

Rebecca Oxford's STYLE ANALYSIS SURVEY (SAS)

INSTRUCTIONS: For each item, circle your immediate response as follows:
 0 = never 1 = sometimes 2 = very often 3 = always

Activity I: HOW I USE MY PHYSICAL SENSES TO STUDY OR WORK

1. I remember something better if I write it down.	0	1	2	3
2. I take a lot of notes.	0	1	2	3
3. I can visualize pictures, numbers or words in my head.	0	1	2	3
4. I prefer to learn with video/TV more than other media.	0	1	2	3
5. I underline or highlight important parts as I read.	0	1	2	3
6. I use color coding to help me as I work.	0	1	2	3
7. I need written directions for tasks.	0	1	2	3
8. I get distracted by background noises.	0	1	2	3
9. I have to look at people to know what they are saying.	0	1	2	3
10. I am more comfortable when the walls where I study or work have posters or pictures on them.	0	1	2	3
11. I remember things better, if I discuss them out loud.	0	1	2	3
12. I prefer to learn by listening to a tape rather than reading.	0	1	2	3
13. I need oral directions for my tasks.	0	1	2	3
14. Background sounds help me think.	0	1	2	3
15. I like to listen to music when I study or work.	0	1	2	3
16. I can easily understand what people say even if I can't see them.	0	1	2	3
17. I remember better what people say than what they look like.	0	1	2	3
18. I easily remember jokes I hear.	0	1	2	3
19. I can identify people by their voices.	0	1	2	3
20. When the TV is on, I listen to the sound more than I watch the pictures.	0	1	2	3
21. I'd rather just start doing things than pay attention to the directions.	0	1	2	3
22. I need frequent breaks when I work or study.	0	1	2	3
23. I move my lips when I read silently.	0	1	2	3
24. I avoid sitting at a desk when I don't have to.	0	1	2	3
25. I get nervous when I sit too long.	0	1	2	3
26. I think better when I can move around.	0	1	2	3
27. Manipulating objects helps me to remember things.	0	1	2	3
28. I enjoy building or making things.	0	1	2	3
29. I like a lot of physical activities.	0	1	2	3
30. I enjoy collecting things - cards, stamps, coins etc.	0	1	2	3

Activity II: HOW I DEAL WITH OTHER PEOPLE

0 = never 1 = sometimes 2 = very often 3 = always

1. I prefer to work or study with others.	0	1	2	3
2. I make new friends easily.	0	1	2	3
3. I like to be in groups of people.	0	1	2	3
4. It is easy for me to talk to strangers.	0	1	2	3
5. I keep up with personal news about other people.	0	1	2	3
6. I like to stay late at parties.	0	1	2	3
7. Interactions with new people give me energy.	0	1	2	3
8. I remember people's names easily.	0	1	2	3
9. I have many friends and acquaintances.	0	1	2	3
10. Wherever I go, I develop personal contacts.	0	1	2	3
11. I prefer to work or study alone.	0	1	2	3
12. I am rather shy.	0	1	2	3
13. I prefer individual hobbies and sports.	0	1	2	3
14. It is hard for most people to get to know me.	0	1	2	3
15. People view me as more detached than sociable.	0	1	2	3
16. In a large group, I tend to keep silent.	0	1	2	3
17. Gatherings with lots of people tend to stress me.	0	1	2	3
18. I get nervous when dealing with new people.	0	1	2	3
19. I avoid parties if I can.	0	1	2	3
20. Remembering names is difficult for me.	0	1	2	3

Activity III: HOW I HANDLE POSSIBILITIES

0 = never 1 = sometimes 2 = very often 3 = always

1. I have a vivid imagination.	0	1	2	3
2. I like to think of lots of new ideas.	0	1	2	3
3. I can think of many different solutions to a problem.	0	1	2	3
4. I like multiple possibilities and options.	0	1	2	3
5. I enjoy considering what future events hold.	0	1	2	3
6. Following a step-by-step procedure bores me.	0	1	2	3
7. I like to discover things rather than have everything explained.	0	1	2	3
8. I consider myself original.	0	1	2	3
9. I am an ingenious (inventive & resourceful) person.	0	1	2	3
10. It feels fine if the teacher or boss changes the plan.	0	1	2	3
11. I am proud of being practical.	0	1	2	3
12. I behave in a down to earth way.	0	1	2	3
13. I am attracted to sensible people.	0	1	2	3
14. I prefer realism to new untested ideas.	0	1	2	3
15. I prefer things presented in a step-by-step way.	0	1	2	3
16. I want a class or work session to follow a clear plan.	0	1	2	3
17. I like concrete facts, not speculation.	0	1	2	3
18. Finding hidden meaning is frustrating or irrelevant to me.	0	1	2	3
19. I prefer to avoid too many options.	0	1	2	3
20. I feel it is useless for me to think about the future.	0	1	2	3

Activity IV: HOW I APPROACH TASKS

0 = never

1 = sometimes

2 = very often

3 = always

1. I reach decisions quickly.	0	1	2	3
2. I am an organized person.	0	1	2	3
3. I make lists of things I need to do.	0	1	2	3
4. I consult my lists in order to get things done.	0	1	2	3
5. Messy, unorganized environments make me nervous.	0	1	2	3
6. I start tasks on time or early.	0	1	2	3
7. I get places on time.	0	1	2	3
8. I enjoy a sense of structure.	0	1	2	3
9. I follow through with what I have planned.	0	1	2	3
10. I know what I am going to do next.	0	1	2	3
11. I am a spontaneous person.	0	1	2	3
12. I like to let things happen, not to plan them.	0	1	2	3
13. I feel uncomfortable with a lot of structure.	0	1	2	3
14. I put off decisions as long as I can.	0	1	2	3
15. I have a messy room or desk.	0	1	2	3
16. I believe that deadlines are artificial or useless.	0	1	2	3
17. I keep an open mind about things.	0	1	2	3
18. I believe that enjoying myself is the most important thing.	0	1	2	3
19. Lists of tasks make me feel tired or upset.	0	1	2	3
20. I feel fine about changing my mind.	0	1	2	3

Activity V: HOW I DEAL WITH IDEAS

0 = never

1 = sometimes

2 = very often

3 = always

1. I prefer simple answers rather than a lot of explanations.	0	1	2	3
2. Too many details tend to confuse me.	0	1	2	3
3. I ignore details that do not seem relevant.	0	1	2	3
4. It is easy for me to see the overall plan or big picture.	0	1	2	3
5. I can summarize information rather easily.	0	1	2	3
6. It is easy for me to paraphrase what other people say.	0	1	2	3
7. I see the main point very quickly.	0	1	2	3
8. I am satisfied with knowing the main ideas without the details.	0	1	2	3
9. I can pull together (synthesize) things easily.	0	1	2	3
10. When I make an outline, I write down only the key points.	0	1	2	3
11. I prefer detailed answers instead of short answers.	0	1	2	3
12. It is difficult for me to summarize detailed information.	0	1	2	3
13. I focus on specific facts or information.	0	1	2	3
14. I enjoy breaking general ideas down into smaller pieces.	0	1	2	3
15. I prefer looking for differences rather than similarities.	0	1	2	3
16. I use logical analysis to solve problems.	0	1	2	3
17. My written outlines contain many details.	0	1	2	3
18. I get nervous when only the main ideas are presented.	0	1	2	3
19. I focus on the details rather than the big picture.	0	1	2	3
20. When I tell a story or explain something, it takes a long time.	0	1	2	3

DEALING WITH IDEAS

- focusing on either the big picture or on detail

GLOBAL LEARNERS	ANALYTICAL LEARNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like interactive tasks focusing on the main idea • can't cope with grammatical minutiae • avoid analysis of words or sentences • cope easily with language ambiguity • content to guess meaning of words and expressions • readily use synonyms or paraphrasing • work around communicative roadblocks in speaking and writing • holistic in approach to communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on detail • concentrate on grammatical details • attend to rule learning • dissect words or sentences • strive for accuracy • do not like to guess or approximate • avoid synonyms & paraphrasing • tend to look up information • are not content with general communication of meaning • don't do well or avoid free flowing communicative activities • tend to not produce spoken or written ideas until they do it well

APPROACHING TASKS

-the degree to which the learner needs to reach decisions or clarity

CLOSURE ORIENTED LEARNERS	OPEN ORIENTED LEARNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like control in their life & learning • have strong need for clarity in all aspects of language learning • want lesson direction to be clear • want grammar and other rules to be spelled out ahead of task • often hard working students • have developed metacognitive skills - planning, organizing & evaluating • sometimes short circuit the development of fluency • miss subtleties & abstractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take language learning less seriously • treat language learning as a game rather than a set of tasks to be completed and judged • don't worry about class deadlines • learn what they can by "osmosis" rather than by effort • often develop high fluency • develop flexibility in communicative situations • sometimes don't do well in traditional classroom settings

HANDLING POSSIBILITIES

ESL/EFL teachers have trouble balancing the needs of these 2 groups

INTUITIVE - RANDOM LEARNERS	CONCRETE -SEQUENTIAL LEARNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are able to think in abstract or random ways • can deal with large scale or non-sequential thoughts • can understand the principles of how a language works without instruction • can conceive of an underlying language system - Chomsky • would rather take daring intellectual leaps • get bored by concrete step by step instruction • find quirky departures from the plan or distractions highly engaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find abstract principles unimportant • deal well with concrete facts • want instruction step by step • want to deal with the task at hand then move on • are frequently slow and steady • make progress, but at their own rate • are unaware of underlying language principles • often miss the big picture • like to know where they are going • dislike randomness and lack of consistency in lesson plans

SENSORY PREFERENCES FOR LEARNING

VISUAL Ls	AUDITORY Ls	KINESTHETIC Ls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow visual instructions and demonstrations easily • have difficulty with oral instructions • remember location of information in texts - by the page or section • remember how words look - good spellers • write things down, take notes when studying • stare, doodle or find something to watch when not busy • remember peoples faces & appearance • like descriptive passages in stories, and can visualize the scene • use expressions like "see" and "look" when speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow oral instructions • avoid written instructions • lose place in strictly visual activities • have difficulty with written work and copying • use phonic approach to spelling - sound words out until it "sounds" right • form ideas and problem solve while discussing issues • hum or talk to themselves when not busy • enjoy listening to others, but can't wait to talk • like dialogue in stories- often skip description • use expressions such as "listen" and "hear" when speaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lose patience with too much oral or visual input • prefer to try things out by themselves • select solutions requiring the greatest activity • write words to see if they "feel" right • often poor spellers • exhibit good fine and gross motor skills • remember best what was done, not what was said • fidget, doodle, and find reasons to move when not busy • like action stories and often skip passive description or dialogue • use expressions like "get" or "take" when speaking

LEARNING STYLES QUICK QUIZ

Use the learning style categories we have been exploring in this workshop.

Resist the temptation to use judgmental terms!

If our learners ...	they are most likely
1. have little concern for deadlines ...	
2. focus only on the main idea ...	
3. strongly prefer group learning ...	
4. absorb new information step-by-step ...	
5. rely on listening for task instructions ...	
6. remember where information is situated in a text ...	
7. think in an abstract, non-sequential manner ...	
8. prefer to work alone for most tasks ...	
9. want grammar rules "spelled out" ...	
10. prefer to learn making and doing ...	
11. have a strong need for clear tasks & directions ...	
12. tend to look up word meanings & information ...	

USEFUL RESOURCES

- John R. Kirby is on the Faculty of Education at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. His clear description of the skills and strategic domains firmly plants learning styles in place amongst the cognitive processes. His chapter is not directed at L2 language learning, and is academic in approach.

Kirby, J., (1994) *Style, Strategy, and Skill in Reading*. In Ronald R. Schmeck (Ed.) Learning Strategies and Learning Styles (?) (pp. 229 - 274).

- Rebecca Oxford has worked extensively with learning strategies and styles. She works in ESL/EFL and is very down-to-earth in approach. She is the originator of the questionnaire.

Scarcella, R., & Oxford, R. (1992). The Tapestry of Language Learning. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

- Joy Reid is another person who has worked extensively with learning styles. She has a very interesting and practical approach to this topic.