

Academic Support at Upland
Parent Information Packet
Upper School Resources

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Learning Styles Preference Information

What does it mean?

There are several types of learning styles. Auditory learners learn best by hearing the material. Visual learners need to see the material to learn most effectively. Kinesthetic (or Tactile) learners are those who learn best by doing. Most individuals use a combination of all three styles. For example, if an individual is a strong visual learner, but also has good auditory (listening) skills, that person may want to use those secondary auditory skills to boost the visual skills for even better learning. The kinesthetic method of rewriting notes soon after a lecture will help reinforce material presented in class. The way an individual takes in new information, sorts, retains, retrieves, and reproduces it is heavily dependent on their style of learning. Knowing one's learning style will help develop strategies to compensate for weaknesses and capitalize on strengths.

Learning Styles Survey

What is your preferred style of learning? Knowing your learning style can help you perform better in school or at work. Take the online inventory below. It will be scored online for you.

<http://www.trenholmtech.cc.al.us/fileadmin/LEC/LearningStyles.htm>

Trenholm State Technical College.

How do VISUAL LEARNERS process information?

They need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. Visual learners prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual obstructions (e.g. people's heads). They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including the following: diagrams, illustrated textbooks, overhead transparencies, videos, flipcharts and handouts. During a lecture or classroom discussion, visual learners often prefer to take detailed notes to absorb the information.

Specifically, a dominant Visual learner:

- asks for verbal instructions to be repeated.
- watches the speaker's facial expressions and body language.
- likes to take notes to review later.
- remembers best by writing things down several times or by drawing pictures and diagrams.
- is a good speller.
- turns the radio or T.V. up really loud.
- gets lost with verbal directions.
- prefers information to be presented visually (e.g. flipcharts or chalkboard).
- is skillful at making graphs, charts, and other visual displays.
- can understand and follow directions on maps.
- feels the best way to remember something is to picture it in their head.
- follows written instructions better than oral ones.
- is good at solving jigsaw puzzles.

Strategically, a Visual Learner:

- uses visual materials such as pictures, charts, maps, graphs, etc. when studying.
- has a clear view of teachers to see their body language and facial expression.

- uses color to highlight important points in text.
- takes detailed notes.
- does frequent, quick visual reviews.
- illustrates ideas as a picture in a brainstorming mind map before writing them down.
- uses multi-media (e.g. computers, videos, and filmstrips).
- studies in a quiet place away from verbal disturbances.
- reads illustrated books.
- visualizes information as a picture to aid memorization.

How do AUDITORY LEARNERS process information?

They learn best through verbal lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say. Auditory learners interpret the underlying meanings of speech through listening to tone of voice, pitch and speed. Written information may have little meaning until it is heard. These learners often benefit from reading a textbook aloud.

Specifically, a dominant Auditory learner:

- follows oral directions better than visual ones.
- would rather listen to a lecture than read the material in a textbook.
- understands better when reads aloud.
- struggles to keep notebooks neat.
- prefers to listen to the radio than to read a newspaper.
- frequently sings, hums, or whistles to themselves.
- when presented with two similar sounds, can tell if sounds are the same or different.
- requires explanations of diagrams, graphs, or maps.
- enjoys talking to others.
- talks to self.
- uses musical jingles to learn things.
- uses finger as a pointer when reading.
- likes to tell jokes, stories and makes verbal analogies to demonstrate a point.

Strategically, an Auditory Learner:

- sits in the classroom where they can hear well.
- participates in class discussions/debates.
- reviews notes often by reading them aloud.
- reads text aloud.
- creates musical jingles to aid memorization.
- creates mnemonics (memory tricks to aid memorization). Example: The sentence "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pickles" is a memory aid for the planets in relation to their distance from the sun. (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto)
- discuss ideas verbally.
- uses verbal analogies and storytelling to demonstrate their point.
- talks with other students about class material.

How do TACTILE/KINESTHETIC LEARNERS process information?

Tactile/Kinesthetic persons learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them. They may find it hard to sit still for long periods and may become distracted by their need for activity and exploration.

Specifically, a dominant Tactile/Kinesthetic learner:

- reaches out to touch things.
- collects things.
- talks fast using hands to communicate what they want to say.
- constantly fidgets (e.g. taps pen, plays with keys in pocket).
- is good at sports.
- takes things apart and puts things together.
- prefers to stand while working.
- likes to have music in the background while working.
- enjoys working with hands and making things.
- learns through movement and exploring the environment around them.
- may be considered hyperactive.
- is good at finding their way around.
- prefers to do things rather than watching a demonstration or reading about it in a book.

Strategically, a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner:

- takes frequent study breaks.
- moves around to learn new things (example: reads or studies while on an exercise bike).
- works in a standing position
- uses bright colors to highlight reading material
- listens to low music while studying
- skims through reading material to get a rough idea of what it is about before settling down to read it in detail
- writes facts that must be learned several times. Keeps a supply of scratch paper for this.
- makes study sheets from their notes. Associates class material with real-world things or occurrences.
- when appropriate, practices role playing
- "teaches" the material to a friend

Many Ways to Study

It is important to try many ways of studying to find ways that work best for your individual learning styles. Below are some of the most effective ways to study specific subjects in History, English, Science and Math.

- * Practice with flashcards (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- * Ask someone to quiz you (Auditory).
- * Read (Visual).
- * Reread (Visual).
- * Highlight your notes (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- * Summarize (Auditory, Visual).
- * Read your notes (Visual).
- * Read your notes aloud (Auditory/Visual).
- *** Organize your papers so you are working with everything you need (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- *** Outline or make a graphic version of written work (lists, columns, Venn diagrams, etc.) (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- * Do a project (Visual, Kinesthetic).

- * Quiz yourself (Auditory, Visual).
- * Write memory work over and over until you feel confident (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- *** Use a worksheet as a quiz by covering over the answers and re-doing it (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- * Look over old quizzes and try to figure out why you're making mistakes (Visual).
- * Look over the returned assignments for the unit (Visual).
- *** Answer study guide questions (Visual, Kinesthetic).
- * Tell someone else what the topic is about (Auditory).
- * Look up the parts of the assignments that you didn't understand the first time (Visual, Kinesthetic).

Note: Study Strategies that are marked *** require learning through many senses (Visual, Kinesthetic, Auditory) as well as make learning more meaningful.

Resource:

<http://www.trenholmtech.cc.al.us/fileadmin/LEC/LearningStyles.htm>

Homework Hints for Parents

Homework doesn't have to be a nightly battle. If you plan ahead and keep a few basic guidelines in mind, you can make homework a much more manageable experience for you and your child. Here are a few tips to help things go smoothly:

1. Help your child keep an assignment book, and discuss with him or her how best to use it. Assignments can also be verified through Power School using your child's login and password.
2. Help your child decide when the best homework time is for him or her. Time should be provided to let off steam after school and to relax before bed. If homework consistently takes your child much longer than you think it should, a school conference is in order to determine what could be causing the problem.
3. Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to work with materials that he or she may need.
4. Help your child plan an approach to each day's homework. Before your child begins each assignment, review the instructions together and answer any questions he or she may have about what to do.
5. Encourage your child to work as independently as possible. If your child gets stuck on something, you can spend a few minutes helping him or her try to figure it out, or the child can call a friend for help. Encourage your child to use their textbook and notes as a reference. If the problem isn't solved in about ten minutes, calmly have the child move on to the next assignment.
6. Breaks are very important in helping a child stay focused on homework and studying. Allow about 5 minutes of break time for every 20 minutes of studying, or between each assignment.
7. When your child has finished their homework, check to see that instructions have been followed, and that the child's work is legible. You may check for factual errors, but use this opportunity for the child to practice mindful learning. For example, ask the child to go back and double check numbers 2, 4, and 8 again. Have them re-do the problems to look for errors, check their notes or textbook. Make a game out of this mindful learning opportunity. Make sure your child puts completed homework into his or her backpack immediately after finishing it.

Homework Suggestions from Jill E. Adaman, Ph.D

Some Tips for Parents: How to Help at Home

It is your right and responsibility as a parent to set consistent, fair, realistic, and appropriate rules for your child. You can support and empower your student to become a successful independent learner by using these suggestions.

- Set high (but reasonable) expectations.
- Help them recognize and set realistic goals.
- Teach your child how to successfully cope with stress.
- Control how many total activities your child is involved in both in and out of school. Over commitment leads to major stress.
- Make a point to talk with (not at) your child about daily activities. When appropriate, ask questions that foster higher-level thinking, not only questions that may be answered with “yes” or “no”.
- Make positive comments and compliments to your child every day when deserved. Look for opportunities.
- Criticize constructively. Give frequent feedback that is positive and negative. Learning opportunities for the child are the result of both positive and negative consequences.
- Encourage “hands-on” activities: interactive computer/board games, etc.
- Identify and feed current “passions.” Take your child to the library, museum, or to community activities of interest, etc.
- Help your child establish good time management techniques and check on this from time to time. Setting up study and or homework contracts with positive and negative rewards with your child is a great strategy.
- Come up with a consistent time, place and duration of time that your child will study or do homework. Set up check in times where as a parent you will monitor their studying and homework effectiveness. For specific time limits use a timer. Hang a wall calendar up for the month and have your child mark down up coming tests, projects or quizzes.
- Respect their study time. Help make it positive, efficient, and effective.
- Encourage your child to learn how to learn. Refer to study skills and problem-solving strategies that you have learned in your past, as well as this Parent Information Packet.
- Discuss your child’s intent to learn with him or her. What are your child’s goals now, a year from now, five years from now? Keep focus on your child’s goals.
- Know how you and your child learn best and take advantage of this information. Apply effective learning strategies for individual learning styles.
- Put a priority on reading and demonstrate it! Read to them and read for yourself.
- Encourage good speaking and listening skills. Involve writing as much as possible.
- Monitor the appropriate use of TV, video/computer games, and telephone.
- Provide an adequate breakfast, lunch, and dinner for your child.
- Eat dinner together. Use this pleasant time to catch up on the day’s events, NOT to drill for answers, lecture them, etc.
- Talk about teachers in a positive tone in front of your child.
- Encourage your child to participate in the “extra” the school offers. Try one or two activities at a time.
- Know what classes and assignments your child has. View Power School online.
- Become familiar with their daily school schedules and classroom policies (late homework/make up).
- Check school calendars for upcoming events, projects, meetings, etc. Be aware of activities by reading newsletters.
- Show your enthusiasm for education by taking an active interest in your child’s schooling. Send notes to teachers; attend school functions, and volunteer/visit the school.
- Find out when/if teachers are available for extra help.

- Have a conference with your child's teacher as appropriate and attend regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences.

Resource:

Learning to Learn, Revised. Copyright 2004 by Incentive Publications, Inc. Nashville, TN.

Reference Articles of Interest to Parents

Homework:

Coping With Homework Horrors

Help your child complete homework with a minimum of tears.

By GreatSchools Staff

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/46>

How Much Homework Is Too Much?

Has your child shed tears over the amount of homework he has? Has he stayed up until 10 p.m. working on assignments? Have you sacrificed your weekends for homework?

By Marian Wilde, GreatSchools Senior Writer

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/586>

How to Help With Math Homework

Use these tips to help your child with her math homework.

By Miriam Myers, GreatSchools Staff

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/769>

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Study Skills:

Five Key Skills for Academic Success

It's never too early or too late to help your child develop the skills for academic success. Learn how to build these skills and stay on track all year long.

By GreatSchools Staff

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/204>

Study Skills for Middle School and Beyond

Your child has a better chance of succeeding in college if she masters school survival skills now. Here's how you can help her get organized and learn to study effectively.

By Linda Streaan, GreatSchools Staff

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/700>