

LEARNING HOW YOU LEARN BEST



AGENDA

- Starter
- My Place
- Try This!
- Think About It
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will discover that they learn in different ways.

Students will compare and contrast their organisational strategies to those of other students.

Students will identify studying and test-taking strategies that could work for them.

Materials Needed

- Sheets of paper, one for each student (Part I)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask for a student to demonstrate how to fold a paper airplane. Ask if someone else can demonstrate the same task in another way.

Point out that it's not necessary for people to do things exactly the same way to accomplish the same task. Say, "What's important is that you use a way that works for you in order to complete a task successfully. Today, we're going to find ways for you to discover how you learn best."

Part I My Place (15–20 minutes)

Purpose: Students discover that they learn in different ways.

1. Students imagine a special place.

Have students think of a place they enjoy where they can relax, be comfortable, and think. Explain that this might be a place they have been before, a place they would like to visit, or a place they imagine. Ask, "Where is this place? What does it look like?"

Place a stack of paper on your desk as you tell students to form a clear picture of their special places in their minds.

2. Students create representations of their special places.

Ask students to draw or write something that represents or describes their special places. Prompt their imaginations by suggesting that they might do one of the following:

- Draw a picture or a diagram of it.
- Draw something they particularly like about the place or how it feels to be there.
- Draw a map to show where it is.
- Write a poem or a paragraph that describes the place itself or how it feels to be there.
- Write a short story about something that happens there.
- Compose a song about it.

Tell students to help themselves to the paper on your desk. Then, give them time to work.

3. Students share their work.

Ask students to discuss what they created. Invite students to display their creations on a wall or bulletin board. Tell students to look at them during or after class today.

Point out the different styles of expression that students used to complete this task. Explain that just as we all express ourselves in different ways, we all learn in different ways, too. We learn by ourselves and we learn when working with others. We learn by reading and we also learn by listening, watching, and doing. We learn by taking notes; we also learn by making graphs, charts, and maps. Tell students that the important thing is to find ways of learning that work for them.

Part II Try This! (10–15 minutes)

Purpose: Students compare and contrast their organisational strategies with other students in order to learn from each other.

1. Students compare notebooks and binders.

Divide the class into small groups of four or five students. Ask students to take out any class notebooks or binders they have with them and share with one another how the material for their classes is organised.

Tell students to focus on how others organise such materials as assignments, notes, and homework. Tell them to also observe how others plan ahead and schedule their study time. Explain that in order to discover methods that might also work for them, students should listen carefully and ask each other questions.

If students seem reluctant to begin, appoint one student from each group to explain how their materials are organised and tell others to follow in sequence.

2. Students compare strategies.

Ask students questions such as the following in order to guide a discussion about their different organisational strategies:

- Were there similarities in how notebooks are organised among the members of your group? If so, describe them.
- Were there differences? If so, describe them.
- Did you discover a better way to organise your own notebook?

Ask students to describe new strategies they identified. Encourage them to implement these ideas. If necessary, point out that some strategies might work better for some classes than others. Ask students to explain why they think this might be true.

Remind students that their work is their responsibility. Point out that if they take the time to find and use strategies that work for them, they will become more successful students.

Part III Think About It (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify studying and test-taking strategies that could work best for them.

1. Students focus on homework skills.

Have students take out a piece of writing paper. Demonstrate how to fold the paper into three sections, from top to bottom. In the top section, have them write the phrase “About Homework.”

Have students list in this section at least three things that they do now or that they think help them the most to get their homework done. Explain that they are to list only those things that they actually do and that work for them.

Give students a few minutes to work. Then, ask them to think about some things that they do not currently do, but that they think might help them complete their homework more effectively. Remind students that when you asked them to think about a special place, they chose a method of expressing what they were thinking about. Tell them that the methods they chose show which learning option they might prefer. When possible, they should use the methods they chose and a learning option to complete their homework. Tell them to add these methods to their lists and draw a box around them.

2. Students focus on studying for and taking tests.

Direct students’ attention to the middle section of their papers and have them write “About Studying for a Test.” In the bottom section, have them write “About Taking Tests.”

Follow the same procedure as described in the step above, addressing each section and topic separately. Be sure to have students list things they currently do, then list other things they might do in order to complete these tasks more successfully. Circulate as students work, reminding them to draw boxes around strategies they think would help them do better.

3. Students reflect on the activity.

Ask students to share what they have listed in each of the boxes. Encourage them to write down homework and study strategies that might be effective for them. Explain that practicing various study methods with notes before a test will help them prepare for it. Suggest that students add strategies to their lists when they get ideas from other students.

Listen carefully to the suggestions the students are offering, and then jot down ideas or practices such as the following to cover important skills that students may have overlooked:

- Planning ahead and not leaving large assignments or studying for tests until the last minute
- Following instructions for assignments and tests carefully
- Gathering necessary information and materials
- Using appropriate resources when needed
- Taking meaningful notes
- Reviewing notes and homework when studying for a test

Conclusion *(2 minutes)*

Ask students to describe the learning strategies that work best for them. Ask them to explain how knowing a variety of methods for studying can be useful. Elicit from students the following **key points** that were taught in this lesson:

- We all learn in different ways.
- Try different strategies in order to find the ones that work for you.
- Using these strategies will help you become a more successful student.

Student Assessment

1. List three things that you do not currently do that will help you to do your homework.
2. List three things that you do not currently do that will help you with studying and taking tests.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“The more that you READ, the more things you will KNOW. The more that you LEARN, the more places you'll GO!”

Create a poster of this quote and deliver to other classmates.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

At the conclusion of a topic, students form pairs, develop and create a study game.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students write about the best class they ever attended. Have them describe what the lesson was about and how it was taught. They can discuss if the lesson included a preferred learning option.

Using Technology

Have students use computers to prepare study guides for an upcoming test.

Have students share their work in small groups, discussing where their ideas came from (e.g., highlighted in notes, teacher said it was important, chapter heading) and which items seemed important enough to be included in the guides of several people.

Homework

Have students bring evidence that they have been actively studying to class on the day of a test (e.g., a study guide, a mnemonic device, flash cards, a web organiser).

Additional Activity

Students compile a playlist of their favourite study songs.