

Gardner [Gardner, H. (2006-this issue). On failing to grasp the core of MI theory: A response to Visser et al. Intelligence] criticized some aspects of our empirical examination [Visser, B. A., Ashton, M. C., & Vernon, P. A. (2006-this issue). Beyond g: Putting multiple intelligences theory to the test. Intelligence] of his “Theory of Multiple Intelligences”. Specifically, Gardner questioned the construct validity of g, and suggested that the measures we used to test his theory were contaminated with verbal and logical demands. In this reply, we explain that the construct validity of g is well established, pointing out (a) that g is expressed in a wide variety of tasks (not all of which are “school-like” tasks), (b) that g predicts many important criterion variables (not only academic achievement), and (c) that g has a well-established biological basis. With regard to the measures used in our study, we point out that the verbal content of those tasks is unlikely to contribute to individual differences in task performance, and that the logical content of those tasks is consistent with Gardner's description of his intelligence domains.

Gardner states that we have failed to grasp the core of MI theory, and perhaps in some sense he is right: it remains unclear to us what it is that MI theory can explain about intelligence, above and beyond what has already long been known. Gardner could clarify this “core” for us, by providing falsifiable, testable, MI based hypotheses that would predict results different from those predicted by existing models of the structure of mental abilities. We encourage Gardner to provide “intelligence-fair” measures for his eight “intelligences” – tasks involving no extraneous personality, emotional, or sensory acuity content – so that MI theory can again be put to the test.