

Learning Pathways

Each individual, yourself included, has a learning style uniquely their own. As a homeschooling parent, you will find that your teaching style tends to reflect your own learning style; after all, what makes sense to you in learning also makes sense to you in teaching. Therein lies a challenge for the homeschooling parent –exploring your child’s unique learning style is in order to help them succeed with their education. Successfully doing this is achieved by determining what your child’s unique style is in order to prime them for optimal learning.

Education styles generally fall under three main categories: tactile (touching/doing), auditory (hearing), or visual (reading or seeing). While everyone learns a little in each of these ways, most people have a stronger tendency to learn better through one of those styles over the other two. And, while teaching to a child’s strongest learning style is most ideal, keep in mind that the majority of people learn best by a combination of all three styles.

Auditory - Learns best through information presented verbally. Use lectures, oral presentations, books-on-cd, music, reading aloud, and songs.

Auditory learners really take information in best by hearing it, sometimes repeatedly. These children will often thrive in having facts put to music and listening to books on tape or CD. Any time you can read aloud to them, the better their chance of retaining the information you’re sharing. Another key for auditory learners is to not only read to them, but to have them read aloud to you. You can also ask that they restate or summarize what you’ve read to them back to you. Basically, anything you can do to engage their ears – your voice, their own voice, music, etc. – the more they will retain.

Kinesthetic/Tactile - Learns best through movement and touch. Use hands-on activities, drawing, doodling, live demonstrations, building, textured materials, manipulatives and whole body movement activities.

If your child is a tactile learner, you will know this because he or she is often touching everything!

Tactile learners seek input by putting their hands on items, often wanting to hold and manipulate them by turning them around, feeling the textures, the weight, etc. Some great ways to teach a tactile learner include allowing them to use clay or play dough to form their letters and/or numbers, to draw in sand, to hold real money for coin and money lessons, etc. The more you can bring your lessons off the page and into your child’s hands, the better they will absorb what you are teaching.

Visual Print /Spatial- These are the two types of visual learners. Visual Print Learners learn through words. Use workbooks, reading, writing, highlighting printed material, and taking notes. Visual Spatial Learners learn through pictures. Use graphic presentations such as videos, computers, drawings, web mapping, timelines, stories, charts and diagrams.

Your **visual learner** loves to see what you are talking about. Pictures, drawings, and any visual aids go a long way to reinforcing lessons. Visual learners may learn from reading, but often benefit from seeing (or drawing) images based on what they’ve read. The technique of Lapbooking, sometimes referred to as journaling, can be of great value to your visual learner. In Lapbooking, your child will summarize each lesson by creating an image of what they have learned and/or writing notes about the lesson.