Learning Styles…

…and what they mean for me
VARK

V = Visual
A = Aural
R = Reading/Writing
K = Kinesthetic
Social or Solitary
Discover Your Learning Style
Complete The Questionnaire

VARK Questionnaire

**Visual (Spatial) Learners**

- Need to see information
  - Body language & facial expression play important roles

- Think in pictures

- Learn best with diagrams, illustrated text books, videos, & handouts

- Find taking detailed notes helpful in retaining the information.

- Usually prefer sitting up front to avoid distracting visuals
Study Skills For Visual Learners

Outlines

Flashcards

Highlight, circle, or underline important information
Aural (Auditory) Learners

- Need to hear information
- Learn best with verbal lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say.
- Need to hear the tone, pitch, & speed of a person’s voice
Study Skills For Aural Learners

Attend and listen in class

Repeat things out loud while studying

Use study groups to discuss material
Kinesthetic (Physical) Learners

- Need to do, move, or touch
- Learn best with hands-on approach
- May struggle to sit still
Multiple short study sessions

Group study sessions

Flashcards

Memory games
Reading And Writing Learners

- Needs to see information displayed in words
- The more words the better
- Learn best with definitions, handouts, note taking (verbatim), or essays
Study Skills For Reading And Writing Learners

Rewrite information and notes

Read your notes (silently) to yourself

Write down trends for graphs and charts
There is no right or wrong style...

...most people are a combination.
Solitary vs. Social Learner

Solitary Learners:
Enjoy working alone and studying individually

Social Learners:
Enjoy working in group environments and bouncing ideas off others
Why Is My Learning Style Important?

1. Knowing your style can help with studying and comprehension
2. Save time by studying the “right” way for you.
3. Better studying can mean better grades
4. Instructors may not always teach using your learning style – learn to balance your style with others
5. Learn to help yourself understand the material
6. Your learning style is subject to change over time
Case Studies
Identify The Following

- What is the student’s learning style?
- What is the learning style challenge?
- Any suggestions for the student?
Case Study #1

Maria is in a Music Appreciation class this semester. She is not a music major but the course fulfills a requirement for her General Education. Maria is experiencing some challenges in the class. She does well on the class assignments and parts of the test that include identifying the notes, key signatures, and chords she sees on the page. She also does well when she is tested on material she has read in the book. Maria finds other parts of the class challenging. She struggles to do well on the portions of the test that require her to listen to music that the professor plays and then identify the key, tempo, or other information about the piece. They all sound the same to her. Maria is concerned because the majority of her grade for the class comes from completing these listening tasks for parts of exams or completing listening labs.
Answer: Case Study # 1

- Maria is a visual learner.
- The learning style challenge is that the class is primarily an auditory class in that it requires a lot of listening skills and learning through listening.

Suggestions:
- Maria could speak with her professor about her learning style and ask for ways to increase her skill in auditory tasks
- Maria could increase the number of hours she spends practicing her listening skills in order to develop her ability to learn by auditory methods
- Maria could speak with classmates who are auditory and work with them to study for the listening assignments
Case Study #2

Jill is taking a chemistry class this semester which requires a lab. Jill is doing well in the chemistry class, as she enjoys the lectures and is able to understand the material when the professor lectures to the group. Jill is struggling, however, with the lab. The lab requires a lot of reading as the students are required to read through the lab manual directions for each experiment and follow these directions in order to answer the questions provided. In addition to having trouble understanding the instructions in the manual in order to perform the experiment, it takes Jill much longer to complete the lab than it does everyone else in class. She is always the last one to leave the lab. She also performs poorly on the quizzes which cover the material they are required to read in the manual. At mid-term, Jill’s grade for her class is an A but her grade in lab is a C-. Jill is concerned and wants to pull her grade up in the lab but has a difficult time understanding the instructions in the manual and finds that she has trouble remembering what she read when it is time for the quizzes.
Answer: Case Study # 2

- Jill is an auditory learner.
- The learning style challenge is that the lab is a combination of visual and kinesthetic learning methods.

Suggestions:
- Jill could read the lab manual *out loud* so that she is hearing the instructions.
- Jill could *speak out loud* the steps of the lab as she completes them.
- Jill could speak with her lab instructor to see if there are any suggestions that he or she has for learning the material based on her auditory learning style.
- Jill could practice developing her kinesthetic learning skills in order to feel more comfortable completing the lab steps.
Case Study #3

Anna is taking her introductory psychology class this semester. She is very interested in psychology and wants to major in it. She was excited early in the semester but after the first month and a half of class, she finds it challenging. Anna finds that she is attentive during the first 30 minutes or so of class but the remaining 50 minutes of the class she is fidgety and impatient. She realizes that at this point in the professor’s lecture she starts to tune out and lose interest. She therefore misses a great deal of information the professor shares in class. Anna often times steps out of class and walks around the hall for a few minutes before returning to class. She wishes the professor would let the class have small group discussions on some of the information or role play to learn some of the theories and techniques he is lecturing about. Anna is worried about her grade in the class. She has taken two tests and has found that she remembers the material she studies on her own when she is either with a study group or when she uses her flashcards on her walks around campus. She does poorly on the material from lectures, which is at least half of the material on each test.
Answer: Case Study # 3

- Anna’s primary learning style is kinesthetic/tactile.
- The learning style challenge is that the class is primarily an auditory class, focusing on lecture as the mode of communicating information, which does not fit with Anna’s preferred learning style.

Suggestions:
- Anna could share with the instructor that her preferred learning style is kinesthetic/tactile and ask if it is possible to add group discussions or role play to the class presentation set up.
- Anna could, with the instructor’s permission, tape record the lecture and then listen to it in her room where she can do kinesthetic activities, such as walking around the room or listen to it as she walks around campus to supplement her learning with the kinesthetic activities she enjoys.
Case Study #4

Margaret is very frustrated in her biology class. She was always a good student in high school but is finding this college course challenging. The class is a lecture class and the instructor definitely enjoys talking! The entire hour and twenty minutes is filled with the professor lecturing. Margaret has a hard time grasping the concepts her instructor is talking about. Margaret also finds the lectures overwhelming because the instructor does not use PowerPoint presentations or even outlines so Margaret has no idea when the instructor has moved on to another topic or even what the main ideas are for the lecture. It takes Margaret a great deal of extra time to study for this course because she has to re-read her notes and find illustrations in her textbook that make what her professor said in class make sense. Margaret is concerned as she prepares for her first exam in the course.
Answer: Case Study # 4

- Margaret’s primary learning style is visual learning.
- The learning style challenge in this case study is that the course is auditory in nature and the instructor’s teaching style is auditory (lectures) with no visual aids.

Suggestions:
- Margaret could let the instructor know that she is a visual learning and ask if the instructor could provide a lecture outline to follow and take notes by.
- Margaret could ask the instructor to point out key charts and figures in the text that cover the material he/she is teaching on so that Margaret can use the visual aids to assist her in learning.
- Margaret could create her own outline of the chapter when she is reading the chapter before class and use it to follow along in class.
- Margaret could sit near the front of the class room so that she could at least see the instructor to stimulate her visual learning preference.
Case Study #5

Jennifer is so excited to study a new foreign language in college. She went to a high school that offered few languages to study and so she chose to study Latin. She always did well in her high school Latin classes and enjoyed translating the material from the book. She has decided to take Italian in college. Jennifer finds the first day of class to be overwhelming – the instructor immediately begins talking to the class in Italian. Jennifer can keep up when he speaks in English but as soon as he speaks in Italian to the class she struggles to follow. She understands the words and vocabulary from the book but is extremely frustrated when they are asked to speak to one another in class. Jennifer has trouble pronouncing the words correctly and when she hears them spoken to her she can’t picture how they are spelled and gets confused about the words, spelling, and endings. Even more frustrating are the language lab assignments because she has to listen to tapes of someone speaking in Italian and then write down what was said in Italian and then translate it to English. She makes very low grades on these assignments and is worried about her upcoming test because there is an entire section, worth ½ of her grade, where she must translate what the instructor says to them in Italian.
Answer: Case Study # 5

- Jennifer is a visual learner and prefers to learn by seeing the material.
- The learning style challenge in this situation is that the class is heavy in auditory techniques for class material, homework, and tests.

Suggestions:
- Jennifer could speak with her instructor and let him know her primary learning style and that she is feeling challenged and overwhelmed. She could seek his suggestions for overcoming this challenge.
- Jennifer could increase her time listening to the language tapes in order to develop her auditory skills.
- Jennifer could listen to the tapes WHILE she reads along in her book so that she can associate what she sees (her primary mode of learning) with what she hears in order to learn the material.
- Jennifer could participate in a study group with students who are comfortable with auditory learning techniques and practice the speaking and listening skills with them.
Questions?
Resources


