Spotlight on Learning Styles

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‘I never knew there were different styles of learning. I thought I just couldn’t learn a foreign language.’
What learning styles are

- Perceptual filters
- Strategies to perceive, store and recall material
- Cognitive processing
- Organisation of perceived material
- Approaches used by individuals
- Patterns of behavior
What learning styles are not

- An excuse
- A method of pigeon-holing
- Right or wrong
- A limitation with no possibility of stretching
- An indication of competence
- Judgmental
Learning styles in the classroom

- Most classes have variety of learner types
- Teachers often teach in the way we learn
- A mix of methods can reach more learners
- Help learners stretch out of preferred styles
- Encourage learners to develop successful strategies
- Harmonise and challenge learners
- Metacognition of styles gives learners more insight
- Tolerance grows from acceptance of other styles
Three models

- Sensory perception: VAK
- Cognitive processing: Global-Analytic
- Behaviour: Mind Organisation
VAK Model

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinaesthetic Emotional
- Kinaesthetic Motoric
Global / Analytic Model

- Global
- Analytic
Mind Organisation

- **Power Planner**
  - Perceive concretely
  - Organize systematically

- **Radical Reformer**
  - Organize non-systematically

- **Expert Investigator**
  - Perceive abstractly

- **Flexible Friend**
A complete profile

- Which of my senses do I use to perceive information?
- How do I store and recall information?
- Do I prefer abstract ideas or concrete situations?
- Do I use emotions or logic to understand?
- Do I organise systematically or non-systematically?
What makes activities appeal to different learner types?

- Use different sensory channels
- Make use of different cognitive processing
- Accept different forms of organisation
- Help learners make use of strengths
- Create possibility to discover new strategies
- Accept how students learn
- Give feeling of progress
Activities
Finding differences in pictures
Can you describe the drawing?
This activity is from page 87 of *Spotlight on Learning Styles*.
Activities

- Find the differences
- The machine
- Draw the picture
- What would you do if ...?
- The ‘yes-no’ hot seat
- The envelope game
- Can you sell it?
- Personal mind maps
Where do learning styles fit in?

- A way to raise awareness
- Learners take an active part
- Can increase motivation
- Learner-centred
- Help learners develop successful strategies
- Encourage meta-cognition in learners
- Encourage autonomy
Time for Reflection

- Work in small groups
- Discuss which activities you personally enjoyed most
- Compare the activities with your styles
- Discuss which activities will work in your classroom
- Talk about ideas for adapting the activities
Any questions?
Thank you for your attention.

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