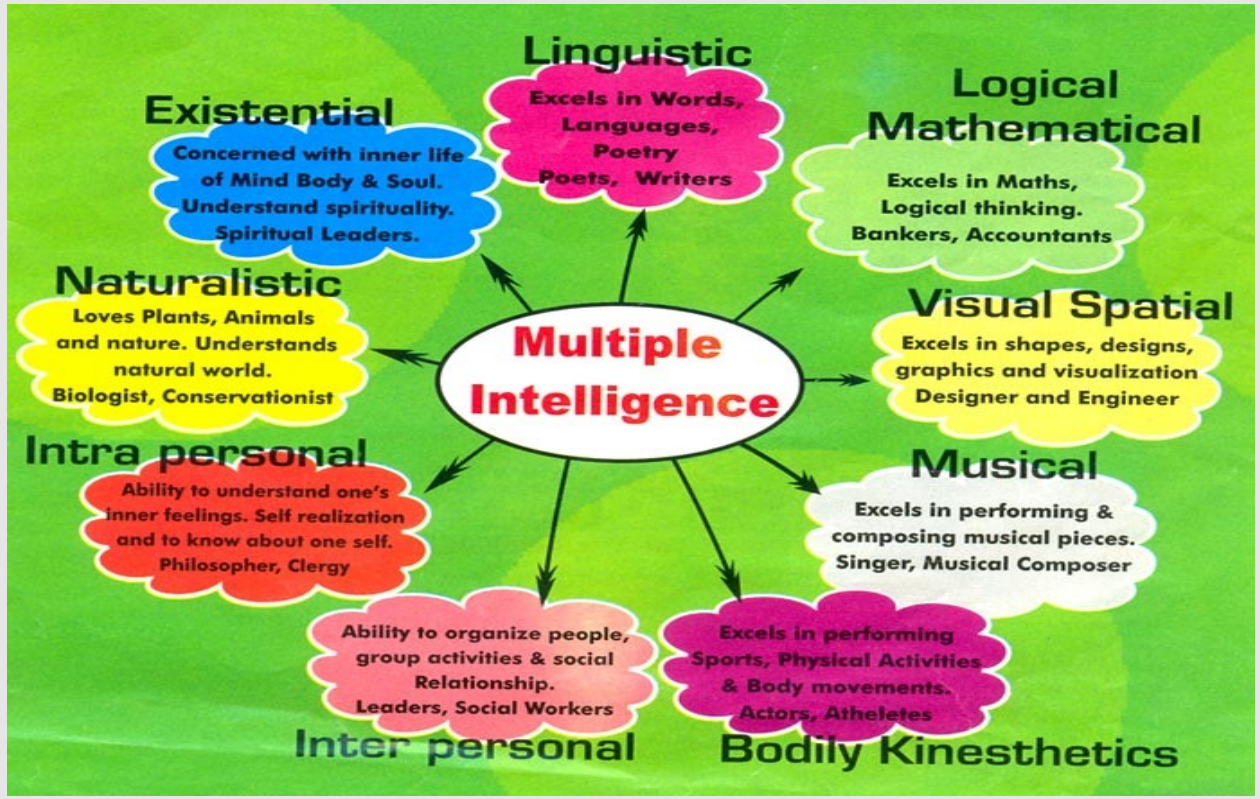
THEORY OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Founder of Multiple Intelligences

- The theory of multiple intelligences was **developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner**, in his book **'FRAMES OF MIND'.**
- He was the Professor of Education at Harvard University.
- Gardner proposes different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults.

Multiple Intelligences (Cont..)

Multiple Intelligences is a theory first posited by Harvard developmental psychologist Howard Gardner in 1983 that suggests, human intelligence can be differentiated into various modalities:



1. Visual-spatial
2. Verbal-linguistic
3. Musical-rhythmic
4. Logical-mathematical
5. Interpersonal
6. Intrapersonal
7. Naturalistic
8. Bodily-kinesthetic
9. Existential

People learn in a variety of different ways.

Multiple Intelligences

- **Multiple Intelligences Theory** describe different ways students learn and acquire information.

- These multiple intelligences range from the use of words, numbers, pictures and music, to the importance of social interactions, introspection, physical movement and being in tune with the nature.

- Accordingly, an understanding of which type(s) of intelligence a student may possess can help teachers adjust learning styles, and suggest certain career paths for learners.

Importance of Multiple Intelligences Theory

By applying the **Theory of Multiple Intelligences** in the classroom, educators take into consideration:

- the different types of learners they might have in their class,
- reinforce all types of intelligences in every student,
- and allow for an individual learning process that will ultimately enable each learner to utilize his or her specific abilities and demonstrate learning.

1. Verbal-linguistic Intelligence

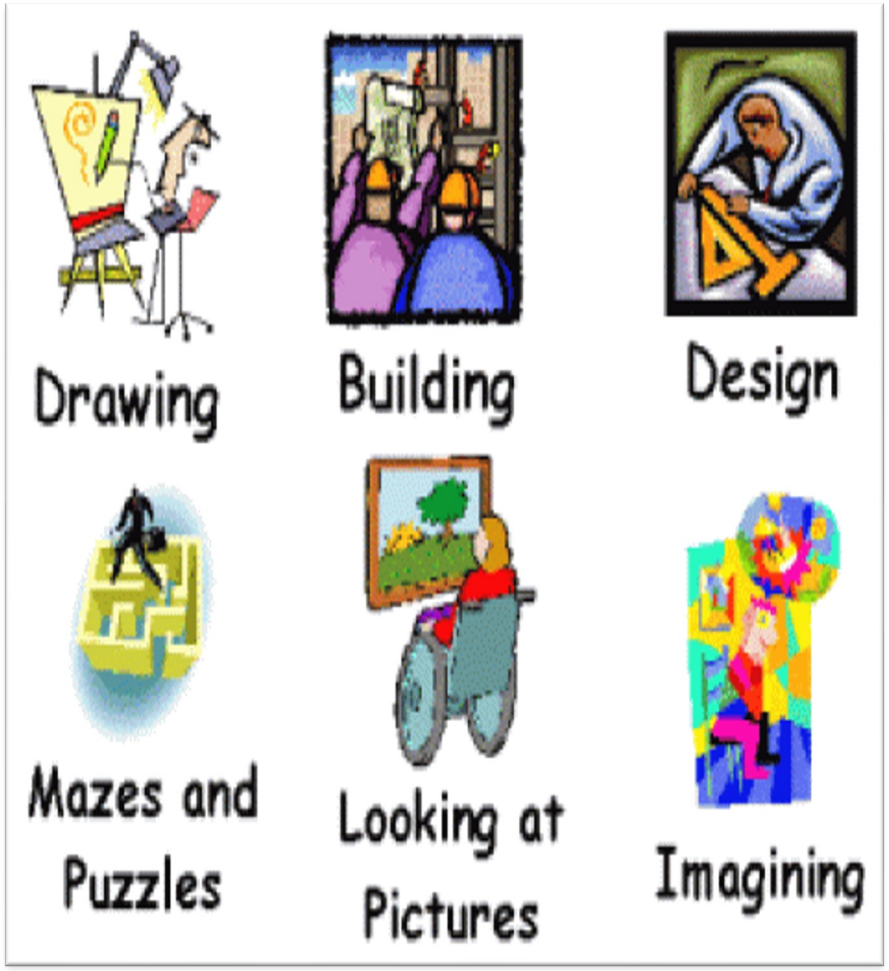
- Verbal-linguistic Intelligence or **"Word Smart"**, refers to an individual's ability to analyze information and produce work that involves oral and written language.
- It is the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings.
- This competency is evident in poets, novelists, journalists, and effective public speakers.

2. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence or **“Math Smart”**, describes the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically, make calculations, and solve abstract problems.

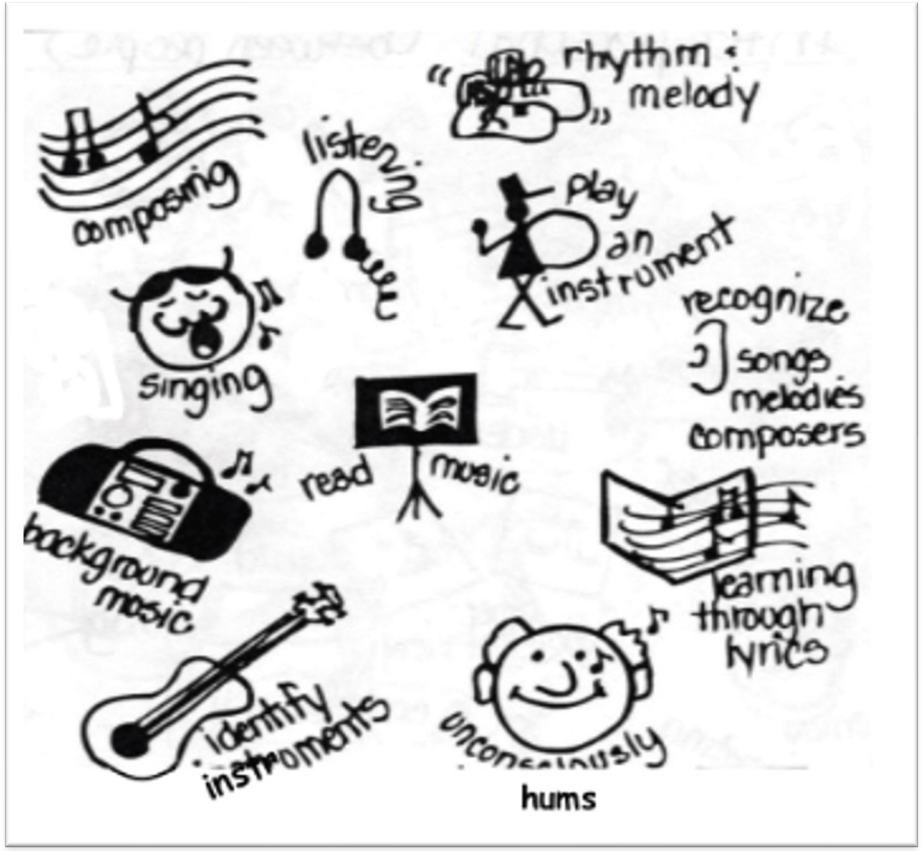
3. Visual-Spatial Intelligence

- Visual-Spatial Intelligence or **“Picture Smart”**, describes the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems, reason and to visualize concepts and space.
- Sailors, pilots, sculptors, painters, and architects all exhibit spatial intelligence.



4. Musical Intelligence

- **“Music Smart”**, involves skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns.
- It encompasses the capacity to recognize and compose musical pitch, tone, and rhythm.



5. Naturalistic Intelligence

Naturalistic Intelligence or **“Nature Smart”**, refers to the ability to identify and distinguish among different types of plants, animals, and weather formations found in the natural world. (hunters, collectors, farmers)

6. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence

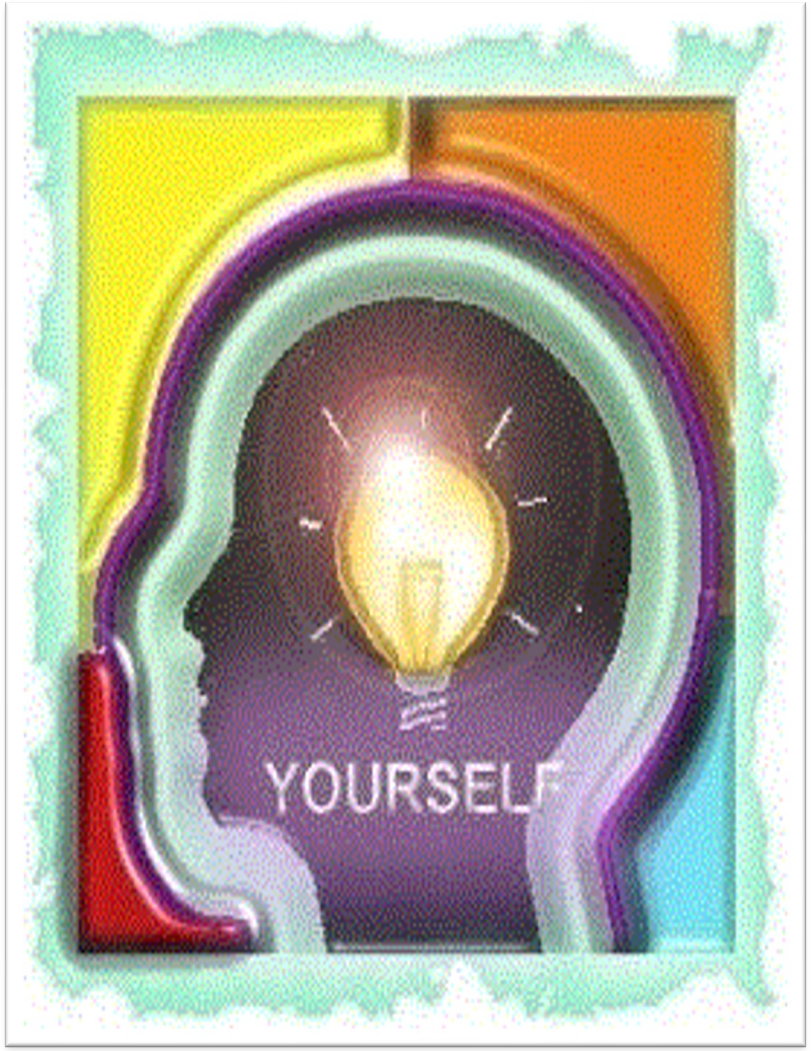
- Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence or **“Body Smart”** is the capacity to manipulate objects and use a variety of physical skills.
- This intelligence also involves a sense of timing and the perfection of skills through mind–body union.
- Athletes, dancers, surgeons, and crafts people exhibit well-developed bodily kinesthetic intelligence.

7. Interpersonal Intelligence

- Interpersonal Intelligence or **“People Smart”**, It is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others.
- It involves effective verbal and nonverbal communication.
- It reflects an ability to recognize and understand other people’s moods, desires, motivations, and intentions.
- Teachers, social workers, actors, and politicians all exhibit interpersonal intelligence.

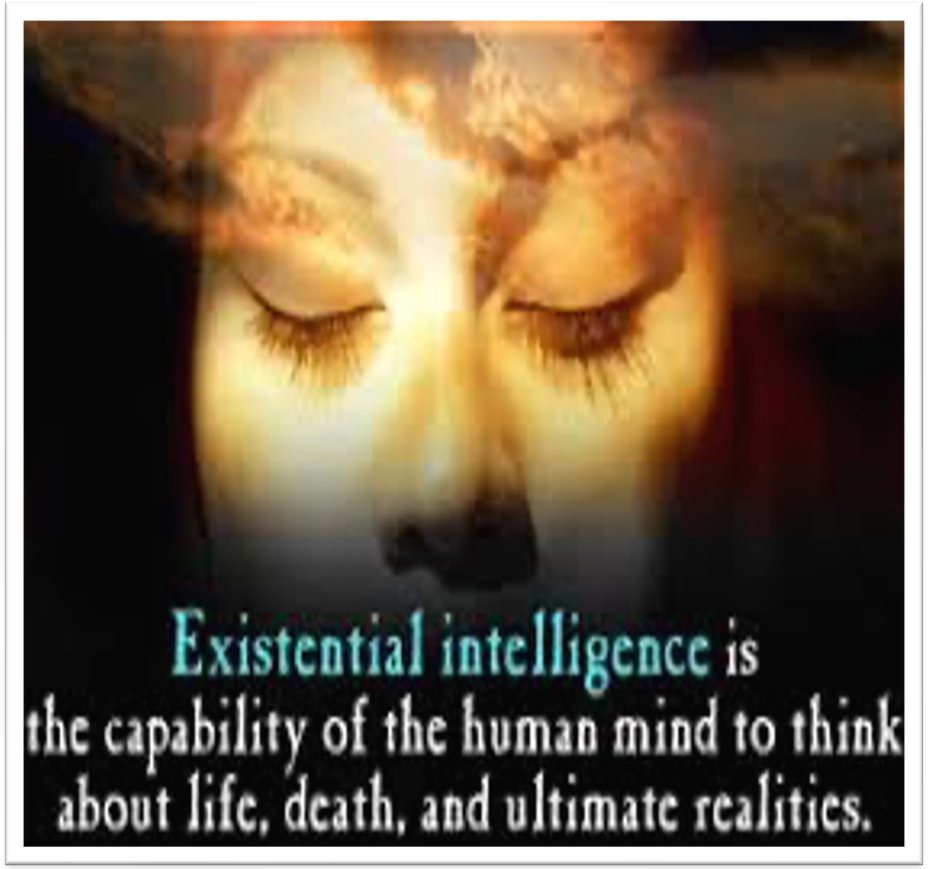
8. Intrapersonal Intelligence

- Intrapersonal Intelligence or **“Self Smart”**, is the capacity to understand oneself and one’s thoughts and feelings, and to use such knowledge in planning and directing one’s life.
- Intra-personal intelligence involves not only an appreciation of the self, but also of the human condition.
- It is evident in psychologist, spiritual leaders, and philosophers.



9. Existential Intelligence

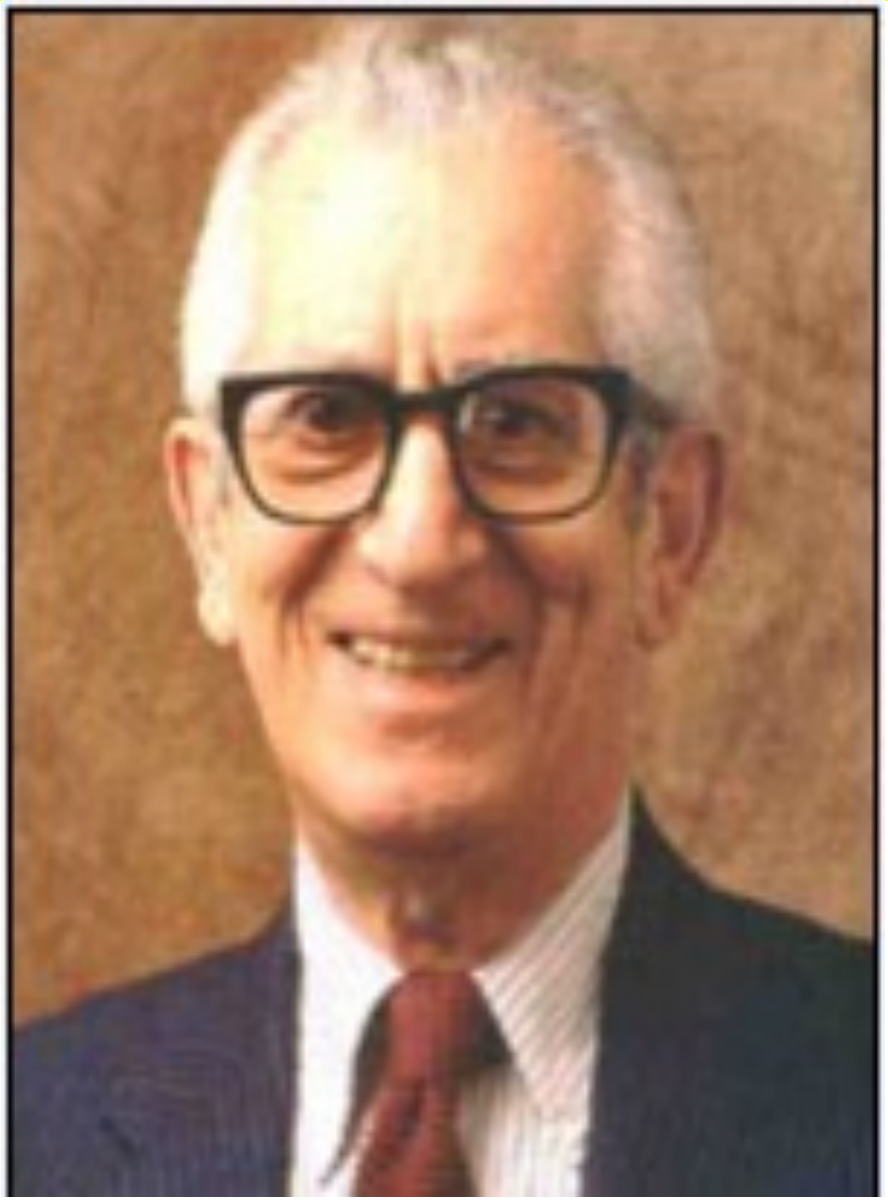
Existential Intelligence or "**Life Smart**" sensitivity is the capacity to tackle deep questions about human existence, such as the meaning of life, why we die, and how did we get here (ecology, existentism).



BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

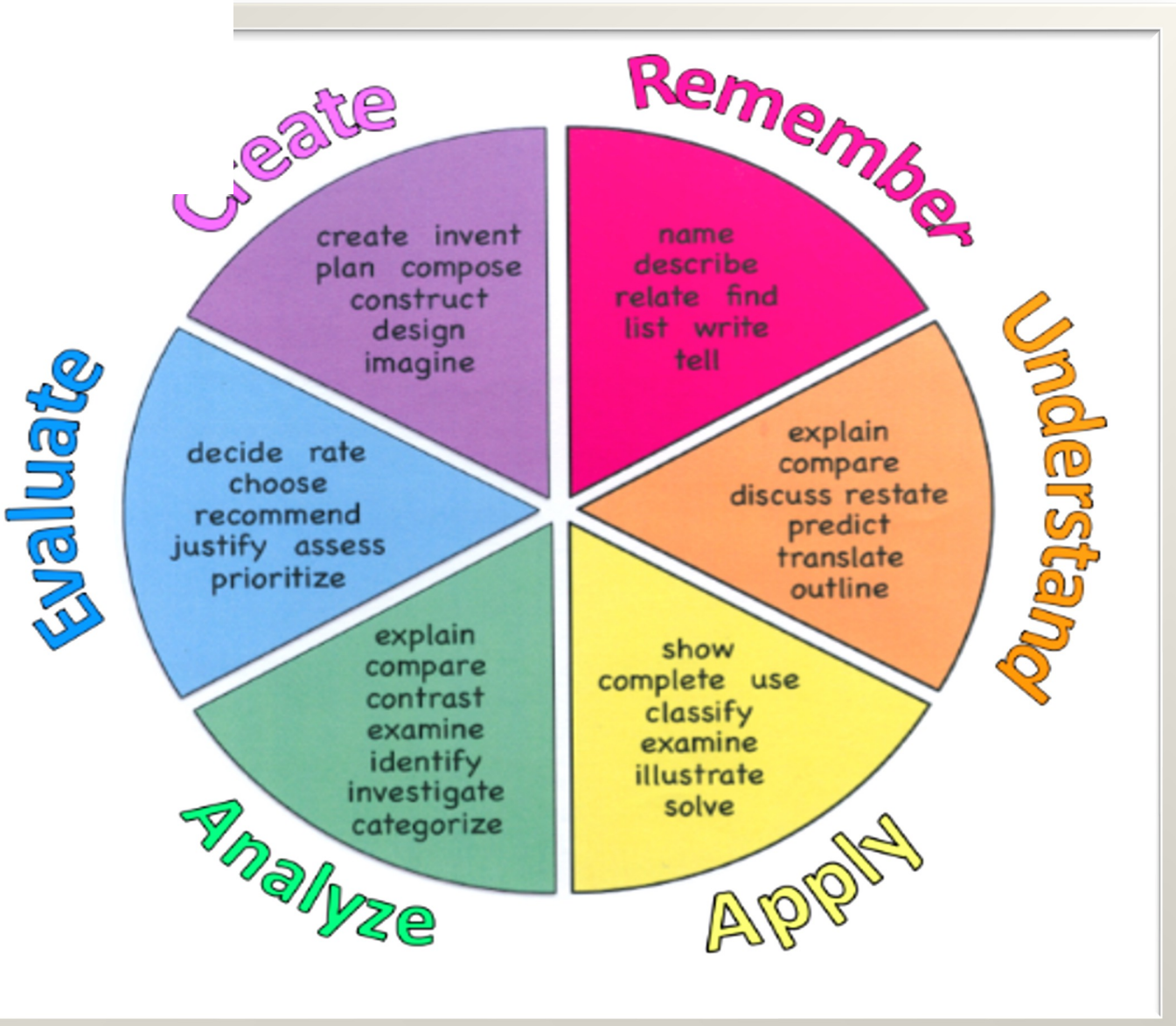
Founder of Bloom's Taxonomy

Benjamin Samuel **Bloo m** (1913 –1999) was an American educational psychologist who made contributions to the classification educational objectives and to the theory of mastery learning.

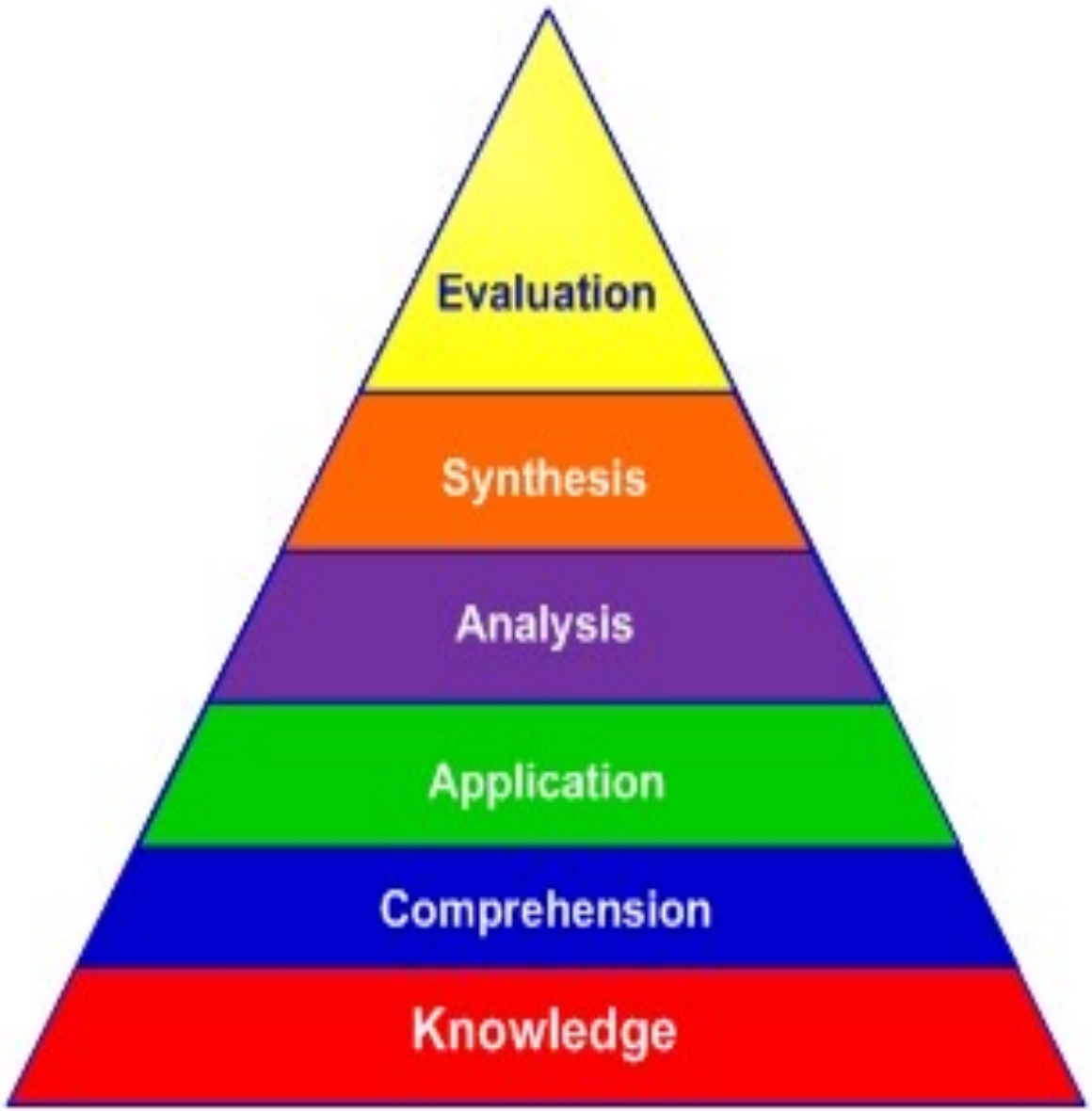


In 1956, Bloom edited the first volume of The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, which classified learning objectives according to a rubric that has come to be known as Bloom's Taxonomy.

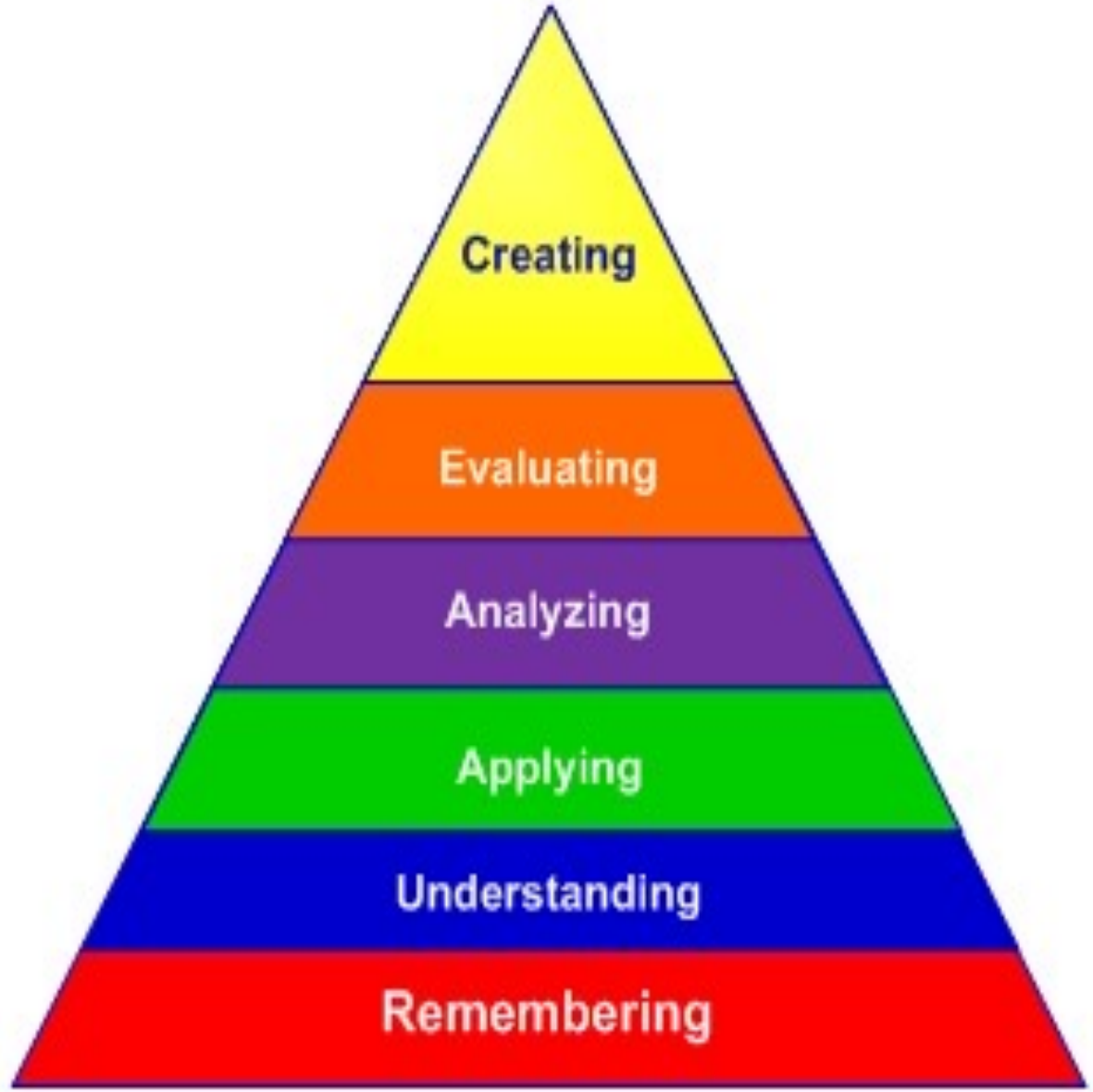
Blooms Taxonomy



Blooms Taxonomy



Blooms Taxonomy - Revised

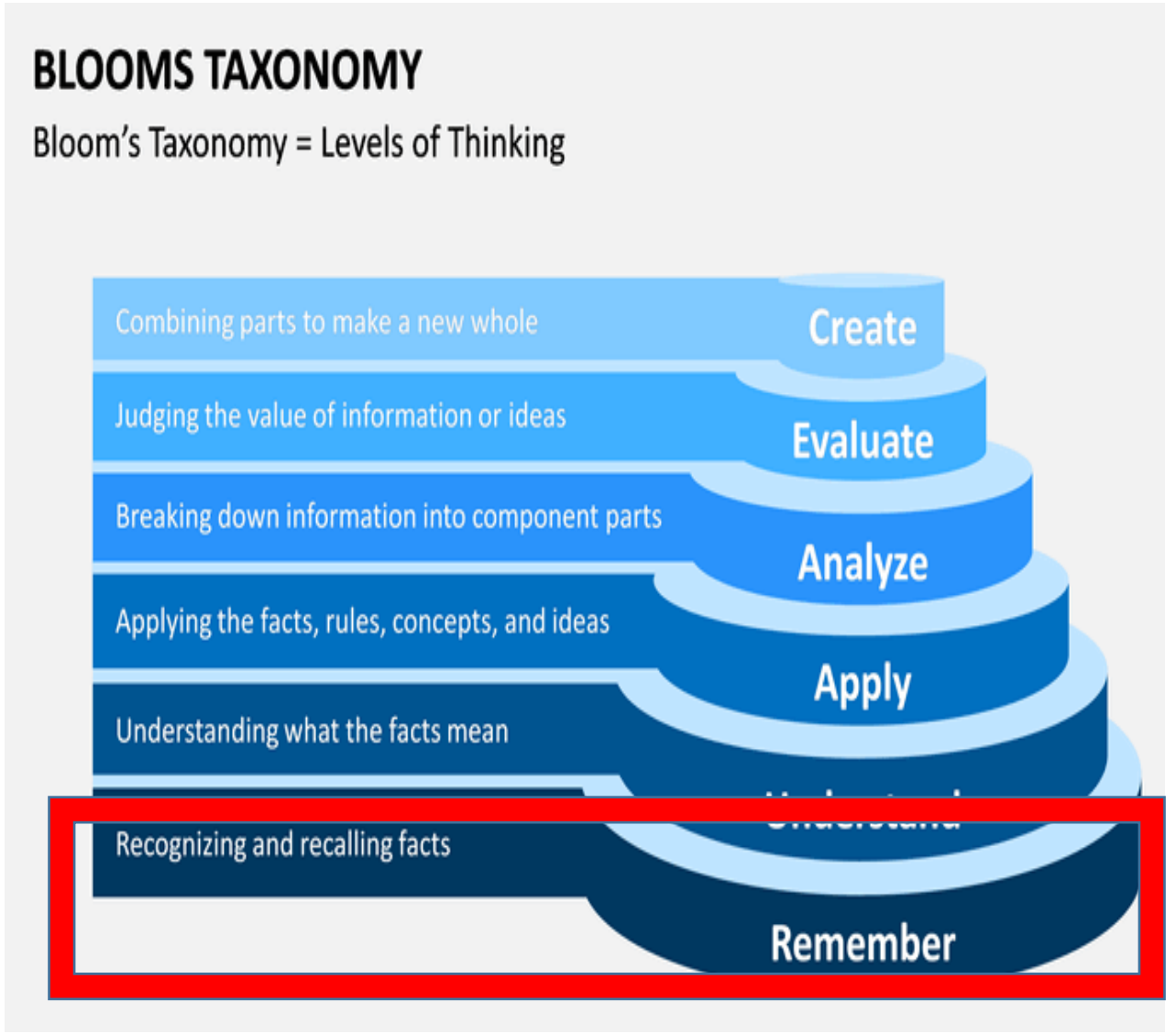


1. Knowledge/Remembering

- Things we usually remember and can easily recall.

<u>For Examples:</u>

  - What is your name?
  - What is your reading assignment for next week?
  - When is your next test?

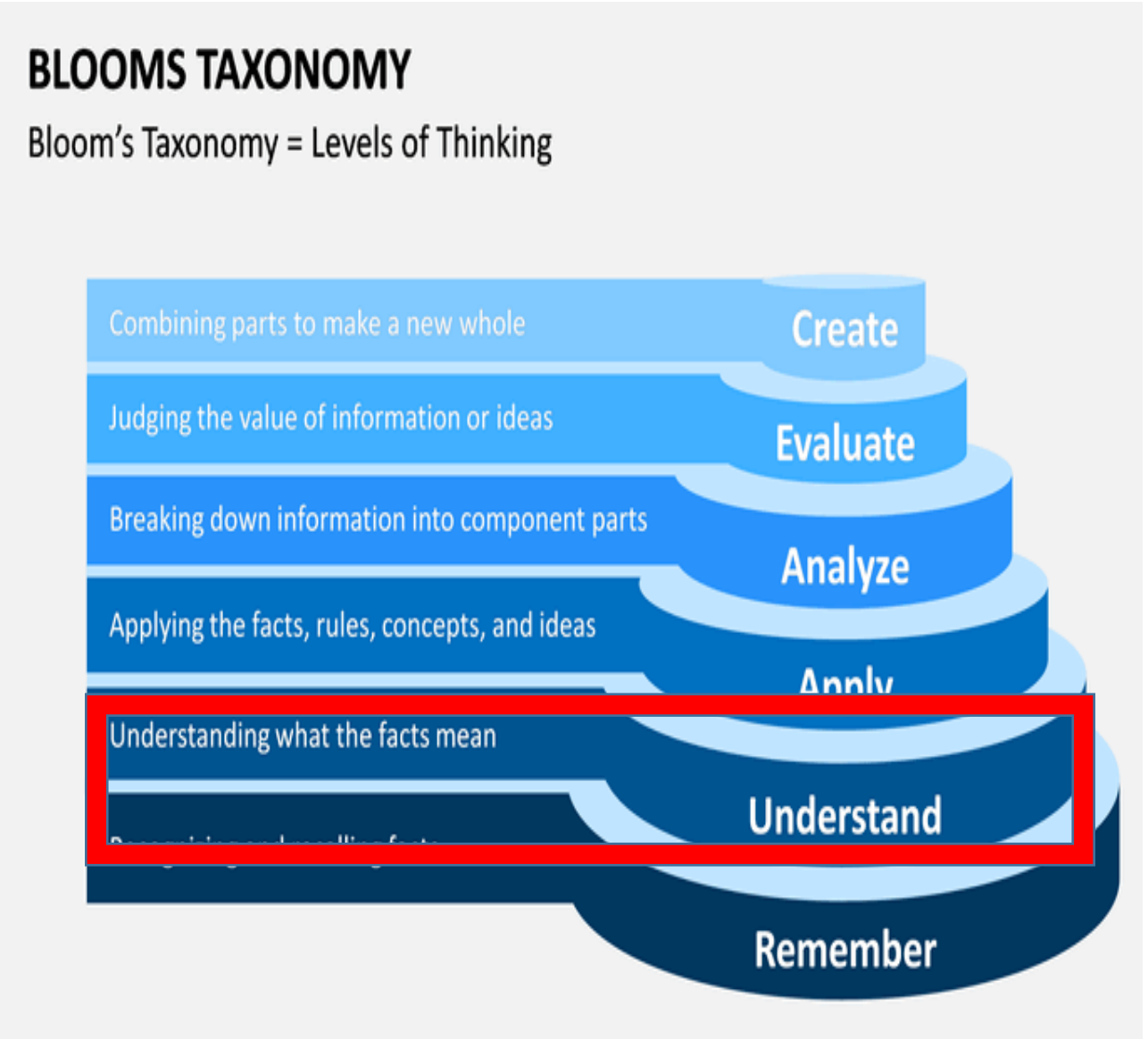


2. Comprehension/Understanding

- Moving towards in-depth understanding and being able to construct meaning.
- Expand on simple memorization to create a bigger “picture”.

<u>For Example:</u>

- Describe the story in your own words.
- What type of texts are you reading?
- Describe the disagreement between the two characters of the story.

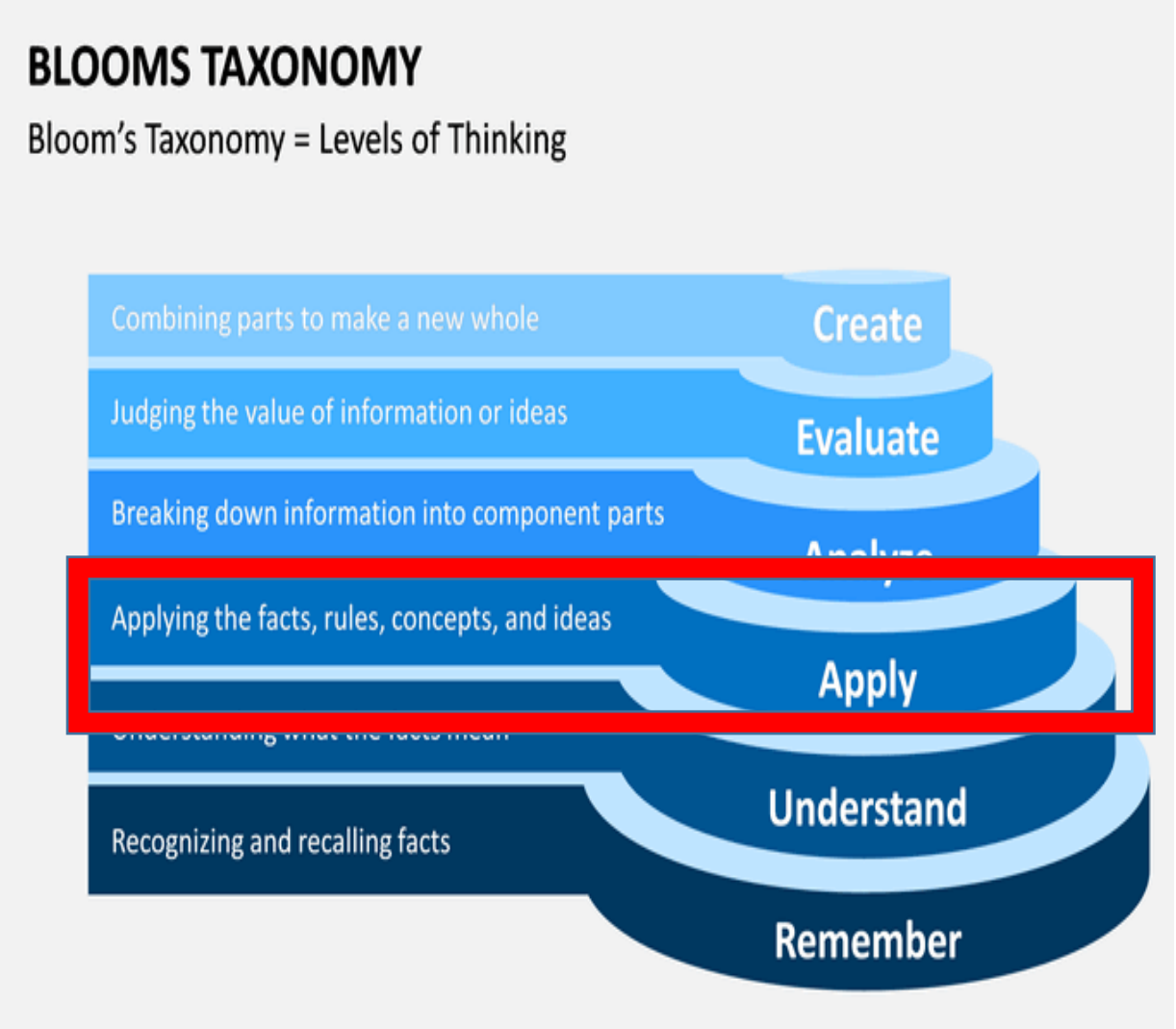


3. Application/Applying

- Put your knowledge to use.
- Implement your understanding.

For Examples:

- What do other schools tend to borrow from Netherland's education system?
- How can you apply this knowledge to a situation or problem?

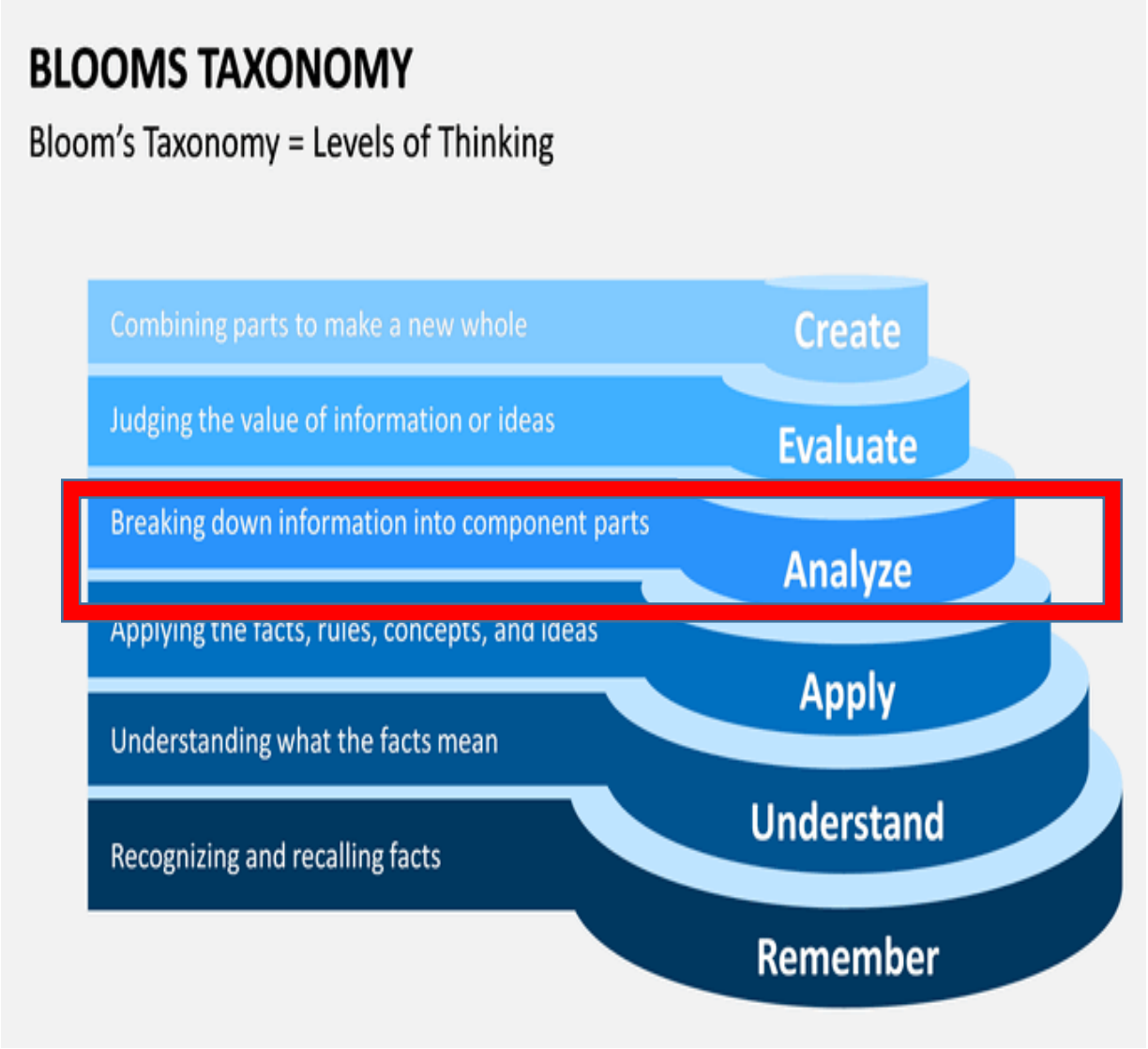


4. Analysis/Analyzing

- Analysis requires you to:
  - Examine what you know.
  - Determine how do concepts relate to one another.
  - Be able to answer multi-faceted questions

<u>For Examples:</u>

- Why few private school systems are financially successful?
- Has technology played any role in moral decline?

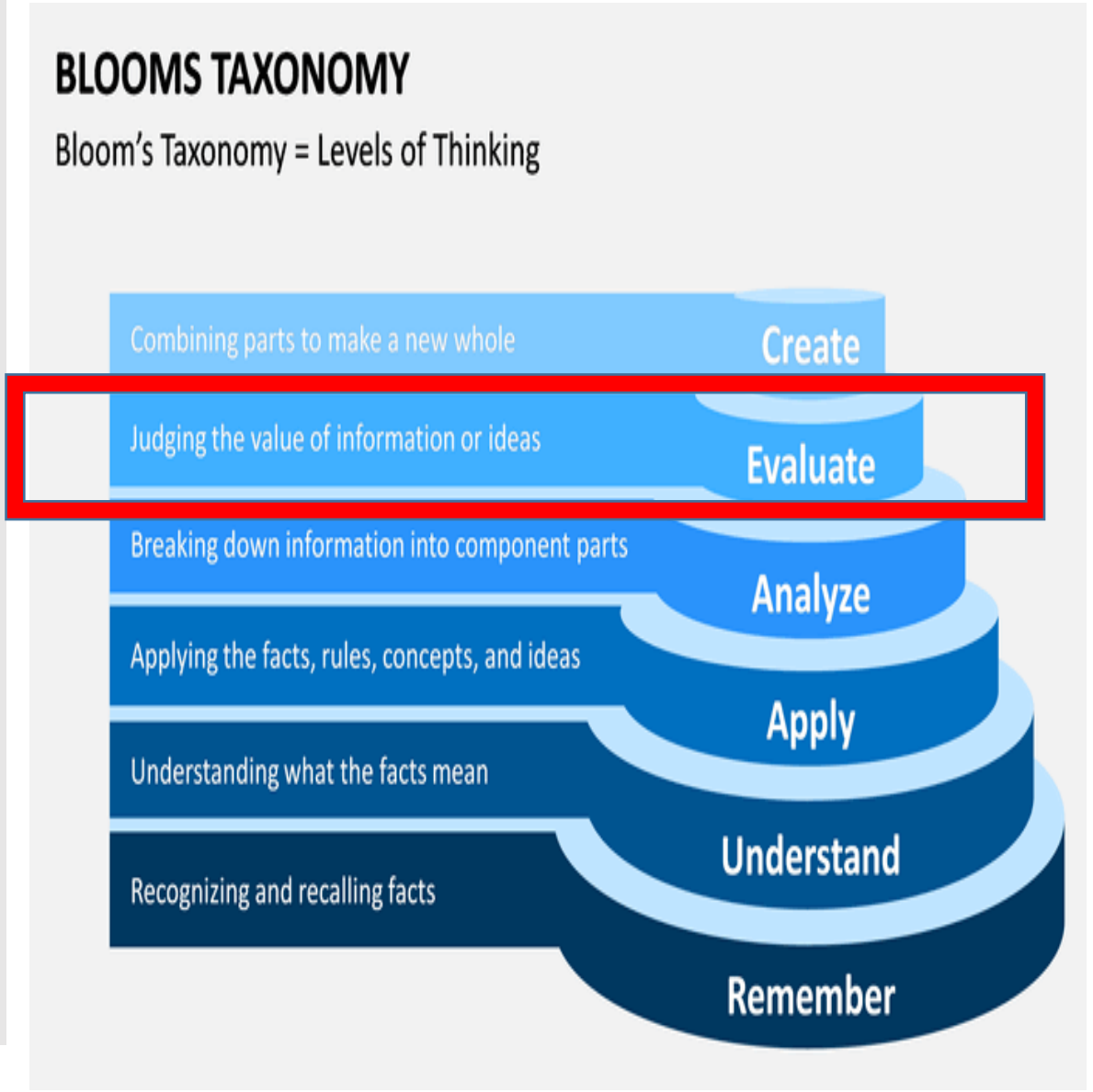


5. Synthesis/ Evaluating

- Bringing all the pieces together.
- Judgments or assumptions after we've critiqued the information.

<u>For Example:</u>

- What types of storylines are popular with children?
- What are the unique characteristics of that type of audiences? Why are they unique?
- What is the difference between advertisements being designed for children today by television channels than they did 20 years ago?

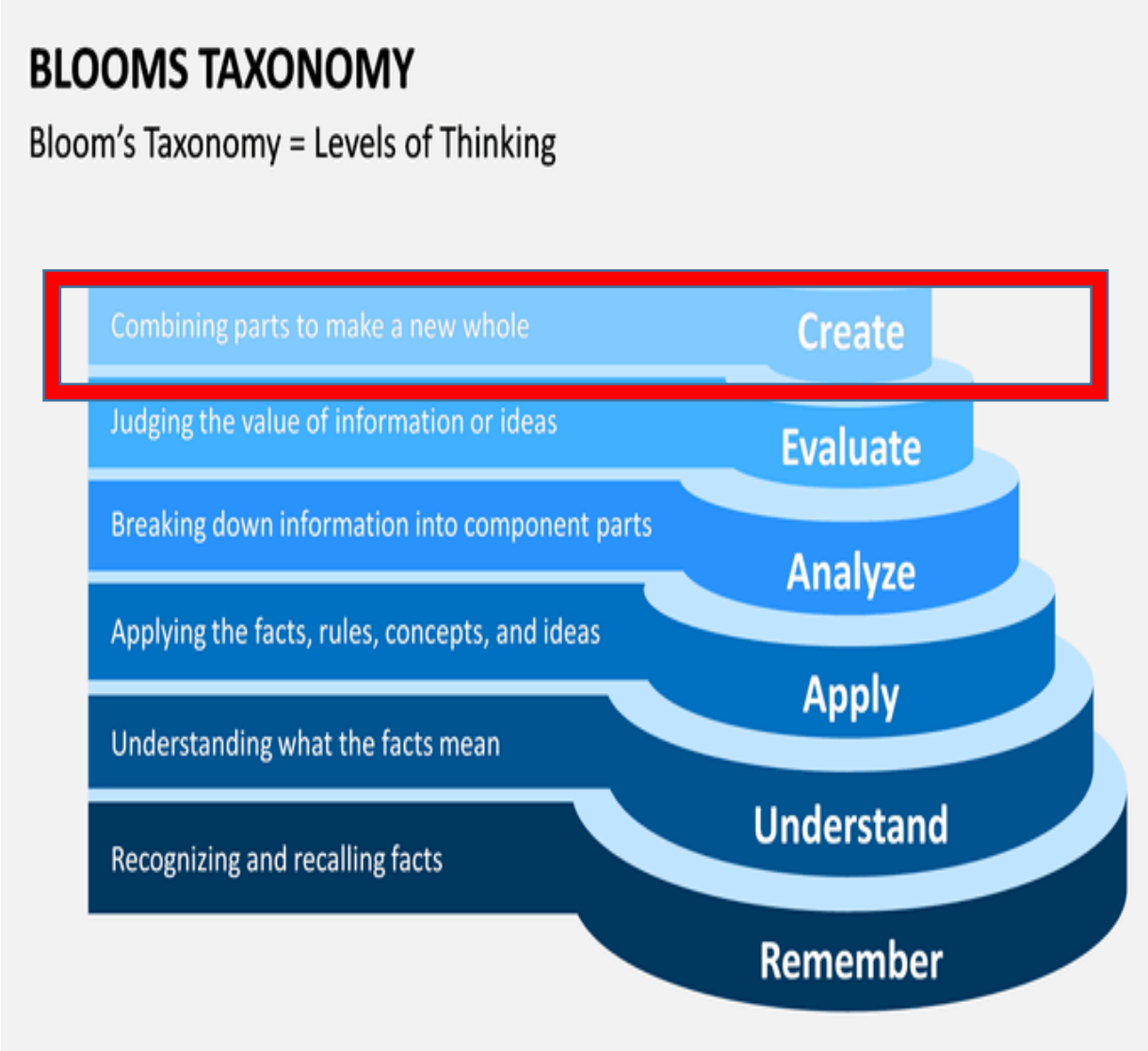


6. Creating

Create something based on all the previous stages of Bloom's Taxonomy:

<u>For Examples:</u>

- Make a poster on pollution
- Create a project or programme.
- Create a toy using play dough or blocks



Blooms Taxonomy

1 Knowledge- What is an apple?

KNOW

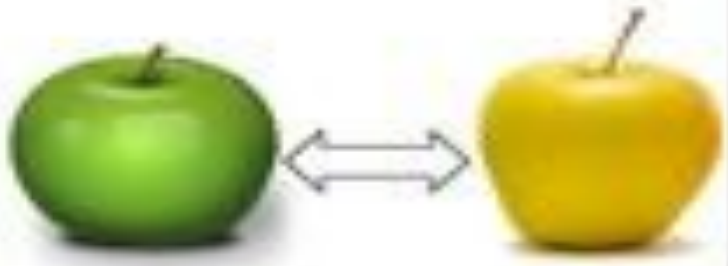
2 Comprehension- Do you understand how an apple grows?

SHOW

3 Application- Can you use apples?

DO

4 Analysis- Can you compare apples?



COMPARE

5 Synthesis- Can you invent a new kind of apple sauce?

CREATE

6 Evaluation- Which type of apples are the best?

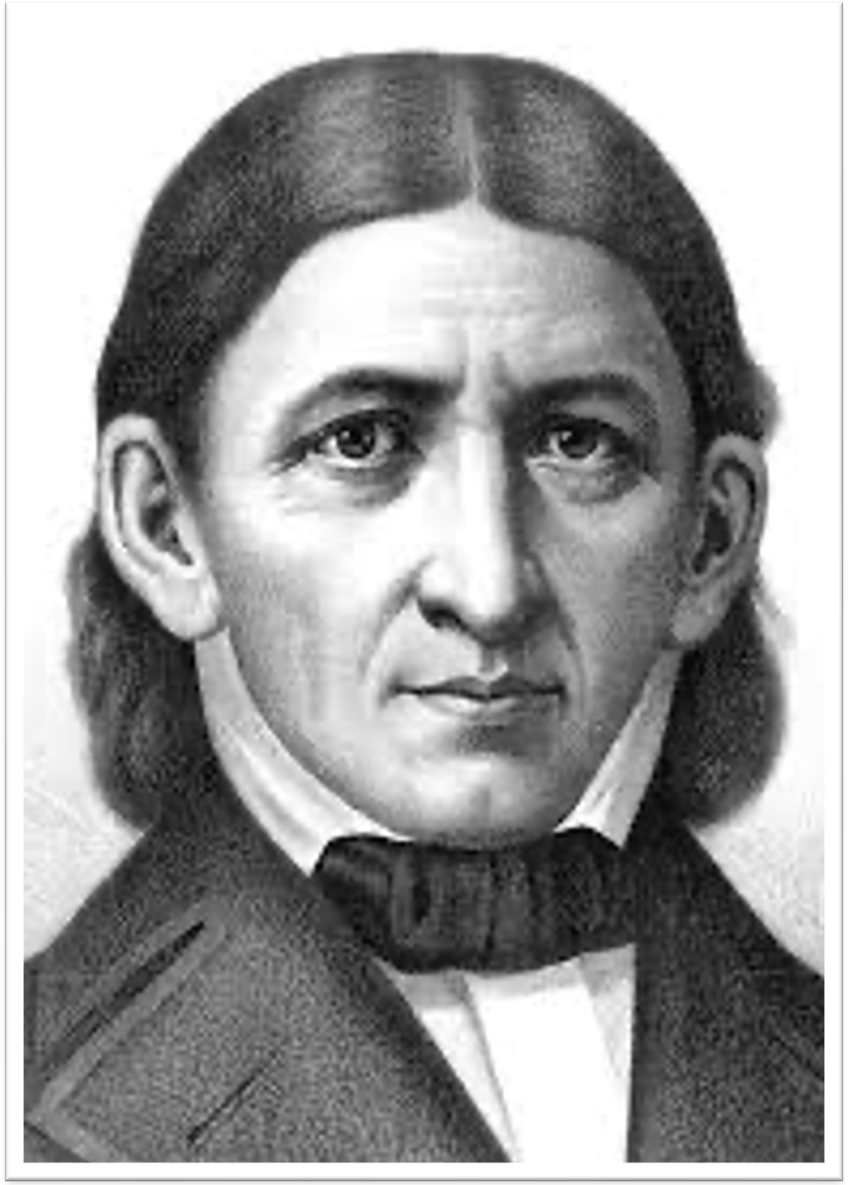
JUDGE

FROEBEL KINDERGARTEN APPROACH

Founder of Kindergarten Approach

Friedrich Frobel was a German educator and the founder of Kindergarten in 1837.

He founded his own school called “Kindergarten”.



GOALS OF KINDERGARTEN APPROACH:

- Physical activity
- The development of sensory awareness and physical dexterity
- Creative expression
- Exploration of ideas and concepts
- The pleasure of singing
- The experience of living among others
- Satisfaction of the soul

About Froebel Kindergarten

- Friedrich Frobel was a German educator and the founder of Kindergarten
- Froebel believed that humans are productive and creative. Achievement comes through developing these in harmony with God and the world.
- As a result, Froebel wanted to encourage the creation of educational environments that involved practical work and the direct use of materials. He believed that a person understanding gets unfolded through engaging with the world.
- He argued that the ability to imagine a different future is what separates humans from other animals, and that creativity and corresponding play activities are how children make meaning of their environments and develop their imaginations.
- Froebel insisted that learning must start with the concrete and move to the more abstract, because perceptual ability develops before abstract thinking skills.

Froebel Kindergarten: The Strategies

- Free Play
- Music
- Art
- Literacy Development
- Social Interactions
- Field Trips.

MARIA MONTESSORI APPROACH

Founder of Montessori Approach

The approach is originated by Maria Montessori (1870-1952), an Italian teacher and physician.

Five Principles of Montessori Approach:

- Respect for the Child
- The Absorbent Mind
- Sensitive Periods
- The Prepared Environment
- Auto Education

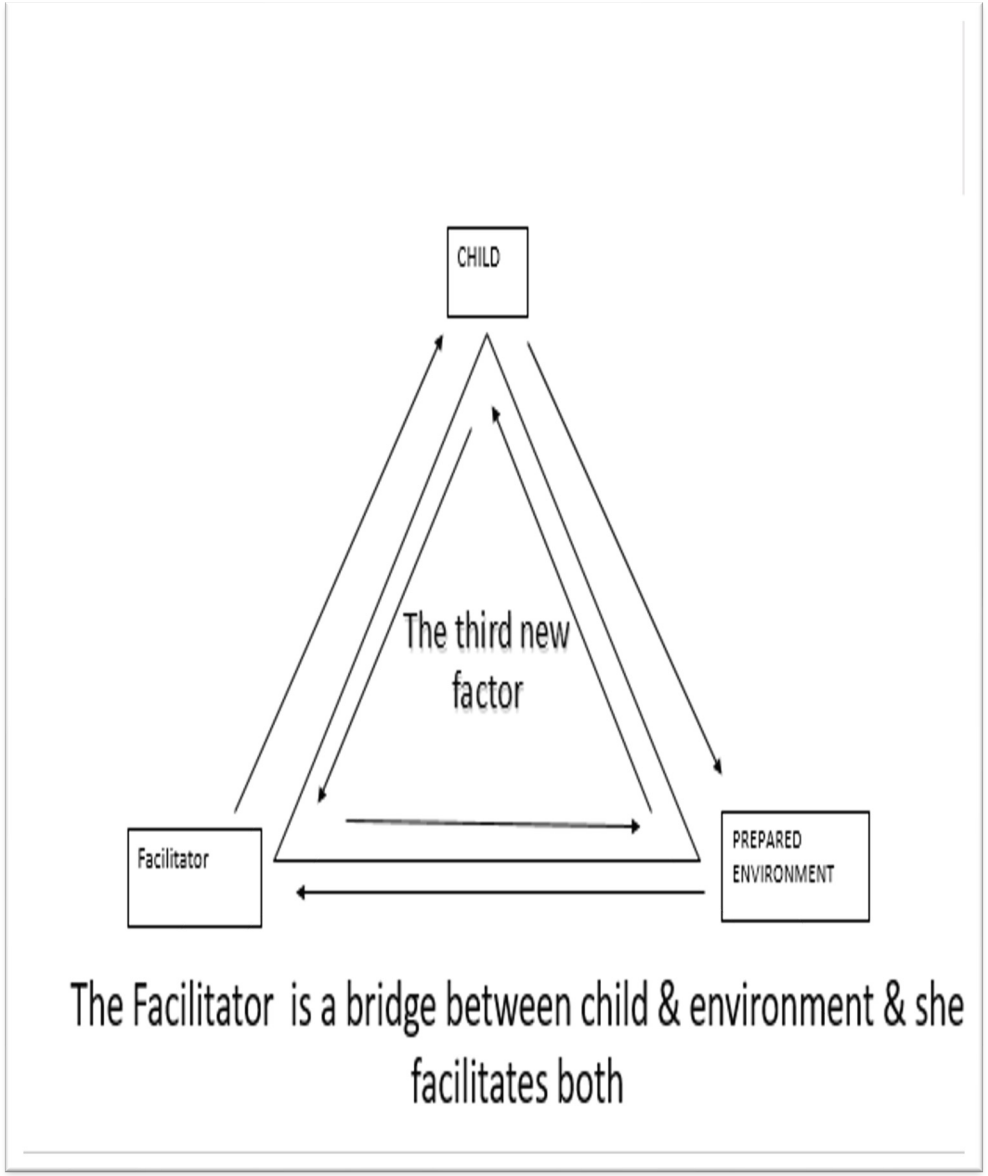
Maria Montessori Approach

- The Montessori Method is an approach to learning which emphasizes active learning, independence, cooperation and learning in harmony with each child's unique pace of development.
- The Montessori Method is an approach to education which emphasizes individuality and independence in learning.
- Children are seen as inherently curious and learning driven. Education is viewed as a process which should occur in harmony with the child's individual developmental pace.
- It is a holistic approach emphasizing all aspects of development, rather than on attaining specific pieces of information.

Key Areas of Montessori Method

1. Exercises of Practical Life
2. Language
3. Mathematics
4. Sensorial Learning
5. Cultural Learning

Relationship among Montessori Components



Montessori Facilitator

+

Prepared/ digital environment

+

Child

(The relationship between the Montessori Facilitator, Child, and the Prepared Environment).

Montessori Classroom Environment- (Video)

Salient Features

- Scientifically programmed preparation, practice, precision, and perfection
- Movement, activity, and work
- Freedom and spontaneity
- Prepared environment
- Sensitive periods
- Discovery and development
- The child as adult-to-be
- To know, love, and serve

REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH

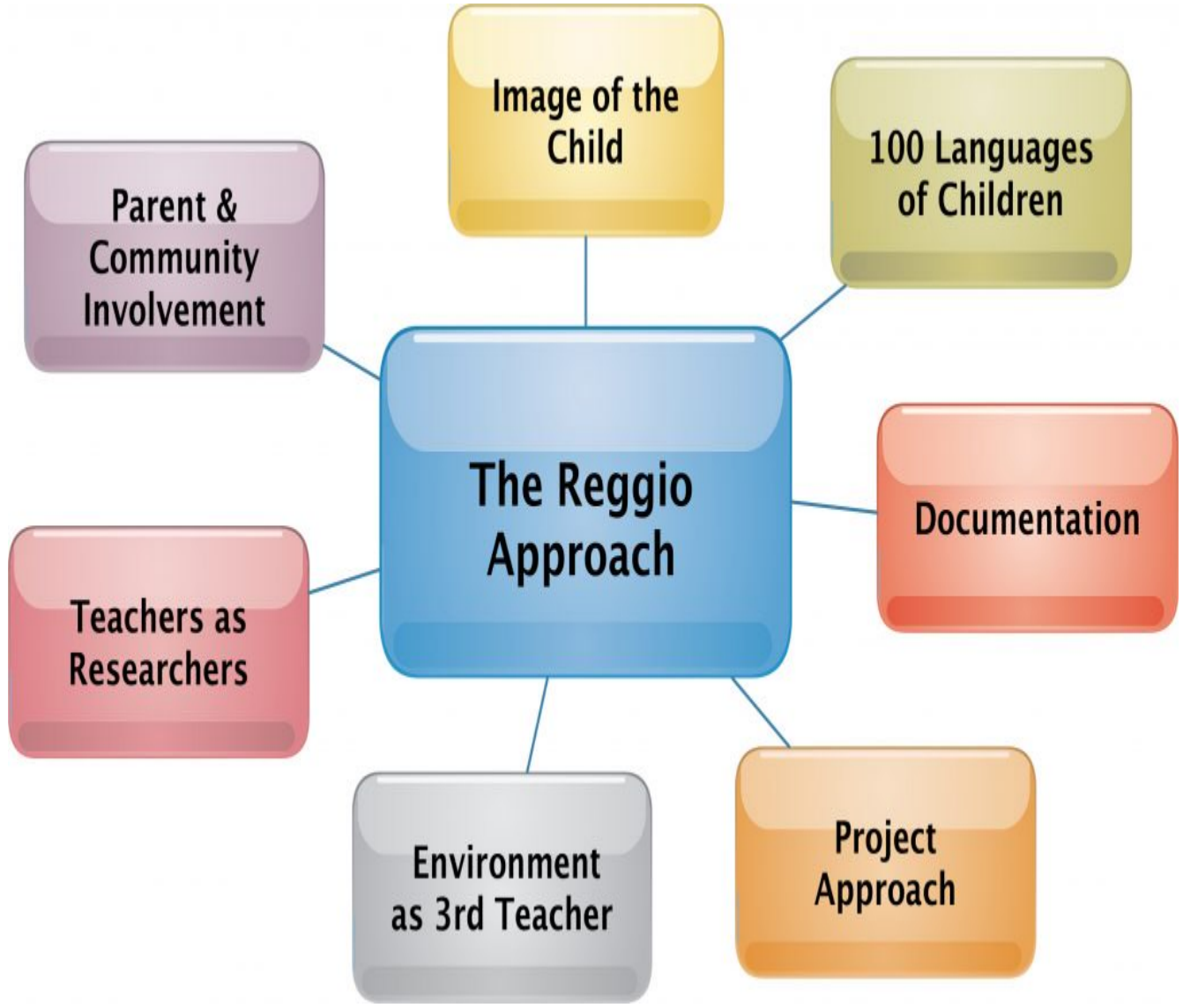
Founder Reggio Emilia Approach

In its founding, Reggio Emilia was deeply woven into the fabric of the local government, community, and people. It was first developed after the conclusion of World War II (1945 onwards) by psychologist **Loris Malaguzzi** and parents in the surrounding area of Reggio Emilia in Italy, where the philosophy gets its name.

Reggio Emilia Approach

The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational philosophy and pedagogy focused on:

- Child-centered
- Constructivist self-guided curriculum
- Self-directed,
- Experiential learning in relationship-driven environments.



Reggio Emilia Philosophy

The Reggio Emilia philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

- Children must have some control over the direction of their learning;
- Children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing;
- Children have a relationship with other children and with material items in the world that they must be allowed to explore;
- Children must have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves.

Reggio Emilia (Video)

HIGH SCOPE APPROACH

High-Scope Founder

The High Scope approach was designed by **David Weikart** (1931-2003) and colleagues, beginning in 1962.

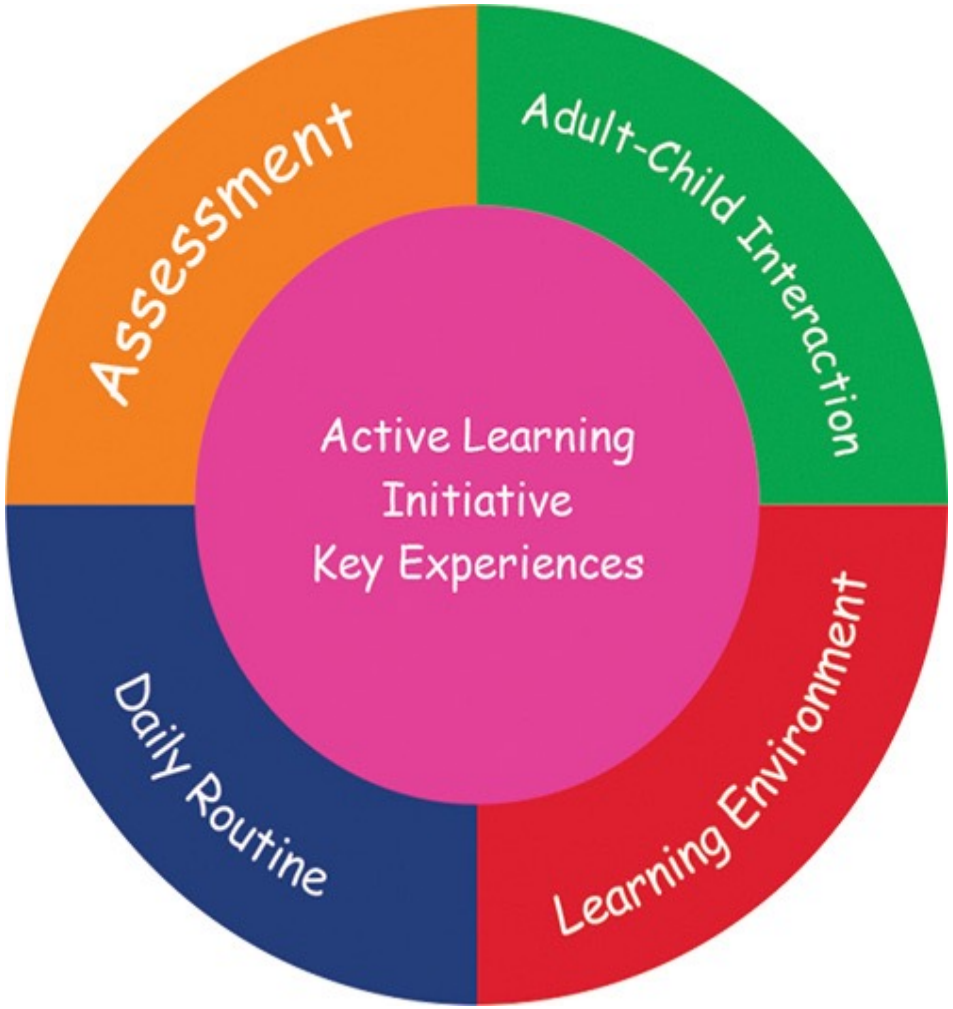
Key features of the High-Scope Approach

The High/Scope Curriculum is based on the child development ideas that children learn better when they are actively engaged.

- High/Scope teachers emphasize the broad cognitive, social, and physical abilities that are important for all children, instead of focusing on a child's deficits.

- High/Scope teachers identify the developmental milestones of the child and then provide a rich range of experiences appropriate for that level.

Key Developmental Elements



Role of Teacher in High Scope

- In the High/Scope curriculum the role of the teacher is to support and extend the children's learning by observing and listening, asking appropriate question and by scaffolding learning experiences.

- They plan their programme based on children's interests using the Key Developmental Indicators as a focus.

High Scope- Daily Routine

- A consistent and flexible daily routine which provides for child and adult initiated activities.
- Opportunities to choose, plan, carry out and reflect on their activities.
- Opportunities for children to engage in the active participatory learning process.

High Scope- Partnership Approach

- Adults who value and appreciate children and provide a creative and supportive learning climate.

- High Scope promotes family involvement through a partnership approach to child care and education with an ongoing exchange of information between the family and the setting. Curriculum-based workshops are used to support families and to promote children's development at home.

Benefits of High Scope Approach

- Children develop self-confidence, initiative, creativity and problem-solving skills through purposeful play.
- Children learn about social relationships, the world about them, math, science and technology, reasoning and language.
- Children develop positive attitudes to self, others and to future learning.
- Well-prepared teachers support and extend each child's learning based on their developmental levels, so children enter school ready and eager to learn.

Links to Resources Used

https://www.verywellmind.com/gardners-theory-of-multiple-intelligences-2795161

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrC_pbHLdxc

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPeQEDStmYU

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