

How Children Learn

There are three different ways we learn. We either learn by seeing (visual), hearing (auditory), or doing (kinesthetic). Sometimes children use a combination of two or more of these learning styles. We all do.



20% of Children Are Auditory Learners. They learn by hearing. They are the future teachers. They also talk a lot because they are processing information as they hear themselves say it. They enjoy talking to others, talk aloud to themselves, remember names, recognize variations in a person's tone of voice, understand concepts better by talking about them, are distracted by background noise, enjoy music, enjoy rhymes, whisper/hum/sing to themselves, and benefit from video tapes, audio tapes, books on tape, melodies, rhythms and beats to reinforce information. They need to answer questions orally, give oral reports, repeat facts aloud with their eyes closed, use repetition to memorize, and recite information aloud when they're studying or, for example, playing with a math game alone in the math center. Visit http://www.education.com/magazine/article/auditory_learners/ for more information.

40% Of Children Are Visual Learners. They learn better by seeing rather than by just hearing the information. They need visual props to better absorb a lesson. They think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including diagrams, illustrated textbooks, overhead transparencies or Smartboards, videos, flipcharts, etc. Other techniques for success with visual learners include: Demonstrate what you a child to do. Use flashcards to help them learn letters, numbers, colors and shapes. Provide visual activities, including maps, videos, models, puzzles, matching activities, computers, and letter searches. Let's say you are teaching the children some facts about reindeer at Christmas time. Read a book such as *Reindeer, A Day in the Life: Polar Animals* by Katie Marsico which has great pictures of real reindeer. Then you use a simple homemade Rudolph hand puppet to reiterate the key points and main ideas you want the children to remember. This technique is much for effective than simply having the children repeat facts aloud after you. These children need displays and posters displayed at their eye level in the classroom. These same methods work best when you are teaching them to behave appropriately, too. Visit http://www.education.com/magazine/article/Helping_Visual_Learners/ for more information.

40% Of Children Are Kinesthetic Learners. A kinesthetic learner learns best through moving, doing and touching. They require a hands-on approach to learning and must actively explore the world around them. They need to move, chew gum, or fidget with something as they listen so that they can absorb and remember what is being said or read. Unfortunately, these are the children who are usually labeled "difficult" or "bad" or "disobedient." They are not. They just need to do things like write their ABC's in shaving cream or place sandpaper under their papers as they write their spelling words sometimes. They need to stand and alternately touch their head shoulders, knees and toes as they recite the rules for the classroom. They need to touch, taste and smell things rather than just hear about them or look at pictures. They need to be allowed to fidget, take frequent breaks from sitting or studying, and encouraged to channel their need for movement into acceptable activities that will not disrupt the classroom. They need experiments, field trips, role-playing, projects, and games! These same methods work best when you are teaching them to behave appropriately, too. Visit http://www.education.com/magazine/article/kinesthetic_learner/ for more information.

So remember to use pictures, rhymes, action songs, props, songs, fingerplays, puppets, movement and more and more and more in your classroom every day. **The best news is that all children will benefit from all of the techniques listed here.** To sum up, if you just talk when you teach, 80% of your class may be missing it! Now you know why you have to repeat yourself 100 times. And worse, it's not their fault, it's yours.