



SPARK TUTORS

WHAT LEARNING STYLE SUITS YOUR CHILD BEST– AND WHY IT MATTERS!

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INTRODUCTION

People prefer to communicate in different ways, ranging from verbal to non-verbal methods. Did you know we also have preferences for how we absorb or learn new information?

Education experts recognize four distinct learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic ("V-A-R-K" for short). Teachers, academic coaches, and tutors who know the learning styles of their students are better able to adapt lesson plans, materials, and teaching methods to get desired results.

The good news is there's no right or wrong way for how students learn best. Having different learning styles is completely normal! As parents and educators, we simply need to identify those styles and respond accordingly. We are here to help!



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WHAT ARE THE FOUR LEARNING STYLES?



Visual Learners respond best to pictures and diagrams. As the name suggests, these students learn best when information is presented visually. They like to picture things in their heads. The telltale signs that someone is a visual learner include being well organized, liking to doodle, being a good speller, being a note taker, having good handwriting, and being a good planner.

Reading/Writing Learners prefer to learn through the written word. They are drawn to expression through writing, reading, and searching online or in the dictionary. Reading/Writing learners tend to be avid readers who like to take lots of notes. They also are skilled at translating abstract concepts into words and essays.



Auditory Learners react most favorably to oral instruction. They prefer to listen to lectures versus simply reading a book or notes. They may even speak aloud or read aloud to reinforce lessons. Auditory learners like to talk, enjoy music, mouth words as they read silently, and tend to be extroverts.

Kinesthetic or Tactile Learners are experiential learners. They learn best by doing, either by acting something out or using their hands. Sure signs someone is a Kinesthetic learner include struggling to sit still, liking to dance, being athletic, being poor spellers, not liking to read, and/or gesturing a lot.



Adapting to Their Style

Part of our initial intake is to begin identifying a student's preferred learning style. We don't have a specific, one-size-fits-all process, and that's by design. We know each student is unique.

Figuring out a student's preferred style can take time. It's essentially a discovery process between the student and the tutor/coach.

Parents can rest assured we are hyper aware of the importance of learning style, and that we're likely to play around a bit with different methods to see what works and what doesn't. We might even find a student has more than one preferred learning style. Overlap is common. That's OK. All Spark Tutors are well-versed in various teaching methods and will find an approach that best suits your child.



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EXAMPLES OF HOW WE MIGHT ADAPT OUR METHODS TO DIFFERENT STUDENT LEARNING STYLES

- For **Auditory Learners**, we'll discuss lessons and have students repeat what they heard to confirm understanding. We'll quiz students verbally and make verbal mnemonic devices, such as songs or rhymes, to help them remember material.
- With **Visual Learners**, we'll create flashcards to help organize lessons in a way students can visualize easily. We'll help them create well-organized notes, with lots of graphics, and utilize visual mnemonic devices using symbols and images. We'll then check understanding by having them complete written worksheets.
- For **Reading/Writing Learners**, we have students read books, class notes, and handouts, and have them write notes in their own words, describing any pictures or graphs by writing a couple sentences for each. Like Visual Learners, we check understanding by having them complete written worksheets. To study for tests, we have students re-write their notes, condensing down as they go and writing bullet point lists of main information for each chapter.
- With our **Kinesthetic or Tactile Learners**, we utilize front/back flash cards, have students pace around the room while quizzing them verbally, and sometimes throw a ball back and forth while discussing material.

Free Learning Styles Assessments

Here are a couple of online assessments students can take to get a sense of their preferred learning style:

VARK Questionnaire
(The assessment is free, but there's a paid 10-page PDF report if you want to take it a step further)

Educationplanner.org (Don't be concerned that this assessment does not include Reading/Writing learners; they're often lumped in with Visual learners.)

Let's Talk!

Contact Spark Tutors today to learn how we can help your student learn the way he or she was meant to learn. While we are still offering tutoring online due to COVID-19 related restrictions, we are confident in our ability to keep students engaged and learning one-on-one, whether in-person or online.