

Things that help me learn

Level: All

Age: 8-12

Organization: Individual, whole class

Aims: To reflect on learning styles and strategies related to specific areas of learning; to develop awareness of your own learning preferences; to begin to develop personalized learning style and strategies.

Language focus: *In the example:* present simple, language to talk about vocabulary learning

Alternatives: language to talk about other areas of learning, e.g. listening, reading, pronunciation; L1

Materials: *Essential:* none / *Optional:* copies of yes/no questions (one for each child.)

Vocabulary

Which of these help you to learn vocabulary? Circle Yes or No.

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| • I learn lots of words together. | Yes/No |
| • I hear the words many times. | Yes/No |
| • I write the words in my vocabulary book. | Yes/No |
| • I draw pictures of the words. | Yes/No |
| • I repeat the words. | Yes/No |
| • I say the words with rhythm. | Yes/No |
| • I say the words in my head. | Yes/No |
| • I walk about as I say the words. | Yes/No |
| • I tap my fingers or toes as I say the words. | Yes/No |
| • I translate the words. | Yes/No |
| • I play with word cards. | Yes/No |
| • I test myself on the words. | Yes/No |
| • Yes/No _____ | Yes/No |
| • Yes/No _____ | Yes/No |

Procedure

Use this activity to get the children to explore learning strategies related to specific areas of learning.

1. Elicit possible things that help the children, for example, to learn vocabulary. Either note their ideas on the board or give them a copy of the handout (either in English or L1) and ask them to circle the statements that apply to them and/or add any other ideas of their own.
2. When the children are ready, divide the class into pairs and ask them to compare their views.
3. Discuss their responses with the whole class. Use the discussion to make the point that there are no 'right' answers and that we all have our own preferences for the way we learn. The important thing is to try and identify and use the strategies that work best for us individually.

Comments and Suggestions

- This activity helps children become aware of options and choices available to them for learning and to think about and identify their own preferences. It also gives you valuable insights into the children's learning styles.
- With older children, it may be appropriate to introduce them to the idea of the way we use our senses when we learn and that some of us prefer to see (visual learners), some to hear (auditory learners), and others to move about (kinaesthetic learners), and that very often we use a combination of two of our senses to learn, or all three. Children can then reflect on their own learning styles in those terms and discuss their preferences.