

香港資優教育學院  
The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

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## Factsheet

### TEACHING AND LEARNING IDEAS IN A NUTSHELL – LEARNING STYLES

#### Definition

This approach to learning emphasises the fact that individuals perceive and process information in very different ways. The learning styles theory implies that how much individuals learn has more to do with whether the educational experience is geared toward their particular style of learning than whether or not they are "smart." In fact, educators should not ask, "Is this student smart?" but rather "How is this student smart?"

#### Discussion

The concept of learning styles is rooted in the classification of psychological types. The learning styles theory is based on research demonstrating that, as the result of heredity, upbringing, and current environmental demands, different individuals have a tendency to both perceive and process information differently. The different ways of doing so are generally classified as:

- **Concrete and abstract perceivers.** Concrete perceivers absorb information through direct experience, by doing, acting, sensing, and feeling. Abstract perceivers, however, take in information through analysis, observation, and thinking.
- **Active and reflective processors.** Active processors make sense of an experience by immediately using the new information. Reflective processors make sense of an experience by reflecting on and thinking about it.

Traditional schooling tends to favor abstract perceiving and reflective processing. Other kinds of learning aren't rewarded and reflected in curriculum, instruction, and assessment nearly as much.

#### How the Learning Styles Theory Impacts on Education

##### Curriculum

Educators must place emphasis on intuition, feeling, sensing, and imagination, in addition to the traditional skills of analysis, reason, and sequential problem solving.

##### Teaching

Teachers should design their instruction methods to connect with all four learning styles, using various combinations of experience, reflection, conceptualisation, and experimentation. Instructors can introduce a wide variety of experiential elements into the classroom, such as sound, music, visuals, movement, experience, and even talking.

##### Assessment

Teachers should employ a variety of assessment techniques, focusing on the development of "whole brain" capacity and each of the different learning styles.

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**Reading**

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Revell, P. *Each to their own*. The Guardian, 2005