

Learning Styles

Purpose: To introduce participants to different learning styles and how to apply them to their study skills.

Objectives: This workshop will give you the tools to effectively:

- identify your learning style
- construct your study skills

Benefits: Participation in this workshop will help you to:

- understand the different learning styles
- improve your study skills

Supplies:

- “What is Your Learning Style” worksheet
- “Students’ Learning Style” handout
- “Learning Style Strategies” handout

Part 1 (10 min): Introduction to the Workshop

1. Please introduce yourself.
2. Review the “Purpose, Objectives and Benefits” (POB).
3. Introduce yourself and have two participants volunteer for the icebreaker.
4. Participant #1 will be asking participant #2 questions. (For example: How many brothers and sisters do you have? What is your favorite color? Do you have any hobbies?)
5. Participant #2 will try to answer the questions and walk in a straight line at the same time. The participant should try to answer the questions as quickly as possible. (Note: Students who identify themselves as auditory learners will have no problem answering the questions and walk at the same time. However, others will pause and try to answer the question before they continue to walk.)
6. Have the two participants switch roles and compare the length it took them to answer each question. Notice whether the student needed to stop walking in order to answer the question.

Part 2 (20 min): Visual, Auditory or Kinesthetic learner?

1. Ask participants: “Have you ever studied with a friend, but then your friend did better on the test?”
2. Allow participants to acknowledge and then ask: “Have you ever sat through a lesson in class, and even though you tried to pay attention, you didn’t remember as much as your friend did?” Allow students to acknowledge this.
3. Explain to participants that not everyone learns the same way and that several styles of learning do exist. It might mean that the way they studied or the way the lesson was taught might be right for the friend, but not for themselves. If they studied a different way the learning process for them might be easier.
4. Give the participants the following scenario “Imagine you are in the park and you noticed everyone playing a new game that you’ve never played. You would like to join.”
5. Ask participants: “How would you do it?” (Note: Most students will respond, “watch the game” or “ask how to play”.)

6. Explain that some people will try to learn how to play by watching the game. Others might be confused trying to learn by watching and decide to ask someone to explain the game to him or her. The best way for the second participant to learn is by having someone explain the game. A third person might get bored or confused trying to figure out the game by just watching or listening so this person might just go out and play. He or she will figure out the rules as they play.
7. Ask participants: “Do you know what your learning style is?”

Part 3 (20 min): Learning Style Questionnaire and Debrief

1. Hand out “What is your Learning Style?”
2. Explain to the participants that they will now complete a questionnaire that will help them identify their own style of learning.
3. Give the participants a few minutes to take the “Learning Styles Inventory”.
4. Have participants check the statements that apply to them.
5. Explain that there are actually several stages to learning and we use different styles at each stage
 - Stage 1: Receiving new information
 - Stage 2: Making decisions about and using new information
 - Stage 3: Creative thinking
6. Have the participants evaluate their response
 - Look at the first section and total up how many “a”, “v”, and “k” responses you have.
 - Write the letter that you have the most of by that section. Some people will be very strong in one type, others will be split between more than one.
 - Do the same for the other two sections.
 - Take the letter from each section and put them together in order to form a three-letter code, like AVK or KAV.
7. Give the participants a minute to calculate their three-letter code. Some participants may have a “tie” in some categories, or even have the same style for two different stages, but most will have a definite style and sequence. For participants without clear results, explain that the way people learn is complex and a short questionnaire is not always sufficient.
8. Use the “Student’s Learning Styles” handout to find and learn more about your three-letter learning style. There are many combinations possible. This handout has only some of the more common ones.
9. Ask individual participants their code and have them read the description.

Part 4 (10 min): Learning Style Strategies

1. Have the participants look over the Learning Style Strategies handout to find ideas on the best ways for them to learn at each stage.
2. Have them identify a minimum of three strategies and go over what strategies are best for them at each stage.
3. Ask participants to develop a plan of action that outlines when, where and how they plan to use the strategies.

Part 5 (5 min): Workshop Debrief

1. Relevant Questions:
 - What is your learning style?
 - What are three strategies that can help you learn new information?

- What do you feel was the most important thing you learned from today's presentation?
2. This workshop was intended to help participants understand the different ways people learn. You should be able to implement the learning style strategies into your daily study plan.
 3. Take questions and provide answers.
 4. Thank the participants.

WHAT IS YOUR LEARNING STYLE?

Here are some questions you can ask yourself to help determine the learning style you prefer. The questions are organized by which modality (kinesthetic, visual and auditory) a person prefers for different learning tasks: taking in and organizing new information, decision making, and remembering and creating.

Questions to determine the taking in and organizing preference:

1. I learn new information best by:
 - k () participating in an activity myself after a short explanation
 - v () reading or looking at a diagram or demonstration
 - a () listening to a lecture or spoken instructions
2. When I am inactive but need to stay alert, I :
 - k () find ways to move
 - v () stare, watch something, or doodle
 - a () listen to sounds around me, hum, or talk to myself
3. I have these qualities:
 - k () Interact best by moving, doing, physical contact and like hands-on activity
 - v () Connect with others through eye contact and need visual order
 - a () Interact easily by talking and like lectures and discussions
4. The kind of language I most commonly use is:
 - k () how do you feel about this, I can't grasp that, that is comfortable for me
 - v () look at it this way, I just can't see the point, that is crystal clear to me
 - a () can I tell you how I think about that, do you hear me, that sounds right to me
5. My emotions are apparent to others by:
 - k () muscular state and movement
 - v () facial expression
 - a () voice tone

Questions to determine the decision making or sorting preference:

1. As part of my sorting process, I:
 - k () use my hands to find words
 - v () use writing, drawing, or visual images to find words and feelings
 - a () recall information through words such as a quote or the line of a song that fits that fits the situation
2. If I am trying to make a decision, it helps me to:
 - k () do something physical like go for a walk
 - v () write, draw, or look at nature
 - a () speak to someone or listen to something

3. I can do these things at the same time:
- k () move or touch something and also feel emotions deeply
 - v () see things externally and also have inner visual images
 - a () listen to external sounds and to own thoughts, listen to radio and read
4. For me intimacy involves:
- k () talking about feelings and fantasies or having total silence and eye contact
 - v () seeing and being seen, especially deeply receiving someone with own eyes
 - a () hearing and being heard, speaking slower to become more personal

Questions to determine the remembering and creating preference:

1. It takes longer for me to access:
- k () physical sensations
 - v () visual images
 - a () words and sounds
2. A characteristic I have is:
- k () disliking most physical competition and being able to sit still a long time
 - v () becoming overwhelmed by visual detail and disliking eye contact
 - a () “spacing out” from lots of spoken words and navigating through questions
3. Another quality I have is that I:
- k () am relatively unaware of bodily sensations
 - v () get lost in visual material
 - a () get lost in conversation or listening to a lecture
4. If I am listening to someone on the phone, I would be most distracted by:
- k () someone putting their hand on my arm or massaging my shoulders
 - v () someone giving me something they want me to read
 - a () someone asking me a question or playing loud music

STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES

A = Auditory

V = Visual

K = Kinesthetic

- 1st letter represents alert, organized thinking and the way a person is most comfortable receiving new information and expressing themselves in public
- 2nd letter represents sorting thinking and the way a person evaluates options and makes decisions
- 3rd letter represents creative thinking and the way a person integrates new information with what they already know and is hardest to access

AVK:

Best order to receive new information – hear, see, experience

Best way to express what is learned – say, show, do

They can speak well, have large spoken vocabularies, and must talk to learn. It may be difficult for them to be alone or feel what is going on in their bodies. Debating and using humor are natural for them. Doing something repeatedly bores them.

Learning support needed - Listen to them tell you about what they are learning, and ask their opinions about things. For memorizing have them put facts into a rhyme or rap song. They can record that and listen to or “lip-synch” the recording. Support them to be physically active, but don't force them to play team sports.

AKV:

Best orders to receive new information – listen, experience, see

Best way to express what is learned – say, do, show

Their words usually come easily and are full of feeling and rhythm. They have a lot of energy bubbling just beneath the surface. They are good at taking action on their own. They like giving orders and wise-cracking. They can often see the big picture but find visual details difficult or boring. They may have difficulty with handwriting and reading quickly.

Learning support needed – Combine movement with reading to help them stay alert. Encourage them to speak about what they read so they remember it. Have them dictate into a tape recorder what they want to write about, and then write as they listen to the reading. They can use the same memorizing method as the AVK. They may concentrate better while studying if they have music of their own choice in the background.

KVA:

Best order to receive new information – experience, see and hear

Best way to express what is learned – do, show, say

They are often soft spoken and like to work alone. It may be hard for them to talk and do something at the same time. Oral presentations can be difficult for them, and hearing a lot of words may overwhelm them. They navigate through life by asking questions.

Learning support needed – Give them lots of time for physical activities and quiet time.

Encourage them to be in motion while reading. For oral presentations encourage them to use notes and props. Help them find non-distracting ways to move their bodies or hands to stay alert while they are listening.

KAV:

Best order to receive new information – experience, hear, and see

Best way to express what is learned – do, say, show

They have huge amounts of physical energy and can't think without movement or touch.

They learn best by using their bodies, rhythm, and hands. They often are “eye-shy” and can find written information overwhelming. Handwriting may be difficult for them. They don't like to read instructions but would rather just figure things out.

Learning support needed – Help create study spaces where they can both move around and be comfortable while sitting. Encourage them to be physically active before studying and in motion while reading.

Reading aloud may help them concentrate. Help them act out stories they read and word problems in math.

VAK:

Best order to receive new information – see, hear, experience

Best ways to express what is learned – show, say, do

They love to tell stories and are excellent readers. They think well in metaphors and like to doodle. Eye contact and how they are seen is important to them. Physical competition may be difficult for them.

They don't like to do the same thing in the same way twice.

Learning support needed – Help them set up a study space without visual clutter. Help them break down writing projects into smaller tasks. Listen to what they have written because it helps them to edit their writing if they can hear the flow of their words out loud. They often think and write well with a computer.

VKA:

Best way to receive new information – see, experience, hear

Best ways to express what is learned – show, do, say

They feel what they see. They can learn to do any activity by watching, but words can confuse things. It is difficult for them to speak without using their hands. They may speak in circles and have difficulty getting to the point. They work well in groups.

Learning support needed – Listen to them share what they are learning. Take notes from that and let them use the notes as a visual model and add to them. For oral presentations, help them prepare notes and props. Relate what they are learning to their experiences or to visual images. Use flashcards. Help them set up a study area without visual clutter.

Learning Style Strategies

Doing well in school involves receiving and organizing large amounts of new information, making decisions about how to use that information in school projects and exams, and creating original papers or speeches with that information. Now that you know your primary learning style, there are some tips on how to accomplish these tasks in each modality.

Tips for receiving new information:

A – Listen to tapes or lectures if possible, tape yourself as you read aloud from books, discuss new information with others

K – Move your body while listening to or reading new material (doodle, play with clay, take notes, etc.), rewrite or verbalize new ideas you read or hear by using experiential language and personal examples as soon as possible

V – Read new material before hearing a lecture or discussing it, make notes, diagrams, outlines, etc. as you listen to or read new information, read in a neat environment without visual clutter

Tips for making decisions about how to use new information:

A – Discuss your ideas for projects with others, listen to relaxing music or nature sounds while deciding what you want to write or speak about

K – Go for a walk while deciding what you want to write or speak about, move your hands as you consider options for projects

V – Write down all your ideas for projects, focus on a painting or beautiful scenery while deciding what you want to write or speak about

Tips for creating original projects with new information:

A – Ask yourself questions and write the answers to them write or make your project in a very quiet place or while listening to instrumental music

K – Move to different places around the room as you write or make your project; allow yourself lots of uninterrupted time for writing or making your project

V – Write or make your project in a place of visual beauty without clutter, let your eyes look all around and then write or make your project