**MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR OWN LEARNING STYLE**

**WHAT IS LEARNING?**

Learning happens when we change in some way.

We **know** something we didn’t know before and can use the new information meaningfully. This is called **cognitive** (head / thinking) learning.

Maybe we understand and feel differently about something so we change our **attitude** or **values.** We call this **affective** (heart / feeling) learning.

We may have found new ways of doing things or can do or make something we couldn’t do before. This is **skills** (hand / doing) learning.

**WE DON’T ALL LEARN IN THE SAME WAY!**

We all learn best in different ways. This is why some students enjoy a particular teacher and other students prefer a different teacher. Even the teachers differ in their styles of teaching. Each of us has different strengths and limitations but we all use varying combinations of looking, listening and doing to help us learn.

Some of us have a strong preference for **seeing** and using pictures and diagrams. We call this a **visual** learning style. If we learn in this way we will tend to read the operating manual before we start using a new gadget.

Others of us prefer to **listen and hear** information; we enjoy music and listening to stories. We are more comfortable listening to an explanation than reading it ourselves. We are **auditory** learners.

Still others of us prefer to learn by **doing** things. We will start trying out the new gadget before asking for instructions or reading the manual. We like to make models and to act out. They call us **kinaesthetic or kinetic** learners.

Almost everybody uses a mix of these three learning styles but most of us have a stronger preference towards one way of learning than towards other ways.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES**

Sometimes a teacher is using a way of teaching that fits in well with your preferred way of learning and the lesson will be interesting and easy to follow, but if the teacher is using an approach that doesn’t really fit your style of learning you may find it difficult or boring. The good news is that there are things you can do when a teacher is not “tuned” to your learning style.

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| **Visual learners can** | **Auditory learners can** | **Kinetic learners can** |
| Ask the teacher to show you maybe with a pictureTo use a diagram To give written notes.Learners can read up on it, make diagrams, highlight and colour- code notes | Ask lots of questions and offer commentsAsk the teacher to explain written materialAsk for links to videos and audio clipsMemorise key words | Ask teachers to demonstrate thingsTry to demonstrate things themselves.Try to make modelsAct it out  |

**PRACTISING AND STUDYING ON YOUR OWN**

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| **Visual learners can** | **Auditory learners can** | **Kinetic learners can** |
| Use mind-maps, diagrams, flow charts, colour-coding,, highlighters.Post-it notes, posters. | ReciteMake up rhymes and storiesTalk about it; teach it to someoneRead aloudRecord and play back | Move around while studyingBeat out rhythms or make up movements or dances.Make modelsDemonstrate it to someone.Write out or draw |

**COUNTER- PRODUCTIVE HABITS**

Sometimes our learning style preferences can work against us by causing us to do things that interfere with attention and concentration or learning. If we are alert to these habits, we can stop them from blocking our learning and use them to our advantage.

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| **Visual learners may** | **Auditory learners may** | **Kinetic learners may** |
| Look out of the windowWatch videos or games on their phone or device.Doodle and make random drawings on their work books | Listen to music on their phones with earphones.Talk with classmates during lessons | Want to go to the toilet oftenFiddle with objects on their deskFidget |
| **instead they should** | **instead they should** | **instead they should** |
| Highlight notes in classWatch the board or the teacher closely | Ask questions, respond to questions. Repeat key words and phrases aloud | Ask to come to the board.Keep their work space clear of distractors.Ask permission to get up stretch or move around at times. |