

Writing with Style: Integrating Learning Styles and Writing Assignments

“How do you learn best?” This simple question brings awareness of learning styles and thinking preferences into the writing experience. By engaging writers through their preferences, a writing consultant, instructor, or tutor can create a fluid and adaptive learning environment where each writer’s needs and strengths are acknowledged and valued. Try the following techniques to enhance the multisensory process of writing.

Visual Learners

- Suggest that the writer form visual images of the topic, story, or characters in his or her mind. The writer can visualize the characters speaking to one another, the setting and the action that will take place in the story, essay, or poem.
- Encourage the use of photographs or a visit to an inspiring location to stimulate the mind and creative process.
- When working with the composing process, color code important parts of the essay, e.g., highlight the thesis sentence in yellow and the topic sentence in pink.
- Ask the writer to record key words or phrases.
- Suggest a web or cluster.
- Encourage the student to develop a working writing portfolio that contains photographs, collages and webs as well as all pre-writing, revisions, and final drafts.

Auditory Learners

- Recommend the use of a tape recorder. Advise the student to carry the recorder in order to archive spontaneous thoughts as they occur.
- Interview someone about the topic. The writer may even tape the interview, if it is permissible.
- Encourage dialogue with other individuals about the paper.
- Suggest that the writer play soothing music.
- Advise the students to silently recite each sentence before writing it.
- Read the writing aloud with the writer.

Kinesthetic Learners

- To assist with brainstorming, ask the kinesthetic writer to make a list.
- Make it contextual. Suggest interviewing someone about the topic.
- Counsel the writer to use a pen or pencil and paper (rather than the computer) in the drafting stage.
- Advise the writer to record topics and specific details on colored index cards and move them around as he or she organizes thoughts.
- Suggest listening to soothing music when writing.
- Make it personal. Suggest that the writer think about personal experiences and record them.
- Recommended writing for short periods of time. e.g., brainstorm for 30 minutes and take a break. Then write the first draft.
- Physical environmental influences writers. Suggest that the writer compose in an area that allows for physical movement.
- Teaching concepts to others increases comprehension. Advise the writer to read the essay aloud to classmates or friends.
- Recommended the use of physical objects to demonstrate the story or essay to others.

*“The Writing Lab Newsletter”
Adapted from Stacey E. Brown
Montgomery College
Conroe, TX*