LEARNING MODALITY

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It’s easy to assume that every student learns in the same way and even easier to assume that they learn the way that we do. But actually student learn in very different ways. One of the differences in how they learn is captured in the concept of learning modalities. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the definitions of modality is: “One of the main avenues of sensation”

Learning modality refers to avenues of sensation students prefer to use to learn.

Many students are visual learners. The modality with which they prefer to learn is the sense of sight. Students like to see information in the form of charts, graphs, images and demonstrations or to read descriptive text that allows them to form a mental picture of the content.

A relatively equal proportion of students are primarily auditory. The learning modality they prefer is the sense of sounds. They love to take in information via the spoken word. Students notice not only what is said, but how it is said, including the tone of voice. When students can integrate elements of music such as tones or rhythms it can enhance their learning experience.

A smaller proportion of students are kinesthetic. The modality through which students prefer to learn is the sense of touch, may also include bodily movement. If you want a kinesthetic learner to best internalize material, then let them physically interact with it somehow and give them objects to hold and manipulate, have them act out scenes related to the material.
Note: Some students recognize a fourth learning modality, tactile, consisting of those that prefer touch and distinguish this from kinesthetic, they define as simply preferring bodily movement.

References: