

Effective Independent Learning



Workbook

Workbook

Intro

Welcome to “Effective Independent Learning.”

Topics: metacognition, motivation, concentration, eliminating distractions, self-regulation, and learning preferences.

This workbook is intended to provide additional resources to those utilized in the online learning module and will provide key definitions, an overview of concepts and skills, as well as space to practice new techniques.

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Reflection

Emailing Your Professor

The 7 “C”s of online communication: a checklist

Clarity:

Is what you are trying to say clearly conveyed and easy to understand?

Is your language simplified? (Remember that sometimes complicated words misrepresent what you might be trying to say.)

Completeness:

Have you provide a complete picture of the needs you would like your professor to address?

Have you addressed who, what, where, why, when and how, within your email?

Conciseness:

Is your email brief?

Have you eliminated repetition from your email?

Have you removed any unrelated information or lengthy explanations from your email?

Concreteness:

Is your communication accurate?

Correctness:

Have you proof read your email?

Is your email free from typos, grammar issues and punctuation problems?

Courtesy:

Is the tone of your email natural?

Is your email polite?

Consideration:

Have you adjusted your tone to reflect who you are emailing?

Will your email reflect positively on you?

Here are some additional resources to consider before you press send:

Netiquette: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Sentence Clarity: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/600/01/>

Activities

Activity

VARK

Choose the answer which best explains your preference and click the letter(s) next to it.

Please click more than one if a single answer does not match your perception.

Leave blank any question that does not apply.

1. You are helping someone who wants to go to your airport, town centre or railway station. You would:

- a. go with her.
- b. tell her the directions.
- c. write down the directions (without a map).
- d. draw, or give her a map.

2. You are not sure whether a word should be spelt 'dependent' or 'dependant'. You would:

- a. see the words in your mind and choose by the way they look.
- b. think about how each word sounds and choose one.
- c. find it in a dictionary.
- d. write both words on paper and choose one.

3. You are planning a holiday for a group. You want some feedback from them about the plan. You would:

- a. describe some of the highlights.
- b. use a map or website to show them the places.
- c. give them a copy of the printed itinerary.
- d. phone, text or email them.

4. You are going to cook something as a special treat for your family. You would:

- a. cook something you know without the need for instructions.
- b. ask friends for suggestions.
- c. look through the cookbook for ideas from the pictures.
- d. use a cookbook where you know there is a good recipe.

5. A group of tourists want to learn about the parks or wildlife reserves in your area. You would:

- a. talk about, or arrange a talk for them about parks or wildlife reserves.
- b. show them Internet pictures, photographs or picture books.
- c. take them to a park or wildlife reserve and walk with them.
- d. give them a book or pamphlets about the parks or wildlife reserves.

Activity

VARK

6. You are about to purchase a digital camera or mobile phone. Other than price, what would most influence your decision?

- a. trying or testing it.
- b. reading the details about its features.
- c. its modern design and looking good.
- d. the salesperson telling me about its features.

7. Remember a time when you learned how to do something new. Try to avoid choosing a physical skill, e.g., riding a bike.

You learn best by:

- a. watching a demonstration.
- b. listening to somebody explaining it and asking questions.
- c. diagrams and charts - visual clues.
- d. written instructions - e.g. a manual or textbook.

8. You have a problem with your knee. You would prefer that the doctor:

- a. gave you a web address or something to read about it.
- b. used a plastic model of a knee to show what was wrong.
- c. described what was wrong.
- d. showed you a diagram of what was wrong.

9. You want to learn a new program, skill or game on a computer. You would:

- a. read the written instructions that came with the program.
- b. talk with people who know about the program.
- c. use the controls or keyboard.
- d. follow the diagrams in the book that came with it.

10. You like websites that have:

- a. things you can click on, shift or try.
- b. interesting design and visual features.
- c. interesting written descriptions, lists and explanations.
- d. audio channels where you can hear music, radio programs or interviews.

11. Other than price, what would most influence your decision to buy a new non-fiction book?

- a. The way it looks is appealing.
- b. Quickly reading parts of it.
- c. A friend talks about it and recommends it.
- d. It has real-life stories, experiences and examples.

Activity

VARK

12. You are using a book, CD or website to learn how to take photos with your new digital camera. You would like to have:

- a. a chance to ask questions and talk about the camera and its features.
- b. clear written instructions with lists and bullet points about what to do.
- c. diagrams showing the camera and what each part does.
- d. many examples of good and poor photos and how to improve them.

13. Do you prefer a teacher or a presenter who uses:

- a. demonstrations, models or practical sessions.
- b. question and answer, talk, group discussion, or guest speakers.
- c. handouts, books, or readings.
- d. diagrams, charts or graphs.

14. You have finished a competition or test and would like some feedback. You would like to have feedback:

- a. using examples from what you have done.
- b. using a written description of your results.
- c. from somebody who talks it through with you.
- d. using graphs showing what you had achieved.

15. You are going to choose food at a restaurant or cafe. You would:

- a. choose something that you have had there before.
- b. listen to the waiter or ask friends to recommend choices.
- c. choose from the descriptions in the menu.
- d. look at what others are eating or look at pictures of each dish.

16. You have to make an important speech at a conference or special occasion. You would:

- a. make diagrams or get graphs to help explain things.
- b. write a few key words and practise saying your speech over and over.
- c. write out your speech and learn from reading it over several times.
- d. gather many examples and stories to make the talk real and practical.

VARK score

Use the scoring chart to find the VARK category that each of your answers corresponds to. Select the letters that correspond to your answers.

E.g., if you answered b and c for question 3, select V and R in the question 3 row.

Scoring Chart

Question	a category	b category	c category	d category
1	K	A	R	V
2	V	A	R	K
3	K	V	R	A
4	K	A	V	R
5	A	V	K	R
6	K	R	V	A
7	K	A	V	R
8	R	K	A	V
9	R	A	K	V
10	K	V	R	A
11	V	R	A	K
12	A	R	V	K
13	K	A	R	V
14	K	R	A	V
15	K	A	R	V
16	V	A	R	K

Understanding your score

Count the number of each of the VARK letters you have circled to get your score for each VARK category.

Total number of **V**s circled =

Total number of **A**s circled =

Total number of **R**s circled =

Total number of **K**s circled =

VARK lets people know how much of a visual, auditory, read/write, or kinesthetic learning preference they have. Take some time to compare your VARK answers; the higher you have scored in any particular section means that you have a stronger preference for that type of learning style.

What Does VARK Mean?

Visual Learning Strategies

Aural Learning Strategies

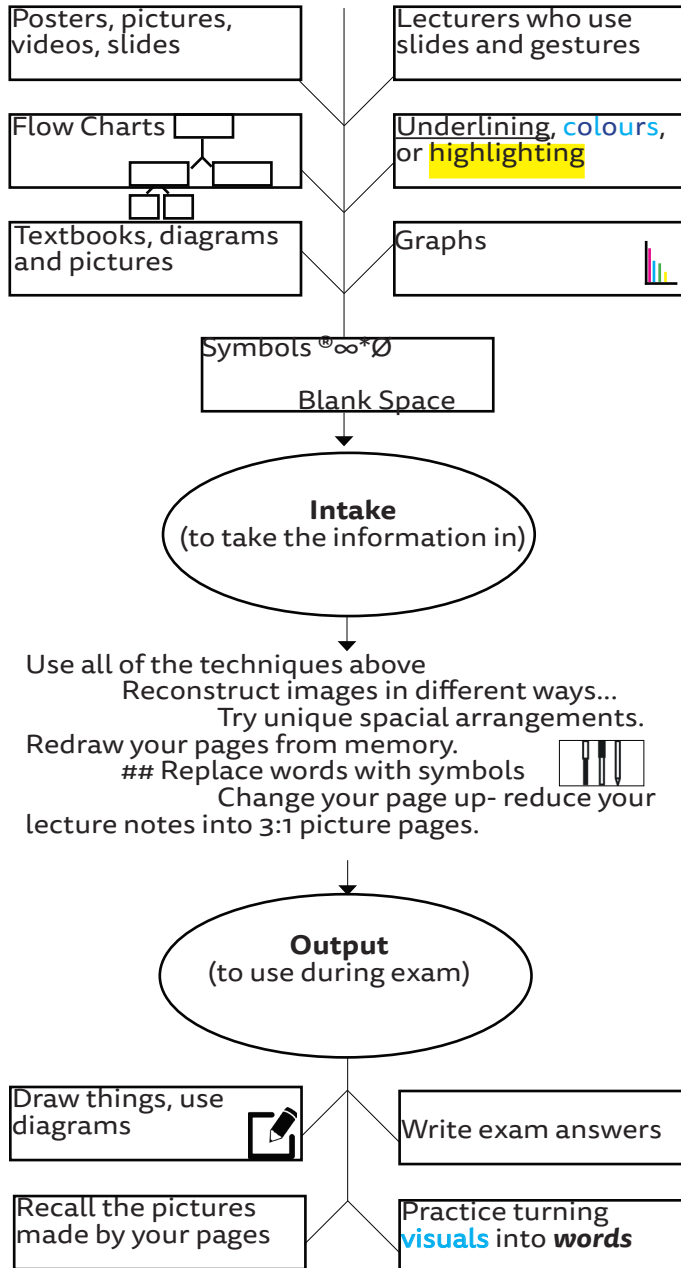
Read/Write Learning Strategies

Kinaesthetic Learning Strategies

VARK Reflection

Visual

If your VARK assessment stated that you have a strong preference for learning by Visual ("V") methods, you should use the following learning strategies:



As a visual learner:

- you want the whole picture so you are probably holistic rather than reductionist in your approach.
- you are often swayed by the look of an object.
- you are interested in colour and layout and design.
- you know where you are in your environment.
- you are probably going to draw something.

VARK Reflection

Aural

If your VARK assessment stated that you have a strong preference for learning by aural (“A”) methods you can try some or all of the following:

To take in the information:

- attend classes.
- attend discussions and tutorials.
- discuss topics with others.
- discuss topics with your teachers.
- explain new ideas to other people.
- use a tape recorder.
- remember the interesting examples, stories, jokes ...
- describe the overheads, pictures and other visuals to somebody who was not there.
- leave spaces in your notes for later recall and ‘filling’.

To make a study/learning package:

- convert your “notes” into a package that you can learn from by reducing them by a third.
- your notes may be poor because you prefer to listen. Try to expand your notes by talking with others and collecting notes from the textbook.
- put your summarized notes onto tapes and listen to them.
- ask others to “hear” your understanding of a topic.
- read your summarized notes aloud.
- explain your notes to another “aural” person.

To perform well in any test, assignment, or examination:

- imagine talking with the examiner.
- recall past conversations and write ideas or information down.
- spend time in quiet places recalling the ideas.
- practise writing answers to old exam questions.
- speak your answers aloud or inside your head.

As an aural learner:

- you prefer to have this page explained to you.
- the written words are not as valuable as those you hear.
- you will probably go and tell somebody about this.

VARK Reflection

Read/Write

If your VARK assessment stated that you have a strong preference for learning by reading and writing (“R”) methods you can try some or all of the following:

To take in the information:

- create lists of topics to cover.
- create a glossary of key terms and their definitions.
- read the textbook and any additional class handouts.
- do additional readings from related books found in the library.
- take notes in class and re-read the notes after class.
- read or create your own manuals for computing and laboratory classes.

To make a study/learning package:

- write out the words again and again.
- read your notes again and again.
- rewrite the ideas and principles into other words.
- organize any diagrams and principles into other words.
- turn reactions, actions, diagrams, charts and flow charts into words.
- imagine your lists arranged in multiple choice questions and distinguish each from each.

To perform well in any test, assignment, or examination:

- write exam answers
- practice with multiple choice questions.
- write paragraphs, beginnings, and endings.
- write your lists (a, b, c, d, 1, 2, 3, 4)
- arrange your words into hierarchies and points.

As a read/write learner:

- you like this page because the emphasis is on words and lists.
- you believe the meanings are within the words, so any talk is okay, but this handout is better.
- you are heading for the library.

VARK Reflection

Kinaesthetic

If your VARK assessment stated that you have a strong Kinaesthetic preference for learning (“K”) you should use some or all of the following:

To take in the information:

- use all your senses – sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing.
- attend any laboratories and field trips related to the course.
- find examples and applications of the principles covered in the course.
- use hands-on approaches to learning, i.e., computing.
- find and record exhibits, samples, and photographs relating to the course material.
- record all solutions to practice problems.
- seek previous exam papers.

To make a study/learning package:

- your lecture notes may be poor because the topics were not “concrete” or “relevant”.
- you will remember the “real” things that happened.
- put plenty of examples into your summary. Use case studies and applications to help with principles and abstract concepts.
- talk about your notes with another “K” person.
- use pictures and photographs that illustrate an idea.
- go back to the laboratory or your lab manual.
- recall the experiments or field trips.

To make a study/learning package:

- write practice answers and paragraphs.
- roleplay the exam situation in your own room.

As a kinaesthetic learner:

- you want to experience the exam so that you can understand it.
- the ideas on this page are only valuable if they sound practical, real, and relevant to you.
- you need to do things to understand.

Activity

Study Distraction Analysis

Concentration is the number one problem for many students. Frequently, the problem is one of finding a place to study where there are no external distractions. External distractions are those that originate outside the body, for example, telephone calls, visitors, and noises.

This checklist will help you analyze distractions in the places you study.

List the three places where you usually study in the order in which you use them most:

Place A

Place B

Place C

Select True or False as it applies to each of your listed study spaces

Possible External Distractions

1. Much of what I can see here reminds me of things that don't have

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

2. I can often hear the radio or TV when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

3. Other people often interrupt me when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

4. I can often hear the phone ringing when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

5. I take a lot of breaks when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

6. I seem to be especially bothered by distractions when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

7. I usually don't study here at a regular time each week.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

8. I take long breaks when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

9. I tend to start conversations with people when I study here.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

10. I spend time on the phone here that I should be using for study.

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

11. The lighting here is not very bright (or is too bright).

Place A True False

Place B True False

Place C True False

Review your answers. The study space that you answered “false” to the most is your ideal study space.

My Ideal Study Space Is:

Reflection

SELF REFLECTION

Review of... Online Learning Readiness

After completing the OLR questionnaire how do you feel about your readiness for online learning?

According to your OLR results, what is your greatest strength?

According to your OLR results, what is your greatest challenge?

How can you use your strengths to leverage your online learner experience and overcome your challenges?

If you run into difficulty, who can you talk to for further advice on mitigating your challenges?

SELF REFLECTION

Review of... Concentration Questionnaire

Make a list of things that tend to distract you while learning.

Reflect on your distractions and organize them from most distracting to least distracting:

Brainstorm possible solutions to mitigate your number one distraction and improve your concentration.

Choose one solution and explain how you are going to apply it over the next week.

If you run into difficulty, who can you talk to for further advice on improving your concentration level?

SELF REFLECTION

Review of... MAI

Define metacognition:

Describe the relationship between metacognition and learning.

Based on your MAI results, select two metacognitive scales that you want to improve upon.

Briefly describe what you already know about these scales.

How can improving these specific scales better you as an online learner?

SELF REFLECTION

Review of... MAI

Brainstorm at least six metacognitive strategies you could use to further develop these scales.

Select one of these metacognitive strategies to focus on over the next two weeks. Describe how you are going to use this strategy in your learning.

If you run into difficulty, who can you talk to for further advice on implementing your chosen metacognitive strategy?

Increasing Concentration by Decreasing Distractions

The failure to concentrate on the study task can be one of the greatest obstacles to efficient use of your studying time.

Not only does this behaviour waste time, it can become an ingrained habit, causing you to put off an assignment indefinitely or, even worse, foster a false sense of diligence. In short, you can easily fool yourself into thinking that, because you just can't seem to get down to the task, the time just isn't right and you should therefore put it off until ... well, whenever. You may also feel that, because you have spent three hours "studying", you must be working hard.

This kind of inefficient study habit is all too human; in fact, to eliminate all distractions and concentrate 100% of the time could represent a very short road to social isolation and near lunacy.

Thus, if you have trouble paying attention to a problem for more than a few minutes at a time, if you find yourself re-reading paragraphs or even pages because you don't remember what you've read, if you find yourself doodling, drowsing, or daydreaming, your real goal should be, not to eliminate all distractions, but to distinguish between those which you can do something about and those which you cannot foresee.

You may find that it's not simply a matter of being interrupted, but of wanting to be interrupted.

External Distractions

It is often assumed that external distractions (telephone, stereos, conversations, roommates' annoying habits, television and so on) are uncontrollable.

This assumption sometimes holds true, but it may also result from the failure to discover a suitable place to study.

Your aim should be to find a regular spot that offers a minimum of external distractions.

In the end you may never find an ideal study place, but you may benefit from some of these suggestions:

The Right Place to Study

Where possible, make sure that you use your study place for studying, not for reading magazines, playing with calculators, talking with friends, or other pleasurable activities. The point is to build up an association between studying and your study place so that it becomes a way of prompting work, not avoiding it. However, if you begin to see this habit as a kind of voluntary imprisonment, it may help to move occasionally to your second-best spot.

Notes

Increasing Concentration by Decreasing Distractions

Remove Distracting Objects

Try to eliminate interesting objects from your line of sight, especially things related to your hobbies or interests. The material on your desk should, within reasonable limits, be related to studying.

Check Your Surroundings

Ensure that your study area has proper lighting, a moderately comfortable chair, and a desk or table large enough to spread out all your work. You should also ensure that your study table or desk is well stocked with necessary items (paper, pen, pencils, calculator, and so on). You can all too easily excuse your unwillingness to work on the lack of supplies.

Music

If you like to study with music in the background, make sure it doesn't unduly distract you. Music can sometimes disrupt attempts to study rather than enhance them. (If you find yourself singing along to the lyrics, you may be working at less than full capacity.)

Learn to Say No

When you know that you should be studying but friends or roommates ask you to socialize, cultivate the art of the occasional "no". If you're a little short of willpower, you might try some kind of "do not disturb" sign on your door. However, if doing this makes you feel like the resident "nerd", you might try something else to indicate that you don't really want interruptions. One student in a rather hectic university residence wears a small scarf to show others that she is serious about studying; another student prefers to wear his Engineering cap as a similar signal. No matter how silly such tricks may appear, the point is that, for these students at least, they worked!

Internal Distractions

It's bad enough to have distractions thrust upon you, but it's even worse to create them yourself.

Of course, worries, daydreams, fantasies, or thoughts about uncompleted tasks can and should never be entirely eliminated.

Yet, if you find that they occupy too much of your time, you may be able to cut down on this behaviour substantially, not merely through more rigorous willpower, but also by determined planning.

Here are a few suggestions:

Notes

Increasing Concentration by Decreasing Distractions

Do the Important Work First

Resist the temptation to complete household chores or even fairly mindless homework before you begin the really important or difficult work. Both kinds of tasks can be used to avoid the more difficult work and to exaggerate your sense of accomplishment

Know When You Work Best

If you easily become bored or tired, schedule study periods for the times of day when you are most alert; divide your study time among different subjects, and plan study breaks into your schedule to reward your concentration.

Make Your Subject Interesting

Boredom may also result from the unavoidable dreariness of the course material or professor. However, in theory there are no uninteresting subjects, merely uninterested people (so much for theories). At any rate, if the subject matter has little appeal for you, you may have to create some. In other words, ask yourself why so many people are studying this subject, determine why your faculty thinks this course is absolutely necessary, find out what skills or knowledge you are likely to gain, associate the subject with your favourite course. Whatever you do, don't fall too often upon the excuse that you can't study something because "it's boring."

Keep to Your Usual Routine

Don't change your sleeping, eating or exercise habits. It has been proved repeatedly that the ability to concentrate depends to a large degree on the regularity of your sleeping and eating patterns.

Put Worries Aside

If frequent worry undermines your concentration, you might try writing down your worries, and what you might do about them. In other words, you transfer the problem from your head to the paper by resolving to do something about it later. However, this is not to suggest that worries can be treated so casually all of the time. At some point, you may find it best to talk out your problem with friends, parents, or counsellors.

Notes

Increasing Concentration by Decreasing Distractions

The Check Mark System

Should you find that no amount of willpower will curb your daydreaming or fantasizing, you might try the check mark system, a technique that involves putting a check mark on a piece of paper each time you become conscious of a distracting thought. After one study period, you count the number of check marks and resolve, before your next study period, to reduce them as much as possible. Some students have found that timing their periods of concentration has helped them to become conscious of the amount and duration of their distractions.

Have a Purpose in your Reading

Lack of attention in reading can sometimes be a result of having no specific purpose. In fact, people often find themselves re-reading passages because they have failed to survey their reading assignment first to get an idea of what they are going to learn or what questions they will have answered at the end.

Notes

Review of Multiple Intelligences Quiz

SELF REFLECTION

Bodily Kinesthetic Learners

Being a Bodily-Kinesthetic learner means that you are comfortable connecting your mind and your body. You may be particularly good at controlling your movements, improving your health and fitness, and maintaining a great awareness of your senses and coordination. Some Bodily-Kinesthetic learners find their learning is maximized using techniques like moving around while they learn, pacing, reciting information, using their finger as a guide while reading, or acting out materials and making games.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- remember, it's okay to take a break from your reading take some time to break up the material by stretching or going for a walk
- pace while reviewing or repeating key concepts

Note Taking

- try to make your notes as hands-on as possible. Try playing with resources like large pieces of paper, colourful pens or digital resources like Google SketchUp to make 3D graphic notes
- make sure that you have room to sprawl out materials and change positions as often as you need to

Test Preparation

- recite important concepts out loud.
- create a model of or act out challenging concepts

Writing

- for researching, use a number of sources that have related information
- take breaks while brainstorming to do something physical like go for a run or stretch. Try to focus on your main ideas while being active to help further develop your brainstorming

Communication

- when discussing something important, try talking while walking
- try to work out and burn off any extra energy before having important conversations

Stress Management

- physical activities will help you eliminate tension. Try creating a regular activity routine
- plan fun activities to fill your free time, like going out dancing, hiking or rowing



SELF REFLECTION

Verbal-Linguistic Learner

Being a verbal-linguistic learner means that you excel at remembering terms, explaining concepts, telling stories, teaching and that you're likely pretty funny. Verbal-linguistic learners have a good understanding of syntax and the meaning of words, they also excel at convincing other people to do something. Some verbal-linguistic learners find that they learn best and maximize their studying by reading and highlighting their notes and textbooks, rewriting notes, creating outlines about chapters of lectures, teaching concepts to other people or reciting information or participating in debates.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- try to keep marginal notes while you read course content
- make an effort to write down summaries and questions regarding the things you are reading

Note Taking

- rewrite the important things you recorded in your class notes from memory
- write out summaries for your notes

Test Preparation

- write out and try to answer questions you think your instructor might ask on a test
- underline key words in review questions

Writing

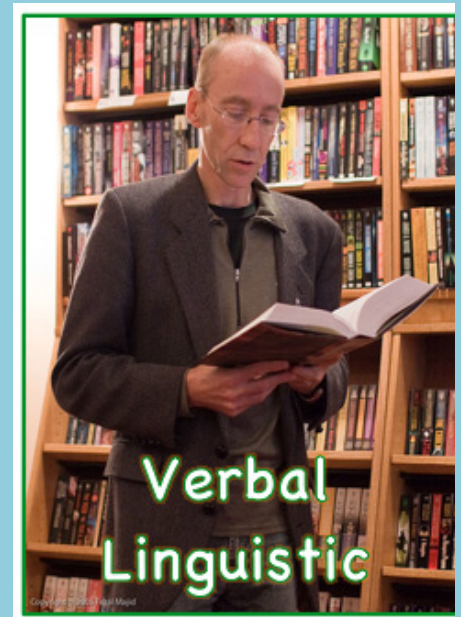
- try to find as many sources as you can and take notes as you read the content. Summarize the main points of these notes to help better hone in your research
- interview people about the topic while recording notes

Communication

- find time to vent your thoughts and feelings. You can share with another person, or record your thoughts
- make an active effort to find the importance in listening

Stress Management

- keep a journal of the things that stress you out
- make time to communicate with your friends, whether it's through email, snail mail, on the phone or in person



SELF REFLECTION

Visual-Spatial Learner

Being a visual-spatial learner means that you are able to perceive and form objects accurately, and you're good at understanding relationships between objects, portraying things graphically, developing images and finding your way in space. Some visual-spatial learners find it helpful to create graphics to represent the information they are learning. Visual-spatial intelligence can be maximized by trying to create mind maps, charts or by organizing notes by colour and trying to visualize or imagine the material being learned.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- while reading, take advantage of visual aids like pictures and graphs
- try to illustrate the concepts you are learning and make links to other difficult material you encounter

Note Taking

- take your notes in coloured pens or using colourful fonts
- rewrite your notes in a way that visually links difficult and important points from the content

Test Preparation

- create a mind map linking important topics. Study this map, and redraw it from memory before your test
- make doodles or illustrations that relate to test topics

Writing

- create colourful graphics while reading your research resources to help you remember and contextualize important information
- create a visual chart to map your thesis, subtopics and related research. Coordinate your topics based on colours.

Communication

- draw out the points you want to make during an important discussion
- if you're doing a presentation, use visual cues to explain your most important points

Stress Management

- enjoy aesthetically-pleasing things. Take some time to see an exhibit, create something, see an art-house film or take some photos
- create a visual map to help you get out of a stressful situation



SELF REFLECTION

Logical-Mathematical Learner

If you are a logical-mathematical learner, you likely thrive at developing abstract patterns, using inductive and deductive reasoning skills, understanding how relationships and connections function, performing complicated calculations and thinking in a scientific way. Some logical-mathematical learners find that their learning is improved by organizing new material logically, explaining things in sequence, creating systems or finding patterns, writing outlines as graphs or charts and analyzing content.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- always read material in sequential order
- try to make logical connections between what you're reading and the world around you

Note Taking

- record important content as an outline
- clarify any ideas you do not understand by making charts

Test Preparation

- create charts or diagrams of practice questions
- organize the key points you think you will be tested on into an outline

Writing

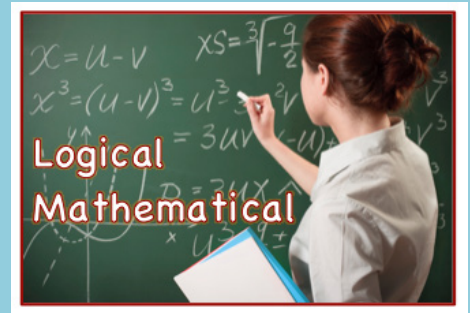
- record your research onto cue cards and arrange them according to topics
- create a detailed outline of your assignment, lay everything out in sequential order and focus on ensuring that your argument makes sense

Communication

- try to think things through before discussing them. It might help to write your arguments out on paper
- try to come to terms with the fact that other styles of communication may not seem as logical as the method with which you're most familiar

Stress Management

- use planning as a means to work through a problem
- analyze means to use your stress positively



SELF REFLECTION

Musical-Rhythmic Learner

If you are a musical-rhythmic learner you are likely good at discerning tones, creating melodies and understanding the structure of music. Musical-rhythmic learners are also often sensitive to sounds and aware of rhythms. Some musical-rhythmic learners find that they learn best when they create a beat or a rhythm to represent words, take musical breaks and play instruments while contemplating concepts or writing raps and music to explain things they know or understand.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- try having music playing while you read
- recite important concepts rhythmically

Note Taking

- have music playing while you review your notes
- create a song that summarizes material from your class and use the refrain to highlight the main points

Test Preparation

- play music that does not distract you while you review
- create jingles, rhymes and beats while reciting the information you find most challenging

Writing

- listen to ambient music or sounds that you find calming while trying to research and brainstorm key points for your writing

Communication

- try having soothing music play while you are involved in an important conversation, but be sure it isn't distracting to anyone else

Stress Management

- play or listen to music that you find the most inspiring
- write songs about the things that are stressing you out or bothering you



SELF REFLECTION

Intrapersonal Learner

If you are an intrapersonal learner, you are probably very aware of your own thinking and how to convey your feelings. Intrapersonal learners are often good at understanding where they fit in regards to relationships with those around them and thinking about things at a higher level. Intrapersonal learners can maximize their intelligence by trying to reflect on the way information relates to them personally, keeping a journal, studying in quiet spaces or visualizing content.

Ways to improve...

Reading

- read by yourself and try to be reflective
- try to consider how content makes you feel and compare that to material you are already aware of.

Note Taking

- schedule time alone after a lecture to reread and consider your notes.

Test Preparation

- spend some time creating a sample test, then take a break and take your sample test the next day.
- be sure to engage in review while you're alone.

Writing

- spend time considering the assignment's topic; use your instincts as a guide while researching and beginning your paper.
- schedule quiet research time

Communication

- if you experience a challenging conversation, take some time to think it over. Contemplate what went on and how to effectively approach the matter next time.
- consider the fact that you may have to communicate things more explicitly than you thought you'd have to in order for others to properly understand what you are trying to convey.

Stress Management

- take time to be alone and think through the things that are making you feel stressed.
- give yourself a few minutes a day to visualize positive outcomes to the scenarios making you feel stressed.



SELF REFLECTION

Interpersonal Learner

If you are an interpersonal learner you are probably good at understanding other people's points of view, working as part of a team, communicating verbally and through body language, and you are probably great at maintaining strong relationships. Interpersonal learners can maximize their intelligence while studying with others, chatting about concepts, participating in memory exercises with others or by teaching.

How to improve...

Reading

- create a reading group in which participants take turns silently reading and summarizing the key points of paragraphs to one another
- chat about any points you may need to clarify after reading or participate in a study group

Note Taking

- try to have your study group meet right after class to go over notes
- establish a study buddy to discuss what you're learning

Test Preparation

- in your study group work to create a mock test and ask each other potential questions orally, in order to discuss the answers out loud

Writing

- talk to other students in your course about your research
- pair up with someone to peer edit and provide a constructive critique

Communication

- try to understand how you communicate with others- if you tend to dominate conversations, take a step back and focus on communicating effectively
- consider the importance of listening

Stress Management

- spend time with people who care about you
- try listening to other people who are stressed as well



SELF REFLECTION

Naturalistic Learner

If you are a naturalistic learner, you probably have a deep connection to the natural world, are able to relate new knowledge to the natural world, are able to distinguish details between similar things (e.g. animals, flowers, rocks), and you probably have a more holistic view of the world, including learning. Naturalistic learners find that they learn best by studying in a natural environment, with like-minded people, by organizing their learning into categories and sub-categories, and by linking new knowledge to existing knowledge and the “big picture.” Sometimes it is difficult to study outdoors due to the weather. Try creating a study environment indoors that mimics your ideal natural environment with plants, water features, and nature sounds.

How to improve...

Reading

- try to read and study outside
- If you must read indoors, engage in meditating on your favorite nature place before hand to help you get in the mood to read

Note Taking

- review your notes outside
- go through and summarize your notes with nature sounds on in the background- whether that means an open window and birds singing or a YouTube nature sounds mix

Test Preparation

- study in an outdoor space that inspires you

Writing

- engage with research topics that relate to the natural world
- relate your writing structure to a time you overcame natural obstacles- like the process of climbing a mountain or a tree in order to feel more confident

Communication

- try to engage in important conversations outside
- if you have a difficult interaction, try to consider the scenario and imagine how you might have responded differently if the interaction had been outside

Stress Management

- spend as much time outdoors as possible
- listen to nature sounds to help relax



Wrap Up

Key Terms

Metacognition

A student's ability to monitor and reflect on their learning process to ensure that they comprehend what they are learning.

Metacognitive strategy

A learning strategy that is designed to assist students in monitoring and reflecting on their learning process to ensure comprehension. (E.g. A student who summarizes what they have just read allows them to assess whether (a) they remember what they have read, and (b), whether they have determined the most important points to include in their summary. By including the most important points the student has to view the information they have read in the larger context of the chapter, textbook, subject, and course to assess its importance. The student also needs to reflect on their own existing knowledge and understanding of the subject to assess whether they already know the information and whether it still needs to be included in the summary).

Multiple Intelligences

Developed by Dr. Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences Theory states that there are at least eight distinct intelligences possessed by people and that some intelligences may be more fully developed than others. The way one learns can be influenced by the strengths and weaknesses of their various intelligence factors.

Self-Directed Learner

A student's ability to determine the learning objectives and goals for a learning session, and the strategies and resources necessary to complete these objectives and goals (e.g. to complete my essay, I need to first develop a research question and if I have difficulty, discuss possible research questions with my instructor).

Self-Regulate

A student's ability to control their behaviour and actions in order to complete a task (e.g. putting off playing video games to read a chapter of a textbook).

Further Reading

The 7 Cs of Effective Communication in Your Online Course - OnlineCollege.org. (2011). Retrieved July 16, 2015, from <http://www.onlinecollege.org/2011/09/16/the-7-cs-of-effective-communication-in-your-online-course/>

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Web Apps to avoid distractions

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Online Resources

**Web Apps
to avoid distractions:**

Strict Workflow

Stay Focused