



## Educational Design and Delivery

### Understanding Differences in Learning Styles

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

#### Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

#### Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will understand the importance of teaching to different learning styles.
- Volunteers will describe three learning style preferences.
- Volunteers will describe ways to incorporate learning styles as they plan 4-H activities and events.

#### Time:

20 – 30 minutes

#### Supplies Needed:

- Pencils and paper
- Markers and flip chart paper
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

#### Do Ahead:

- Prepare handouts.
- Prepare situations for Activity 2 by writing situations on small slips of paper and putting them in a basket or container.

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#### Volunteerism for the Next Generation:

<http://nextgeneration.4-h.org/volunteerism/>

#### 4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-h.org/headquarters.gov/>

### INTRODUCTION

Do you seem to understand more by reading the instruction manual or by having someone demonstrate how to use something? Do you prefer to touch, feel or experience to learn or have someone tell you information? Each of us has a preferred learning style. Learning styles are those “educational conditions under which a student is most likely to learn,” according to Stewart and Felicetti (1992). Learning styles are not really concerned with “what” learners learn, but rather “how” they prefer to learn. (Power Point Slides 1, 2)

### WHAT TO DO

Learners will use multiple ways to give, receive and store information, and most will have a preferred style. It is important not to categorize learners by learning style preference. Learning styles can be a point along a continuum and change with time, subject matter, and other factors. Understanding learning style preferences can help volunteers provide a variety of experiences for youth to allow them the greatest margin of success in learning new skills and concepts.

There are three major learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile.

#### Activity 1: What Learning Style Are You?

Distribute Handout 1 and have individuals complete the quiz. Remind them that there are many learning style assessments that are available. This is a simple quiz that can indicate preferences. This quiz could also be used with the 4-H youth they work with. What new insights did you gain? Were you surprised at the outcome? Why or why not?

(Power Point Slide 3) Visual learners are those who rely most on sight. They tend to prefer seeing things written down and often use pictures, maps, graphs, charts, and other visual learning tools. They remember things best by seeing something written and like handouts and other written mediums. Visual learners often have a good sense of direction and can often be observed doodling or drawing.

(Power Point Slide 4) Auditory learners are those who generally learn best by listening. They prefer demonstrations, videos, lectures, discussions, and reading aloud. Auditory learners remember best through hearing or saying items aloud and can be observed reading out loud to themselves.

(Power Point Slide 5) Kinesthetic or tactile learners are those who learn best through touching, feeling, and experiencing that which they are trying to learn. They remember best by writing or physically manipulating the information. Kinesthetic learners prefer role plays, experiments,



**VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development:**

<http://www.national4-h.org/headquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

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**References for this lesson:**

- Stewart, K. L., & Felicetti, L. A. (1992). Learning styles of marketing majors. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 15(2), 15-23.

simulations and other hands-on activities. In many cases, they also like a variety of activities to engage them in the learning.

Activity 2: Applying Learning Styles

Have each volunteer draw a learning situation out of a container one at a time. Have the volunteer read their situation and share ideas for teaching strategies that would be helpful to someone who is a visual learner, auditory learner, and kinesthetic learner. Then proceed to the next volunteer and situation. [Ideas for situations: Building a bird feeder, learning about animal diseases, types of fish, how to judge a model, spinning wool, making a nutritious menu, taking a picture, working with a robot, exhibiting a llama, grooming a dog, writing a skit, leading campers, singing a song, defining electricity terms, planning a club field trip, etc.]

(Power Point Slide 5) As volunteers, planning 4-H activities and events that incorporate all three learning styles is best. This allows youth to not only maximize the potential for learning using their preferred style, but to experience the other styles as well. This builds their capacity for learning no matter what style is used.

**Conclusion:**

Understanding the differences in learning style preferences of others provides volunteers an additional tool to help plan successful learning experiences. Addressing individual learning style preferences and providing experiences in all styles can help strengthen the potential for each young person to learn. (Power Point Slide 6)

**TALK IT OVER**

**Reflect:**

- Describe the three learning style preferences. Why are they important to a volunteer?
- What are examples of how to develop activities and learning experiences that include the three learning styles?

**Apply:**

- Describe two things that you will do differently because of your understanding of learning styles and its importance in helping youth learn.

**EVALUATION**

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 2).

**ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY**

Check out the ideas for using learning styles in project lessons in *Using learning style preferences to teach more effective riding lessons* by Karen L. Waite, M.S., Specialist, Michigan State University Extension, and Instructor, Department of Animal Science, Michigan State University  
<http://web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/anisci/LearningStyles&TeachingHorsebackRiding.pdf>.

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## Handout 1

**Quiz: What's Your Learning Style?**

1. How do you sound out a new spelling word? a) Write it down to see if looks right; b) Say it out loud to hear if it sounds right; c) Finger spell it in the air
2. When you are bored in line at the amusement park, do you... a) Look around at the surroundings b) Strike up a conversation c) Hop up and down on the railing
3. When you meet someone new, you remember: a) Their face, but not their name b) Their name, but not their face c) What you were doing when you met the person.
4. When you go to a party, do you later think about: a) The way the house looked/what people wore b) The things you heard or talked about c) The things you did/ate
5. When you are angry, do you: a) Make angry gestures, expressions b) Yell c) Stomp around or throw things
6. Which one would you do to relax: a) Read b) Listen to Music c) Play, dance, move
7. The way you prefer to learn to do something new is to: a) Read the instructions b) Have someone describe how to do it c) Just try it and see what happens
8. Which is most distracting to your study environment? a) Lights that are too bright or dark b) Unexpected noise c) An uncomfortable chair
9. What kind of camp would you choose: a) Art Camp b) Music Camp c) Sports Camp
10. When you need to remember a phone number, you: a) Visualize the numbers in your head b) Remember what it sounds like c) Let your fingers pick out the numbers without thinking

**Analysis:**

- If you got mostly "a's", you are probably a visual learner. You learn best by looking at something and remembering the picture in your brain.
- If you got mostly "b's," you are probably an auditory learner. You learn best by hearing and talking things over.
- If you got mostly "c's," you are probably a kinesthetic learner. You learn best by doing things with your body, and linking concepts to movement

From: Education.com. Quadratic Learning Styles Quiz.  
[http://www.education.com/activity/article/Quadratic\\_Formula\\_Learning\\_Style/](http://www.education.com/activity/article/Quadratic_Formula_Learning_Style/) accessed 4/2010



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## Handout 2

## Evaluation

Please complete the following evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be shared with those who work with the program. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared.

Please answer the questions by circling the number that indicates your level of understanding of the topics listed before and after the training.

1 = Very little understanding

2 = Understand somewhat

3 = Clear understanding

	NOW – After the training			THEN – Before the training		
1. I understand the importance of teaching to different learning styles.	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. I can describe the three main learning style preferences.	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. I can describe a variety of ways to incorporate learning styles into the 4-H activities and events that I work with.	1	2	3	1	2	3

- Please list at least two ideas or skills that you learned as a result of this presentation.
  
- How will you use what you learned in this presentation?



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