

Student Learning Profiles

The teacher uses student learning profiles to collect self-reported information from students about their preferred learning activities and styles (such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, analytical, or practical), the circumstances and conditions under which they learn best, and ways in which they prefer to express themselves (for example, writing, oral communication, physical expression, artistic media, and others). The teacher might create student learning profiles using formal inventories or informal discussions and surveys. After a teacher has gathered data using student learning profiles, he or she should use the information to inform his or her interactions with students.

Teacher Actions

- Creating learning profile questions that elicit students' learning styles and preferences
- Encouraging students to think about how they learn best while completing learning profiles
- Evaluating learning profile responses to identify students' learning styles and preferences

Desired Student Responses

- Responding to profile questions honestly and in detail
- Explaining how they prefer to learn and how they learn best

Extra Support

- Asking students to describe (written or orally) the best learning experiences they've had

Extension

- Asking students to investigate their learning styles to identify activities that could help them learn

Technology Tips

- Use online survey tools to administer learning preference surveys to students. Analyze the results to understand students' preferences and improve lessons.
- Use polling technology to administer student learning profiles. Analyze polling data to understand students' preferences and prompt discussions about learning preferences.

Student Learning Metrics

Learning Styles

Learning styles refer to the way that an individual best processes new information. There are three learning styles that teachers can be aware of: (1) visual, (2) auditory, and (3) kinesthetic. Visual learners are those who best learn through seeing content during its presentation. They better remember things that are written down or that they can relate to an image. Auditory learners best process information when it is presented to them through sound. They often prefer to have things explained to them out loud or engage in conversation about the new information. Kinesthetic learners are hands-on learners who prefer to use activities to understand new content rather than have a concept explained to them using words.

Providing Opportunities for Students to Talk About Themselves

Teachers can include the following questions on a student learning profile to determine the learning style of a student. The teacher presents each of the options and asks students to rate the degree to which they agree or disagree.

- When learning new material, I prefer to (1) get a handout with the information on it, (2) have it explained to me by the teacher, or (3) try it out myself.
- When studying, I'm most successful if I (1) create visual outlines, flashcards, charts, or graphs of the material covered so far, (2) have someone verbally quiz me or repeat my notes out loud, or (3) do something active (like pacing back and forth) while studying.

Expression Preference

Students may differ in the ways in which they prefer to express themselves. While some students might prefer a written exam, other students might prefer a creative final project or an oral presentation. Expression preference is often correlated with learning type, though not always. Teachers can use the following question to determine students' expression preferences.

- What is your preferred type of assignment? (Note: a teacher may choose to tailor this question to provide options for summative assessments, such as giving students a choice between an essay, oral exam, physical expression, or creative project.)

Working Preference

Working preference refers to whether students best work individually, in small groups, or in large groups. Teachers can ask students directly about their working preferences using the following question.

- Do you prefer to work alone, in a pair, in a small group, or in a large group?

However, teachers may also prompt students to explain why they hold these preferences.

Learning Conditions

Teachers can also use student learning profiles to determine the circumstances and conditions under which students best learn. Teachers can use the following questions to ask students about their preferred learning environments.

- What sort of activities do you think best help you learn?
- Describe your ideal classroom to learn in.
- Under what circumstances do you find it difficult to focus or learn?