

**Middle Georgia State University
OTA Program**

**Inservice:
Teaching Skills**

**Provided By:
Middle Georgia State University
Occupational Therapy Assistant Program**

TEACHING SKILLS

Agenda

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| I. | Welcome Introduction/Objectives | 5 - 10 mins. |
| II. | Lecture/Activities | 45 mins. |
| III. | Wrap-Up/Questions/Assessment | <u>10 mins.</u> |
| | Total Time: | 1 Hour |

OBJECTIVES

- › Identify the characteristics of an effective teacher
- › Identify the stages in the teaching/learning process
- › Name and discuss the 4 basic steps in good instruction
- › Contrast various types of feedback and their effect on learning
- › Discuss strategies for adult learning
- › Describe a method of teaching using a developmental model in clinical education

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I. Characteristics of an Effective Teacher:

The effective teacher is enthusiastic about the learning content and enjoys teaching. The teacher is positive, realistic, accepting, empathetic, and nonjudgmental toward the learners. This person is consistent in approach and expectations, flexible, adaptable, attentive, and able to motivate learners. The effective teacher gives positive and honest reinforcement to learners and observes and analyzes their behaviors to evaluate the outcome of learning. Such characteristics enhance the possibility of moving the learner toward independence and thus to successful treatment outcomes.

The effective teacher remains in the teaching role and does not become friend, mother, brother, or confidant to the learner. Thorough knowledge of the skill to be taught and the ability to present it in an understandable way are essential.

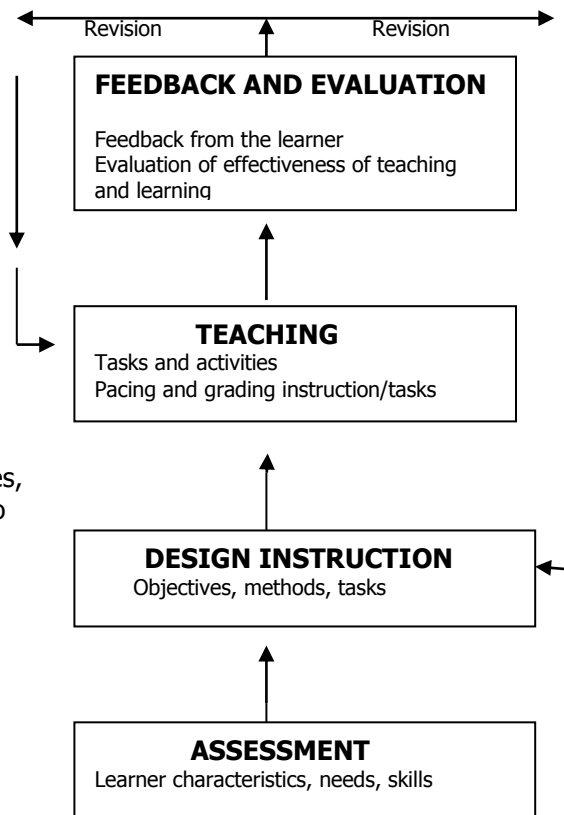
Activity: *Think of your favorite teacher. Identify one quality that stands out in your mind about him/her.*

II. The Teaching/Learning Process

The teaching/learning process is a systematic problem-solving process designed to facilitate learning. The teaching/learning sequence involves four basic steps: assessment, design of the plan, instruction, and feedback/evaluation.

A. Assessment

The teacher must assess characteristics of self, learner characteristics, learning needs, learning skills and style, and the situation. Psychosocial readiness also should be considered. The attitudes, feelings, and emotional state in student relation to the task, and the teaching process need to be assessed. Readiness for learning implies that the learner is prepared for the learning process.



Systems model of teaching-learning process. (Modified from Kemp JE: The Instructional design process, New York, 1985, Harper & Row.)

B. Design of Teaching Plan

It is very helpful to write specific learning objectives as well as plan instructional tasks and methods of instruction to suit the learner. Student motivation must also be considered.

The learner's perception of the relevance, value, and meaning of the learning task at hand influences involvement in performance. Motivation may be intrinsic or extrinsic. *Intrinsic motivation* derives from an internal drive, is self-initiated, and occurs when the learner has a need to know something and is ready to learn. *Extrinsic motivation*, on the other hand, derives from an external stimulus to act, such as the teacher deciding what the learner needs to learn and presenting this information. Extrinsic motivation engages the learner in a learning process that requires more effort, concentration, and time than learning that is motivated intrinsically. Much learning is probably driven by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Specific Behavioral Objectives

Given patients with a variety of diagnosis in either two different treatment settings for a total of 12 weeks (6 weeks each facility) or 1 setting for a total of 12 weeks, the student will begin the process of clinical reasoning via:

1. Using all available written sources for collecting evaluation data.
2. Select items of information which are relevant to patients/clients OT needs.
3. Elicit useful and pertinent data from interviews with patients/clients and others.
4. Obtain useful and pertinent data from observation of patient/client performance.
5. Maintain accurate records.
6. Report clearly and concisely at meetings.
7. Share data with others for treatment planning or program change.
8. Contribute suggestions for program adjustments that are relevant to treatment goals and patient/client needs.
9. Contribute suggestions for programs that are practical and applicable to the treatment setting.
10. Budget time for preparation, clean-up, and review.
11. Maintain equipment, materials, and treatment environment in good order.
12. Use techniques/modalities advocated for the achievement of treatment goals; e.g. group tax, splinting, etc.
13. Consider patient's/client's needs and background when initiating and establishing the relationship.
14. Adapt his/her approach to meet patient/client needs.
15. Review patient/client progress and responses with the supervisor.
16. Recognize when program needs change and report to supervisor.
17. Prepare patient/client (and family) for the program change or termination.
18. Follow through on decisions made for change.
19. Communicate with supervisor to facilitate implementation of treatment goals.
20. Communicate with others to facilitate collaborative implementation of overall treatment goals.
21. Report clearly and concisely orally and in writing.
22. Meet role expectations as a student, professional, supervisee and COTA as per the Fieldwork Performance Assessment.

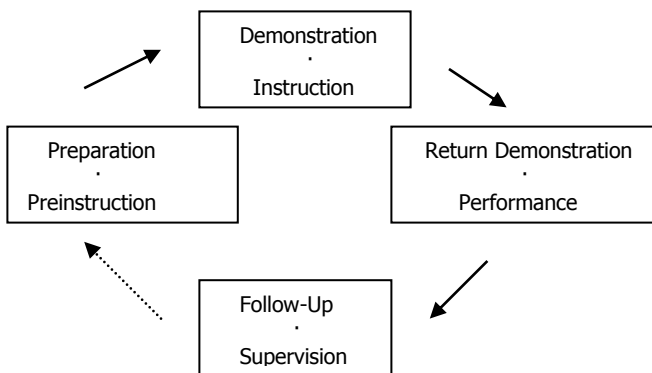
Activity: Break into groups and write learning objectives and instructional tasks to teach someone how to put together a puzzle.

C. Instruction

The teacher teaches the task/activity to the student in a meaningful way. Repetition of Instruction may be important. Pacing (structuring the instruction/practice so that the learner can progress at their own speed) is an important consideration. Learning should also be graded in complexity because learning is enhanced if it progresses from simple to complex. Active participation and repetition at a tactile and kinesthetic level ensure retention and enhances the learning process.

The Instructor Phase can be subdivided into 4 steps:

- 1) Preparation
- 2) Demonstration
- 3) Return demonstration
- 4) Follow up



- 1) **Preparation: Preinstruction**
 - Should occur before instruction
 - Select purpose/object and design activity
 - Select method of teaching
 - Prepare environment
- 2) **Demonstration: Motivation & Instruction Phase**
 - Put student at ease
 - Explain purpose
 - Demonstrate "show & tell" one step at a time
 - Stress key points - CLEAR
 - Repetition may be needed
 - Tactile cues, too
- 3) **Return Demonstration: Performance Phase**
 - Student demonstrate
 - Ask, "Do you understand?"
 - Observe and correct errors
 - Have student verbally list key points to reinforce understanding
- 4) **Follow up: Guided Independence Phase**
 - Once certain student can do it
 - May need supervision from distance
 - Give opportunities to ask questions, correct faculty performance

Activity: Volunteers for teaching "Patty Cake."

D. Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback and reinforcement are closely connected. Confirmation of successful responses encourages the person to continue learning. The person also needs feedback during the learning process to recognize mistakes and modify performance. It is best to correct the learner as soon as an error is noted so that erroneous patterns do not develop.

- ▶ Reinforcement may be derived intrinsically from personal satisfaction/observing the results or provided extrinsically by the instructor.
- ▶ Give constructive criticism thoughtfully, tactfully, non-threatening, but honest.
- ▶ Don't false praise.
- ▶ Evaluate the effectiveness; Instructor must ask self, "How did it go?"

E. Overview of Instructional Skills

1. Set induction - prepares student for lesson, purpose, clarify goals; objectives, written, Verbal
2. Cueing - prepare student to answer question
3. Questioning - consider probing, rehetorical, etc.
4. Reinforcement -
 - a) Positive verbal "Good Point"
 - b) Positive nonverbal - smile, nod, attend
 - c) Positive qualified (verbal/non)- only acknowledge correct part, cue for accuracy
 - d) Delayed - emphasize earlier contribution
5. Use example.
6. Planned repetition - opportunities to practice
7. Silence - try not to be afraid
8. Non-verbal cues - Facial (smile, frown), body movement (pose, action), head movement, (nod, cock head), gesture (point, expression)
9. Summation/Closure - synthesize major point, make corrections

III. Methods of Teaching/Learning**A) Teaching**

1. Teaching through Auditory system: Verbal instruction
 - ▶ Assumes understand spoken word, has previous experience with activity, can retain, retrieve the memory on command, can plan and execute the task, and is motivated to do so.
 - ▶ Least effective
2. Teaching through Visual & Auditory System: Verbal Instruction & Demonstration
 - ▶ Demonstrate and give verbal instruction enhances learning
 - ▶ 2 sensory systems engaged
 - ▶ Poor visual or auditory memory may hamper this style
3. Teaching through Somatosensory & Vestibular Systems: Touch, Proprioception & motion
 - ▶ May use with or without auditory/verbal instructions
 - ▶ Guiding through the activity physically

B) Types of Learners (*taken from Excell, Inc.*)

1. Type one learners: **DIVERGER**
2. Type two learners: **ASSIMILATOR**
3. Type three learners: **CONVERGER**
4. Type four learners: **ACCOMMODATOR**

1) DIVERGER - Perceive information concretely and process it reflectively. They integrate experience with the Self. They learn by listening and sharing ideas. Are imaginative thinkers who believe in their own experience. They excel in viewing direct experience from many perspectives. They value insight thinking. They work in harmony. They need to be personally involved, seek commitment. Are interested in people and culture. They are thoughtful people who enjoy observing other people. They absorb reality; they seem to take in the atmosphere like osmosis. They seek meaning and clarity.

As leaders they:

- ▶ thrive on taking the time to develop good ideas
- ▶ tackle problems by reflecting alone and then brainstorming with staff
- ▶ exercise authority with thrust and participation
- ▶ work for organizational solidarity
- ▶ need staff who are supportive and share their sense of mission

As teachers they:

- ▶ are interested in facilitating individual growth,
- ▶ try to help people become more self aware,
- ▶ believe curricula should enhance one's ability to be authentic,
- ▶ see knowledge as enhancing personal insights,
- ▶ encourage authenticity in people,
- ▶ like discussions, group work, and realistic feedback about feelings,
- ▶ are caring people who seek to engage their students in cooperative efforts,
- ▶ are aware of social forces that affect human development,
- ▶ are able to focus on meaningful goals,
- ▶ tend to become fearful under pressure and sometimes lacks daring.

Strength: Innovation and ideas

Function By: Value clarification

Goals: To be involved in important issues and to bring harmony

Careers: Counseling, personnel work, teaching, organizational development, humanities and social sciences.

Favorite Question: Why?

- 2) Assimilator** - Perceive information abstractly and process it reflectively. They form theory and concepts by integrating their observations into what is known. They seek continuity. They need to know what the experts think. They learn by thinking through ideas. They value sequential thinking. Need details. They critique information and collect data. They are thorough and industrious. They will reexamine the facts if situations perplex them. They enjoy traditional classrooms. Schools are made for them. They are more interested in ideas than in people. They prefer to maximize certainty, and they are uncomfortable with subjective judgements. They seek goal attainment and personal effectiveness.

As leaders they:

- ▶ thrive on assimilating disparate facts into coherent theories
- ▶ tackle problems with rationality and logic
- ▶ lead by principles and procedures
- ▶ exercise authority with assertive persuasion, by knowing the facts
- ▶ work to enhance their organization as embodiment of tradition and prestige
- ▶ need staff who are well organized, have things down on paper, and follow through on agreed decisions

As teachers they:

- ▶ are interested in transmitting knowledge
- ▶ try to be as accurate and knowledgeable as possible
- ▶ believe curricula should further understanding of significant information and should be presented systematically
- ▶ see knowledge as deepening comprehension
- ▶ encourage outstanding students
- ▶ like facts and details, organizational and sequential thinking
- ▶ are traditional teachers who seek to imbue a love of precise knowledge
- ▶ believe in the rational use of authority
- ▶ dominating attitude tends to discourage creativity

Strength: Creating concepts and models

Function By: Thinking things through

Goals: Intellectual recognition

Careers: Natural science, math, research and planning departments

Favorite Question: What?

- 3) Converger** - Perceive information abstractly and process it actively. Integrate theory and practice. Learn by testing theories and applying common sense. They are pragmatists, they believe if it works, use. They are down-to-earth problem solvers, who resent being given answers. They do not stand on ceremony, but get right to the point. They have a limited tolerance for fuzzy ideas. They value strategic thinking. They are skills oriented. They experiment and tinker with things. They need to know how things work. They edit reality, cut right to the heart of things. Sometimes they seem bossy and impersonal.
They seek utility and results.

As leaders they:

- ▶ thrive on plans and time lines
- ▶ tackle problems by making unilateral decisions
- ▶ lead by personal forcefulness, inspiring quality
- ▶ exercise authority by reward/punishment, (the fewer the rules, the better, but enforce them)
- ▶ work hard to make their organization productive and solvent
- ▶ need staff who are task oriented and move quickly

As teachers they:

- ▶ are interested in productivity and competence
- ▶ try to give students the skills they will need in life
- ▶ believe curricula should be geared to competencies and economic usefulness
- ▶ see knowledge as enabling students to be capable of making their own way
- ▶ encourage practical applications
- ▶ like technical skills and hands-on activities
- ▶ are exacting and seek quality and productivity
- ▶ believe the best way is determined scientifically
- ▶ use measured rewards
- ▶ tend to be inflexible and self-contained
- ▶ lack team-work skills

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Strength | Practical application of ideas |
| Function By | Factual data garnered from kinesthetic, hands-on experience |
| Goals | To bring their view of the present into line with future security |
| Careers | Engineering, applied sciences |
| Favorite questions | How does this work? |

- 4) Accommodator** - Perceive information concretely, and process it actively. Integrate experience and application. Learn by trial and error. Are believers in self-discovery, are enthusiastic about new things. Are adaptable, even relish change. They excel when flexibility is needed. Often reach accurate conclusions in the absence of logical justification. Are risk takers. Are at ease with people. They enrich reality by taking what is and adding to it sometimes seen as manipulative and pushy. They seek to influence.

As leaders they:

- ▶ thrive on crisis and challenge
- ▶ tackle problems by looking for patterns, scanning possibilities
- ▶ lead by energizing people
- ▶ exercise authority by holding up visions of what might be
- ▶ work hard to enhance their organization's reputation as a front runner
- ▶ need staff who can follow-up and implement details

As teachers they:

- ▶ are interested in enabling student self-discovery
- ▶ try to help people act on their own visions
- ▶ believe curricula should be geared to learner's interest and inclinations
- ▶ see knowledge as necessary for improving the larger society
- ▶ encourage experiential learning
- ▶ like variety in instructional methods
- ▶ are dramatic teachers who seek to energize their students
- ▶ attempt to create new forms, to stimulate life
- ▶ are able to draw new boundaries
- ▶ tend to rashness and manipulation

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Strengths | Action, getting things done |
| Function By | Acting and testing experience |
| Goals | To bring action to ideas |
| Careers | Marketing, sales, action-oriented managerial jobs, education social professions |
| Favorite question | If? |

IV. Adult Learners

- ▶ Adult learners are a widely diverse group that encompasses many different styles, goals, and experiences
- ▶ Adults come to each learning experience with an integration of all prior learning (include formal and informal learning experiences, interactions with peers, teachers, etc.) and work experiences
- ▶ Adults learn best in a situation of mutual respect
- ▶ Chaffee (1998) says that the key to successful adult thinking consists of eight steps:
 1. Think critically
 2. Live creatively
 3. Choose freely
 4. Solve problems effectively
 5. Communicate effectively
 6. Analyze complex issues
 7. Develop enlightened values
 8. Think through relationships
- ▶ When addressing the unique learning needs of adults several themes emerge. Adults have an educational history that may be positive or not. Adults learn through their experiences (experiential learning). Motivation can support learning, however, adults typically learn within their own environments. Mutual respect plays an important role in adult learning. All of these factors can influence the transfer of training to life situations. All of these factors, if negative, can cause a negative loop that is recursive and self-fulfilling. The goal of the teacher is to manage these factors in a way that is positive to the adult learner.

A Few Suggestions:

- ▶ Use good communication skills (collaboration)
- ▶ Open posture and open ended questions
- ▶ Begin at student's level
- ▶ Encourage active learning
- ▶ Control sequences of learning (pleasurable experiences reinforce)
- ▶ Provide opportunity for trial & error
- ▶ Provide opportunity for practice & repetition
- ▶ Encourage student to set own goals
- ▶ Practice skills in different situations
- ▶ Move learning from simple to complex
- ▶ Encourage creative problem solving
- ▶ Acknowledge that learning is stressful & anxiety producing, and everyone handles this differently

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- 1.** Thou shalt never try to make another human being exactly like thyself; one is enough.
- 2.** Thou shalt never judge a person's need, or refuse your consideration, solely because of the trouble he/she causes.
- 3.** Thou shalt not blame heredity nor the environment in general; people can surmount their environments.
- 4.** Thou shalt never give a person up as hopeless or cast him/her out.
- 5.** Thou shalt try to help everyone become, on the one hand, sensitive and compassionate, and also tough-minded.
- 6.** Thou shalt not steal from any person his/her rightful responsibilities for determining his/her own conduct and the consequences thereof.
- 7.** Thou shalt honor anyone engaged in the pursuit of learning and serve well and extend the discipline of knowledge and skill about learning, which is our common heritage.
- 8.** Thou shalt have no universal remedies or expect miracles.
- 9.** Thou shalt cherish a sense of humor, which may save you from becoming shocked, depressed, or complacent.
- 10.** Thou shalt remember the sacredness and dignity of thy calling, and, at the same time, 'thou shalt not take thyself too damned seriously."

Taken from: Kidd, J. R., "How Adults Learn".

V. Developmental Model for Teaching

- ▶ **Loevinger Model of Personality Development**
- ▶ **Ego development = way the individual makes sense of the world**
- ▶ **Stage conscientious**
 - ▶ Obey rules without asking questions
 - ▶ Need to belong & gain approval
 - ▶ United self awareness
 - ▶ Uncomfortable with idea that problem has several solutions
- ▶ **Explorer Stage**
 - ▶ Increased complexity in thinking
 - ▶ Questions and able to see different possibilities and tries to align with own view
 - ▶ None introspective
 - ▶ Tension b/t wanting to stand out in a group yet not be outside group
 - ▶ Express belief with rigidity
 - ▶ Doesn't want to discover anything that will confuse his/her configuration of the world
- ▶ **Achiever Stage**
 - ▶ Acceptance of multiple viewpoints
 - ▶ Ability to understand complexities of situations
 - ▶ Internalize standards of performance
 - ▶ Hypercritical & overly concerned with self improvement
 - ▶ Responsible
 - ▶ Concern for communication

| Student Group | Teaching Approach | Supervision Sessions | Administrative Instructions | Counseling Intervention |
|----------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Conscientious | Assume student sees supervisor as "authority" and expert. Present information: Show how several solutions can work. Lead toward student identification of problems, solutions. | Structure, with clear description of expectations. Make assignments to think about, bring to next meeting. Respond best to highly structured sessions. | Delineate rules. Expect student to follow. Show disapproval if student does not. | Student desires acceptance, wants things to go well. Student will be upset with problems and look to supervisor for answers. Lead student to join supervisor in seeking answers. Help student separate personal worth from professional performance. |
| Explorer | Assume student in process of developing own system of problem solving. Discuss how student's view is worthwhile, problematic. Lead student toward accepting multiple viewpoints. Encourage exploration with clearly defined limits | Negotiate: Explain supervisor expectations. Seek student input. Lead, but allow some flexibility in goals. Respond best to limited explanation. Watch for information overload/overwhelm. | Delineate rules: Expect student will not follow if rules conflict with own ideas. Discuss implications if student chooses to follow own inclination. | Student will be dogmatic and upset when things do not work according to plan. Lead student to see several ways to be effective. Support student through confusion. |
| Achiever | Assume student has developed systems of beliefs, problem solving. Challenge ideas. Discuss implications. Lead toward greater analytic competence in problem solving. Encourage exploration with feedback. | Discuss supervisor expectations and students. Collaborate on discussing best method to achieve goals. Respond well to discussion concerning old & new knowledge. | Delineate rules: Discuss origins where appropriate. Expect student to seek exceptions. Explain when supervisor can/cannot be flexible. | Student will be hypercritical of failures. Help student see when guilt is appropriate, when student is exceeding reasonable limit of responsibility. |

Resources

1. Ryan's O.T.A. Text 3rd Edition by Sladyk & Ryan; Shack Publishers, 2000
2. Physical Dysfunction Skills for the OTA by Early; Mosely Publishers, 1998
3. Willard & Speckman's OT Text 9th Edition by Neistad & Crepean; Lippincott Publishers, 1998
4. "Teaching Strategies for the Development of Clinical Reasoning" AJOT. Sept. 1996, Vol. 50, #8
5. "An Approach to Supervision of Students on Fieldwork" AJOT, June 1984, Vol. 38, #6

YOUR STRONGEST LEARNING PREFERENCE

Most learning style instruments help you think about ways that you take in, store, and retrieve information. This worksheet will help you discover one of your strongest learning preferences.

LEARNING STYLE CHARACTERISTICS CHECKLIST

****Check the following characteristics that apply to you.**

1. () When I have a problem, I usually tell someone right away.
2. () I keep a journal.
3. () I often take notes, although I do not always refer to them.
4. () I take good notes and then rewrite them at a later time.
5. () I read in my free time.
6. () I have the TV on even if I am not watching it.
7. () I have good intentions of writing to people but usually call instead.
8. () I often shut my eyes to help me concentrate.
9. () When studying or solving a problem, I pace back and forth.
10. () I would rather hear a book on audiocassette than read it myself.
11. () Forget the cassette, I would rather wait until it comes out on film.
12. () I prefer reading the newspaper to watching the news on TV.
13. () I prefer to study in a quiet setting.
14. () To remember a spelling, I see the word in my mind.
15. () I would prefer an oral exam to a written one.
16. () I prefer a multiple choice format on a test.
17. () I would rather do a project than write a paper.
18. () I would rather give an oral report than a written one.
19. () I remember better what I read rather than what I hear.
20. () I keep a personal organizer.
21. () I reread my notes several times.
22. () I would rather take notes from the text than attend a lecture on the material.
23. () I often "talk to myself."
24. () I learn best when I study with a partner.
25. () I can locate a passage that I have read by "seeing it."
26. () I find it hard to sit still when I study.
27. () If I forget why I walked in the kitchen, I retrace my steps from the bedroom.
28. () Once in bed for the night, I shut my eyes and plan the next day.
29. () I cannot clean unless the music is on.
30. () I would rather read directions than have someone tell me about them.
31. () I can put something together as long as the directions are written.

Your learning style may be characterized by one preference or a combination of strategies may work best for you.

Scoring the Checklist

Compare your answers from your checklist to the following list. Circle the number/letter combinations that correspond to your answers.

- | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1. S | 6. L | 11. V | 16. V | 21. R | 26. D |
| 2. W | 7. S | 12. R | 17. D | 22. W | 27. D |
| 3. DW | 8. V | 13. L | 18. S | 23. SL | 28. V |
| 4. W | 9. D | 14. V | 19. R | 24. SL | 29. L |
| 5. R | 10. L | 15. S | 20. W | 25. V | 30. R |
| | | | | | 31. R |

Tally the number of S, W, D, R, L, and V responses and record the totals:

| S | W | D | R | L | V |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | | | | |

If you have three or more responses of one letter, you most likely have a preference for that learning style. Most people have at least one preference, but you may have more than one. The following descriptions provide more detail about your particular strength. As you read the descriptions, think about decisions you could make to improve your current approach to studying.

Speaking (S). Three or more checks in this area indicates a preference for learning information by saying it. Talking or conversing about the information you need to learn really helps you to learn it. Strategies that rely on speaking to learn include reading your notes and text aloud, or at least the chapter headings. You may also find it beneficial to have a study partner, or to speak into a tape recorder and play your tape back. You may ask someone to listen to you as you explain a principle. After reviewing information, play the part of a teacher by asking questions aloud. Repeat concepts aloud and ask questions of others. Any activity that involves speaking about the material will help you learn more quickly than the types of activities described below.

Writing (W). If your strength is writing, then any activity during or after class that involves writing will help you learn the material more quickly. Your study strategies should include lots of note taking from your readings. Other strategies might include rewriting your notes on paper or index cards that you can use to quiz yourself or your study partner with later. Consider making tests for yourself and take them. Make it a habit to write notes in the margins of your texts and notebooks. You may naturally do better in classes that involve lots of essay writing.

Doing (D). Often thought of as the kinesthetic modality, students who have this preference learn best by doing. If you have this type of preference, you know that you enjoy becoming involved with the material. Effective study strategies are active (e.g., making a model, map, or diagram of the information you need to learn). You may enjoy studying in an empty classroom and writing on the board. You might also find it helpful to carry index cards with the information you are trying to learn because you can pull out the cards while you are walking or exercising. Activity is the key action for this learning style and any study strategy that involves activity will help you learn the material more quickly and easily than strategies emphasizing the other preferences.

Reading (R). Learners with this preference pick up material easily through reading. Effective study strategies include borrowing other students' notes so you can read them and fill in any information you may have missed. Also consider highlighting text passages to easily locate information. Read additional articles or texts on the subject to be learned. Read and reread information because this is your preferred learning preference.

Listening (L). Learners with a preference for listening would benefit from participating in a study group or at least studying with a partner. Effective study strategies include having others read to you. Consider listening to tapes of course lectures or review sessions as often as possible. You may also find it helpful to call classmates and have them read their notes to you or quiz each other over the phone. These last two ideas may sound awkward, but if you team up with a partner who learns by speaking, you will both benefit.

Visualizing (V). If this is your leaning strength, you learn best by picturing information in your head. You are apt to "see" a page of information. You benefit from closing your eyes and recalling information. You can take advantage of your gift for visualization by taking note of the way information is written, as well as the shape, color, and size of the paper. This will help you recall the information later. Effective study strategies would include using different color pens to take notes. Use these and other strategies to help your mind highlight when and where the information was learned and to facilitate recall.

Most theories emphasize that it is beneficial for you to study in more than one way. Studying that involves the use of different preferences reinforces the ideas or skills in your mind. The key is to begin studying the way you learn and then to gradually incorporate other styles into your repertoire of study habits. The larger your repertoire, the easier you will be able to meet the demands of different types of classes and different learning challenges. Remember, your learning profile is unique, and just because your friend studies best when listening to music does not mean that listening to music will help you learn. Reading about learning styles or completing several different learning inventories will help you to be strategic about study habits. Take the time to inventory your strengths so you can develop a work style based on the way you learn best.