

Learning Approaches

An important consideration in ministering to children (and to youth and adults as well) is learning styles. This resource is provided to help you evaluate this specific area within your ministries. In other words, do we minister to every type of learner or focus in on just one style? To be most effective, it is important that we include every learning style in our ministry with children.

Approaches to Learning

- ❖ Visual
- ❖ Auditory
- ❖ Tactile / Kinesthetic
- ❖ Meditative

First of all no matter what the learning preference, we should recognize and draw attention to God's presence. For us learning is first and foremost about building a relationship with God.

We tend to measure learning by retention and behavior.

In other words, the preferred way of learning is that which helps a student better retain the information and live into it.

Each of us has a preferred way of learning. The trick is providing a meaningful way of including each learning strength within the context of our individual learning environments while being attentive to God.

Here are some ideas for the student who is more receptive to:

Visual Elements:

Environment: Colorful images and objects

- ❖ Video clips,
- ❖ Show & tell,
- ❖ Art: using variety of mediums to tell the story
- ❖ Visual aids
- ❖ Categorizing
- ❖ Picture symbolism
- ❖ Shadow drama
- ❖ Stick figure drawing or cartooning
- ❖ Puppets
- ❖ Expression match

Auditory Elements:

Environment: Meaningful, ordered sound. Quiet background music, sounds of nature, or mood music. Sounds should not compete with each other but harmonize.

- ❖ Tape stories,
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Readings
- ❖ Listening
- ❖ Auditory illustrations
- ❖ Singing
- ❖ Brainstorming
- ❖ Interview
- ❖ Story telling
- ❖ Discussion

Tactile/Kinesthetic Elements:

Environment: Space for movement, centers for tactile exploration

- ❖ Puzzles
- ❖ Action songs
- ❖ Role play
- ❖ Make board game
- ❖ Relief maps
- ❖ Food
- ❖ Movement games
- ❖ Charting
- ❖ Clay map
- ❖ Drama
- ❖ Strobe theatre
- ❖ Mime

Meditative Elements:

Environment: Quiet, soft music, or nature sounds, muted or low light, candles, journals or art supplies.

- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Reflection
- ❖ Silent internal imaging of a told story
- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Silent expression or prayer through art
- ❖ Journaling
- ❖ Listening
- ❖ Focused presence with God
- ❖ Meditative walk

Remember God is present in all learning contexts, and we can take the opportunity to acknowledge God's presence in each of the elements and approaches we engage in.

Incorporating Different Learning Styles in Your Ministry

As we examine the teaching and learning environments in our church, do we consciously address and affirm each learning style? Does our curriculum?



As an individual, do I include each of these learning styles or do I skip over the parts of a curriculum I am less comfortable with?