



# December GATE Group



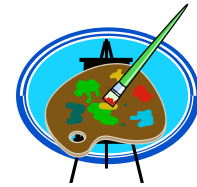
## Survey Your Smarts



Dear Parents,

Our topic for "GATE Group" this month was: "Surveying Your Smarts." For this topic, I actually did a "read aloud" with the students! It was great fun using the children's book, "Mrs. Spitzer's Garden", by Edith Pattou. In essence this author wrote about how Mrs. Spitzer, a flower gardener, cared for her flowers. She helped each unique flower to grow so that each could be the most beautiful. The author used many analogies in this book, and it was the student's job to make connections. Some of the questions that I asked as I read were:

- How is Mrs. Spitzer's garden like a classroom?
- How are the flowers like students?
- Why did the author choose to tell her story through flowers rather than children?
- What "weeds and pests" might affect your learning?
- What type of flower are you? Why?
- What are your own individual strengths and weaknesses as a learner?



The author's purpose in writing this book was for children to have respect for, appreciation of, and sensitivity to individuals' differences. The style of writing was perfect for our discussion, and we moved right into the survey part of our session.

I had the students take a survey entitled: "How I Learn Best". Each student had to read statements that were listed under these categories: *Word Smart, Number Smart, Self Smart, Art Smart, Song Smart, Body Smart, People Smart*, and then check the "yes" or "no" box near these statements that described them the best. (A similar survey can be found by going to this link:

<http://www.hasd.org/curriculum/learningstyleinventoryprimary.cfm> )



When the students finished completing the survey, I had them analyze their results to see in what areas they seem to have strengths, and in what areas they may seem to be weaker. I shared with them that both the strengths and weaknesses may change, but for right now, they can look at their "Smarts" and see how they learn best. I also emphasized to the students that each person can have "Smarts" in more than one area; it's just that this survey gives them an initial indicator of what type of learner they are right now, and what they seem to have a high interest in. I also made sure that the students understood that it is very rare to be "Smart" in every area, and that because we are all different; it provides us with a reason to lean on others to do group work and to cooperate with. Making sure that your children didn't feel badly about their weaknesses was also a main goal as we discussed their survey results.

I think your children came away from our GATE Group session knowing just a little more about themselves as learners, and how being different from others can be an asset, not a hindrance!!



Ask your child to show you the survey, and see what they found out about themselves!! And better yet, take the survey yourself and see what you learn. Here is a link to a more "adult" version of the survey.

<http://www.hasd.org/curriculum/learningstyleinventorysecondary.cfm>

I hope you have a great December!!

Mrs. B. 😊😊

