Student Learning Styles – An Introduction

Students have many different learning styles. This template provides a self-assessment, titled How do I learn best? that helps students identify the learning style that works best for them. It also helps them identify strategies for improving study skills and schoolwork.

Teachers can use the Learning Styles Table for Teachers to identify instructional techniques for engaging all their students.

### Tips for using the learning styles self-assessment with students:

As a mini-lesson or as a homework assignment, have students complete How do I Learn Best? Part One and then Part Two.

- Ask the students:

  What stories or examples from your life show how you learn best?

  Do you see connections between your extracurricular activities and your learning styles?

- Then, have students select two or three learning strategies for their schoolwork over the next two weeks.

- Over the next two weeks, have students record what strategies they used and when.

- At the end of two weeks, have a class discussion or a student conference in which students assess which strategies helped them.

- Have students interview one another about their learning styles. Help students develop questions to investigate why a partner might learn best in a certain way and to identify specific examples that demonstrate this student’s learning style. Have students describe connections between their partner’s extracurricular interests and his or her learning style.

- Using the strategies in the table as a guide, have students come up with other strategies that would complement their learning styles and improve their study habits even more.

### Using this template

**Tips for engaging students with different learning styles:**

1. Distribute a copy of How Do I Learn Best? Part One to students and have them complete the self-assessment.

2. Once they have completed Part One, pass out How do I Learn Best? Part Two to have them determine their individual learning styles.

3. Once students have identified their learning styles, take inventory of the different learning styles in each of your classes.

4. Use the Learning Styles Table for Teachers to incorporate teaching strategies that engage different types of learners. Incorporate these strategies into your instructional methods and materials, including class work, homework, and assessments.

### Notes:

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How Do I Learn Best? Part One

Look at each column and check the box next to each phrase that describes how you learn best. Once you’ve read through each phrase, add the number of boxes you’ve checked and write that number in the total line for each column.

Your teacher will then pass out a sheet that describes your unique learning style!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
<th>Column C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>When you are learning or studying, you prefer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When you are learning or studying, you prefer to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>When you are learning or studying, you prefer to:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Use visual materials such as pictures, charts, maps, graphs, etc.</td>
<td>□ Participate in class discussions/debates</td>
<td>□ Take part in hands-on class projects like lab experiments or art projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Have a clear view of your teachers when they are speaking</td>
<td>□ Make speeches and presentations</td>
<td>□ Write or draw while you are learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Use color to highlight important points in text</td>
<td>□ Discuss your ideas with your friends, family or teachers</td>
<td>□ Move around while you learn new things (for example, change your sitting position or walk around the room)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Take notes or look at handouts from your teacher</td>
<td>□ Tape record lectures instead of taking notes</td>
<td>□ Do your class work or homework in a standing position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Illustrate your ideas as a picture before writing them down</td>
<td>□ Read text aloud or listen to someone reading it to you</td>
<td>□ Chew gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Write a story and illustrate it</td>
<td>□ Create short songs or musical jingles to help you remember information or facts</td>
<td>□ Use bright colors to highlight reading material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Use different media (computers, videos or film)</td>
<td>□ Use rhymes or phrases to remember facts or concepts</td>
<td>□ Decorate your workspace with posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Read illustrated books</td>
<td>□ Dictate to someone while they write down your thoughts</td>
<td>□ Listen to music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Visualize information as a picture to help you remember it</td>
<td>□ Tell a story to communicate your ideas</td>
<td>□ Skim through reading material to get an overview before reading it in detail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total for **Column A** ______  Total for **Column B** ______  Total for **Column C** ______
How Do I Learn Best? Part Two

Now it’s time to find out which learning style suits you best. Read the column where you scored highest with the suggestions on how to apply your learning style more effectively. If you have a tie between two columns, read about both learning styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If Column A had the highest score, you learn best through Seeing</th>
<th>If Column B had the highest score, you learn best through Listening</th>
<th>If Column C had the highest score, you learn best through Moving, Touching, and Doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are a Visual Learner.</td>
<td>You are an Auditory Learner.</td>
<td>You are a Tactile or Kinesthetic Learner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Learners store information as images in their minds. They learn best by viewing written materials, diagrams, posters, graphics, live demonstrations, maps, charts and actual objects.</td>
<td>Auditory Learners store information as “sound bites” in their minds. They learn best through listening to instructions or lectures, talking through problems, discussing topics with others, asking questions, and sometimes through hearing music or other sound effects.</td>
<td>Tactile or Kinesthetic Learners store information best when they can feel or touch what they are learning about. They learn best through hands-on projects or activities; writing, drawing, moving, handling objects, exploring and role-playing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions for the Visual Learner:
- Use the ideas listed in Column A to help you in class or with your homework.
- When you need to memorize something (like a list of facts or a reading passage) write it down and create graphs, charts, tables or illustrations for the information as often as you can.
- Picture a word in your mind when you try to spell it or remember its meaning.
- When you read, visualize the descriptive passages and dialogue in your mind.
- Draw diagrams or graphic organizers to organize your notes and to solve math problems.
- Keep your workspaces at school and at home neat and organized.
- Read cartoons and comic books in your free time. Also, when recalling something you read, sketch the events out in cartoon frames so that you can visualize what happened.

Suggestions for the Auditory Learner:
- Use the ideas listed in Column B to help you in class or with your homework.
- Ask your teachers or classmates for verbal instructions whenever possible.
- Talk through your ideas or thoughts with a friend, your teacher or a family member as you do your homework.
- Say a word aloud when you are trying to spell it or remember its meaning.
- Volunteer for projects that involve talking with other people, like interviewing people with different careers or life experiences.
- Read all characters’ dialogue aloud when you read, or imagine what it would sound like.
- When you are solving math problems, talk through it aloud—to yourself or to another person.
- Find a quiet place to study if noises distract you, or play music if it helps you concentrate.

Suggestions for the Tactile or Kinesthetic Learner:
- Use the ideas listed in Column C to help you in class or with your homework.
- When given the option, do oral reports or demonstrations in place of written reports.
- Record words on index cards with the meaning on the opposite side, to help you remember their meanings.
- Seek out reading materials that have a lot of action, such as science-fiction books or mystery novels.
- Use objects or physical models to help you solve math problems.
- Take frequent, short breaks when you are working on homework or studying.
- Volunteer for projects that require physical activity or movement, such as plays or role-playing.
- Before sitting down to study or do homework, take a walk or do some exercise. Also, find the time to exercise before taking important exams.
Learning Styles Table for Teachers:
How do your students learn best?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If students learn best through seeing, they are <strong>Visual Learners</strong></th>
<th>If students learn best through listening, they are <strong>Auditory Learners</strong></th>
<th>If students learn best through moving, touching, and doing, they are <strong>Tactile or Kinesthetic Learners</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Learners</strong> store information as images in their minds. They learn best by viewing written materials, diagrams, posters, graphics, live demonstrations, maps, charts and actual objects.</td>
<td><strong>Auditory Learners</strong> store information as &quot;sound bites&quot; in their minds. They learn best through listening to instructions or lectures, talking through problems, discussing topics with others, asking questions, and sometimes through hearing music or other sound effects.</td>
<td><strong>Tactile or Kinesthetic Learners</strong> store information best when they can feel or touch what they are learning about. They learn best through hands-on projects or activities, writing, drawing, moving, handling objects, exploring and role-playing.</td>
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**Suggestions for Engaging Visual Learners:**
- Illustrate concepts as a picture, graphic organizer, chart, map or graph instead of just listing or writing them.
- Make sure students can see you when you are speaking.
- Use color to highlight important points in overhead text, and identify items that belong in different categories.
- Provide handouts that outline the key points of your lessons or provide visual representations of what you are teaching.
- Give students opportunities to illustrate or graphically organize their work, when appropriate.
- Teach students how to use graphic organizers and different data displays, such as tables, charts and graphs to visually represent their thoughts.
- Use different media (such as computers and videos).
- Provide students with illustrated books.
- Model how to visualize information to aid memorization.

**Suggestions for Engaging Auditory Learners:**
- Give students opportunities to share their ideas verbally in discussions and debates.
- Give students opportunities to make speeches and presentations.
- Allow students to use a tape recorder during lectures as well as taking notes.
- Read text aloud and have students read text aloud, when appropriate.
- Help students to create rhymes or musical jingles to aid memorization.
- Allow students to dictate their thoughts to a partner while the partner writes them down.
- Use verbal analogies and storytelling to demonstrate ideas.
- Assign projects that involve dialogue with other people, such as interviews, oral histories, creating and anchoring news stories for current events, putting on plays or role-playing.

**Suggestions for Engaging Tactile and Kinesthetic Learners:**
- When teaching a new skill or concept, demonstrate the steps for the class.
- Allow students to take occasional study breaks.
- Create lessons that allow students to move around the classroom.
- Create lessons that engage students in hands-on exploration and experimentation.
- Model how to skim through reading material to get an overview before reading it in detail.
- Give students the option of doing hands-on projects or demonstrations in place of written work.
- Have physical models or objects available in class to support students in math.
- Teach students how to take effective notes while listening in class.
- Call on students frequently to demonstrate work for the class.

Number of students who say they are **Visual Learners**: ______
Number of students who say they are **Auditory Learners**: ______
Number of students who say they are **Tactile or Kinesthetic Learners**: ______