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Child > Learning & Education

The auditory learner (grades 1 to 3)

By [Jhoanna Robledo](#)



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Auditory learners understand new ideas and concepts best when they hear the information. If you peek into a classroom, they're the ones who learn a tune in a snap just from hearing their teacher sing it, or who can follow directions to the letter after being told only once or twice what to do. Other auditory learners concentrate better at a task when they have music or white noise in the background, or retain new information more accurately when they talk it out.

What are the benefits of knowing my child's learning style?

Knowing how your child likes to learn and process information is an invaluable tool that you can use to help her do better in school and develop a love of learning. Education experts have identified three main types of learners – physical, visual, and auditory. Understanding that your child is an auditory learner (though her style may shift later), and therefore most comfortable using hearing to explore the world, can help you play to that strength and work on the other learning styles – physical and visual – that need more stimulation.

When learning about a new math concept, for example, an auditory learner will remember the information if she can listen to the teacher explain it or sing it and answer her questions. A physical learner may need to use blocks, an abacus, or other counting materials to practice the new concept. A visual learner will grasp the material more quickly by reading about it in a math book, watching her teacher solve a sample problem on the black board, or seeing herself solve the problem with concrete materials.

These learning styles aren't just theoretical. Several studies have shown that accommodating a child's learning style can significantly increase her performance at school. Many of these studies were based on a specific learning styles program developed by Rita Dunn, director of the Center for the Study of Learning and Teaching Styles at St. John's University in Jamaica, N.Y., and the evidence is compelling. Two elementary schools in North Carolina increased the achievement test scores of students from the 30th percentile to the 83rd percentile over a three-year period. And in 1992, the U.S. Department of Education found that attending to a child's learning style was one of

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The best way to support your auditory child is to indulge her interests and provide her with the materials she needs to learn. "Pay attention to activities your child enjoys, and try to approach learning from that point," says Kurt Fischer, director of Mind, Brain, and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Have lots of audio materials, such as books-on-tape and music, readily available at home. If she's working on a project or playing a game, go over the directions with her orally. Ask her lots of questions and encourage her to do the same, especially at school, if she needs help understanding a topic or doesn't understand what she needs to do for homework. Talking about subjects as much as she needs to will help her grasp new concepts. For more activities your auditory child may enjoy, see:

For 1st graders:

- Activities for a [beginning reader](#)
- Activities for an [intermediate reader](#)
- Activities to promote a 1st grader's [math skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 1st grader's [writing skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 1st grader's [listening skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 1st grader's [speaking skills](#)

For 2nd to 3rd graders:

- Activities for an [intermediate reader](#)
- Activities for an [advanced reader](#)
- Activities to promote a 2nd grader's [math skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 3rd grader's [math skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 2nd to 3rd grader's [writing skills](#)
- Activities to promote a 2nd to 3rd grader's [listening skills](#)



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How can I address my auditory child's weaknesses in other areas?

Try not to think of your child's heavy reliance on her hearing and listening skills as a weakness. Just because she's primarily an auditory learner doesn't mean she'll have trouble keeping up in school. Learning styles aren't set in stone – your child will adopt other styles as she grows older and develops other skills. "Learning is complex," says Barbara Given, director of the Adolescent Learning Research Center at the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. "Finding out your child's learning style is just the tip of the iceberg." What matters more is how you use this information to help your child learn new things.

While it's important to provide your child with many opportunities to engage in listening activities, Given says pay attention to the other learning styles, too. "It's crucial that parents work with multiple senses as well, so the child can become well rounded and use various strategies to grasp new information," she says. To help boost her visual skills, play matching card games or "I spy" (you say, for example, "I spy a man in a red shirt and your child has to find him). To give her more physical stimulation, immerse her in hands-on activities such as building models, flying kites, and making collages.

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subject. You could also talk to her teacher about taping the lessons so she can listen to them again when she's home. If she's struggling to learn grammar, "Schoolhouse Rock" or other jingles that help auditory kids remember the rules of the English language will help.

Teach her to use her auditory skills to complement any activities that are more visual or physical. If she's in circle time and is unable to concentrate on the stories she's hearing because the teacher is showing the pictures in the book at the same time, tell her to sit away from the teacher where she's not distracted by the images, close her eyes, and listen. If she's learning how to dance or solve a math problem, she can whisper each step to herself as she does it.

In the end, what matters most is that you nurture and support your child's learning, no matter what her style. Follow her lead and focus not on how great she's becoming at certain subjects, but on how great she is in general. "Good parenting counts most," says Given. "It's essential for learning and discovery."

Where can I get more information about learning styles?

See the following articles:

[The physical learner](#)

[The visual learner](#)

Was this article helpful?



Yes



No

The visual learner

By Jhoanna Robledo



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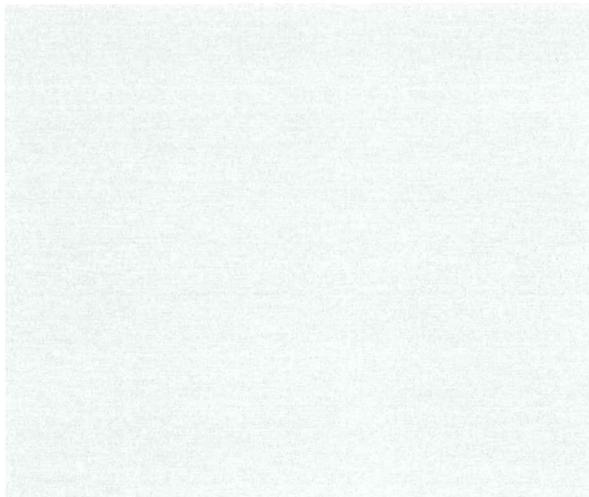
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