

# **Shows Frustration with Homework (Learning Modalities)**

Many people fail to appreciate that the way children learn might be very unique to them. This means they have their own style because of their preference to use one sensory modality more than others. For instance, a child might naturally learn better by seeing and visualizing something. Another child might learn faster by hearing and thinking about sounds and words. Another might prefer to be a "hands on" learner who wants to touch and move things in order to learn about them. When your child seems frustrated with homework, it might be because he or she is being asked to use a sensory modality that is not preferred. Review the activity and learn the characteristics of each learning modality and teach them to your children. They will be able to adapt what they do to learn and their learning rate will improve.

## **Activity #1**

Have your child take the Learning Modalities Test at the end of this lesson. Follow the instructions given. Make a copy of the Learning Style Characteristics sheet and go over it with your child. Ask her to decide which set of statements (Visual, Auditory, or Kinesthetic) seems most like her. A child's dominant learning style is indicated by the set of statements that best describes that child.

## **Activity #2**

Go over the following characteristics of different learning modalities. Ask your child to see which one best describes her.

## **LEARNING MODALITY CHARACTERISTICS**

### **👁 Visual**

- Learn best by seeing the information.
- Learn fast, but forget equally fast.
- Recall is helped by writing information down.
- Drawing pictures, charts, and diagrams is helpful.
- Using colors to organize notes and visualizing information is also helpful.

### ☞ Audio

- Learn best by hearing the information.
- May be helped by using a tape recorder and by making up rhymes or songs.
- It is also helpful to study with others, verbally quiz each other, talk over concepts, etc.
- Participating in class discussion is also beneficial.

### ☞ Kinesthetic

- Learn best by using body in the learning process.
- They need to write down the information or have hands-on experience with it in order to learn it.
- Highlighting information with a marker or squeezing something in one hand can be helpful.
- Taking frequent breaks and walking around while studying can be beneficial.

How can knowing that you are a visual, audio, or kinesthetic learner help you to use your brain better?

## Activity #3

Read the following information together with your child. Ask her to pay attention to those statements that seem most like her.

## Learning Style Characteristics

### ☞ VISUAL LEARNERS

- When remembering items, I try to visualize them.
- When taking notes, I like to doodle, draw pictures in the margins, or use colors.
- I have a hard time understanding what people are saying.
- I enjoy doing puzzles.
- When taking a test, I often remember where on the page of my notes or textbook the answer is.
- I like to be aware of my appearance — how my clothes look, how my hair is behaving, etc.
- It is much easier for me to follow a map than to follow verbal instructions.

## 🌀 AUDITORY LEARNERS

- I can remember things that I hear better than things that I read.
- When reading, I often mix up words that look the same, like “though” and “thought.”
- I have an “ear for music” (I can distinguish notes, tone, etc.)
- I would rather listen to someone tell me things than read a textbook.
- When I write, I tend to cross-out words and erase a lot — it looks kind of messy.
- It is easier for me to follow verbal instructions than written instructions.
- Reading and writing are tiring and difficult for me.

## 🌀 KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

- I learn best by actually doing something, such as doing a lab in science.
- When studying, I like to get up and walk around frequently.
- It helps me to learn something if I can watch someone else do it first.
- I often speak with my hands (meaning I use hand motions while speaking).
- I am good at physical activities such as dance and sports.
- I tend to use a trial-and-error approach to solving problems rather than logically thinking through the problem.
- I can quickly learn physical tasks, such as how to use tools or a sewing machine.

**MY LEARNING STYLE IS:**

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**CHARACTERISTICS OF MY LEARNING STYLE ARE:**

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### **Activity #4**

Pick a subject such as “driving a car.” Ask your child to talk about how she could learn about this using all three different learning styles.

For example, a visual learner should demonstrate how drawings, charts, diagrams, could be used to learn how to drive a car.

### **Activity #5**

Teach a simple lesson that uses all three learning styles. For example, teach your child that the cerebral cortex is the outer part of the brain by:

- (1) drawing a picture.
- (2) giving a verbal explanation.
- (3) having your child make her hands into fists and put them together. (The fingers represent the cerebral cortex, and the hands together are about the size of the brain.)

The purpose of this activity is to help children recognize the value of using more than one learning style.

### **Activity #6**

How could you use your learning style to learn math?  
Give the following examples:

#### **🌀 Visual**

The multiplication problem  $3 \times 2$  could be drawn as three groups of two dots or two groups of three dots. Word problems can be drawn out.

#### **🌀 Audio**

Chant, "A negative times a negative is a positive!"

#### **🌀 Kinesthetic**

Use manipulatives. Do problems on fingers.

How could you use your learning style when reading?  
Give the following examples:

#### **🌀 Visual**

Visualize, draw pictures, highlight with colors, etc.

### 🔊 Audio

Read out loud or repeat confusing sentences out loud, such as, “Assemble part 4597 into the hydrostatic cylinder slot 1563, being sure not to cross wire 8359530 with wire 8359531.”

### 👉 Kinesthetic

Take notes, underline, highlight, take breaks, and walk around.

## **Tie it Together**

Remind your child that her learning can increase and be enhanced when she understands, first, what her preferred mode of learning is and, second, that she can and should use all three learning styles when learning something new or doing homework. If you notice her getting frustrated in the future, ask her to apply different learning styles and see if she feels more confident and successful.

## **Learning Modalities Test**

This is an informal test that measures children’s ability to process and temporarily store small bits of information. The results of the test should help children identify which of the learning styles is most natural and efficient for them: visual, audio, or kinesthetic. However, the results of this test are not one-hundred-percent conclusive. Instead, the results suggest a more dominant learning style that children should evaluate against their lifelong experience.

Instructions: Do the three memory activities with your child (order does not matter). As you do the activities, look for the following physical characteristics in your child and mark a V for Visual, A for Audio, and K for Kinesthetic. Children may demonstrate more than one characteristic.

### **VISUAL LEARNERS**

They tend to look up or close their eyes when trying to recall the words. (They’re trying to picture the words in their minds.)

### **AUDIO LEARNERS**

They tend to mouth the words. You might even hear them whispering the words. (They’re trying to recreate the sound of the words in their minds.)

## **KINESTHETIC LEARNERS**

They tend to use their hands a lot when trying to recall the words. They may count on their fingers, tap their pencil, fidget around a lot, write words with their finger, or even smack their head.

### **Visual Activity**

1. Write the following list of words in pencil or on a white board, and then have your child memorize them without writing or saying the words out loud.

*chalkboard, freeway, cousin, globe, typewriter, exit, basket*

2. Soon after you have written the words, erase them.

3. Ask your child to write down the number of words she can remember.

### **Auditory Activity**

1. Have your child memorize, without writing or saying the words out loud, the following list of words as you say them. Read the words slowly and repeat the list twice.

*file cabinet, kitchen, sidewalk, laundry, rubber bands, pasta, computer*

2. Have your child write down the number of words she can remember (Make sure she doesn't repeat the words out loud or write them down.)

### **Kinesthetic Activity**

1. Tell your child to write down the following words as you read them orally:

*office, carpool, outlet, lagoon, snowstorm, clock, telephone*

2. When she finishes writing down the words, have her turn her paper over and write down as many of the words as she can remember.

### **Interpreting the Results**

Explain that your child just completed a Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic memory activity. Ask her to identify the memory activities she did the best on. The activity an individual child did best on is probably his or her dominant (most natural)

learning style. Also, talk about the physical learning style characteristics and let her know if you marked an A, V, or K to describe her.