

HELPING YOUR CHILD SUCCEED

You probably remember what school was like when you were a child. You also know how you best learned new information. You likely still discover new information in the same way you picked it up in school.

However; when it comes to your child, you need to forget everything you remember about your school preferences. Your child is a unique individual. Not only is it likely that he or she likes different subjects, but your child may also learn differently than you do.

THREE DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Your child may use only one or all of these styles as he or she progresses through school.

VISUAL learners benefit from seeing or observing the way something looks or works. Think about and ask your child the following questions. Does he or she have a hard time remembering names but can always remember a face? Does he or she do better with directions based on landmarks than on street names? Ask your child how he or she recalls information. Does he or she see images? If so, your child is likely a visual learner.

If your child is a visual learner, help him or her try the following approaches:

- Have your student take a lot of notes in class; then have him or her recopy them after school.
- Ask your child to highlight important information on worksheets or handouts with a marker or draw a line under it with a pencil.
- Make flash cards for your child. Math facts and science terms lend themselves well to flash cards.
- Help your child make charts, diagrams, and graphs to better understand and express information.

AUDITORY learners learn best by hearing or listening. If your child is an auditory learner, he or she probably retains more information when the lesson is presented verbally and when the teacher questions the whole class. Ask your child if he or she does well in class discussions. Does he or she take fewer notes than other students? Is he or she easily distracted by noises? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, your child is likely an auditory learner.

You can help your auditory learner do better in school by:

- Reading aloud to him or her or having your child read material aloud.
 - Using mnemonic devices or phrases when memorizing materials. If you memorized HOMES, you probably remember all the Great Lakes.
 - Allowing your child to study with a friend or to take part in group-discussions so he or she can hear and talk about information.
 - Making available a voice recorder for ideas and reminders. Your child might also find the recorder helpful for outlining papers before beginning.
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KINESTHETIC or TACTILE learners learn best by touching or doing. You'll know easily if your child is a tactile learner. Is he or she the only person in the family who can set the digital recorder or run the computer? Does he or she love to build things? Is your child often out of his/her seat in the classroom? Yes, yes, and yes? Then your child learns best with hands-on activities.

You can try the following things to help your kinesthetic learner do better in the classroom:

- Ask your child to act out or demonstrate concepts.
- When helping your child with homework, give him or her a real world perspective on the content. For example, if your child is learning about photosynthesis, let him or her see what happens to a plant that doesn't get enough sunlight.
- Take advantage of hands-on projects. Your tactile learner will enjoy these assignments the most.
- Allow your child access to multimedia applications and learning tools on the computer.

QUICK TIPS

Helping your child discover his or her own learning style will make your child more responsible for his or her own learning.

With your help, your child can develop strategies for making the best use of his or her dominant style – as well as overcome any obstacles he or she may have with other learning styles.