



visual * aural * read/write * kinesthetic
VARK[®]
helping you learn better

VARK NEWS:

Teaching & Learning with VARK[®]

In this Issue:

Welcome
What Does Effective Teaching Look
Like?
Q & A - Online Teaching/Learning
Teaching in Different Contexts
Carol's Corner

WELCOME!

Welcome to the 3rd edition of VARK[®]'s monthly newsletter. In our last issue we looked at what it means to be a MULTIMODAL learner. You can still read about this thought-provoking topic by clicking [here](#), and you can check out previous editions of our newsletter on the VARK[®] [website](#).

This month we explore the concept of teaching and the shift in education methodologies from past to present. From the traditional, teacher-centred "one size fits all" approaches to more modern "differentiated" instruction which incorporates a variety of teaching strategies, we look at the implications for teachers at all levels in attempting to accommodate the diverse learning needs of their students and show how incorporating VARK[®] principles into teaching practices can lead to more engaging and effective learning experiences for students.

What Does Effective Teaching Look Like?



Modern ideas of teaching are inextricably linked with the concept of learning and are founded on the beliefs that all students can learn, and that the teacher's role is to facilitate and guide that learning. VARK[®] was developed in this context, primarily providing a way for students to improve their learning process. In this article, we will look at how VARK[®] is used in effective teaching to support student learning. We will cover the use of multiple modalities when presenting learning content, incorporating active learning activities, and fostering metacognition.

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Q & A - Online Teaching/Learning



Distance learning has been around for some time and as you would imagine, earlier programs, both on paper and screen were “dense with unrelieved text”, which suited learners with a READ/WRITE preference, but few others. With the arrival of COVID-19, online learning became a much more utilized tool to support those unable to attend in person.

Let’s look at some of the challenges teaching and learning online has presented for both educators and students.

Question: How can educators support students who feel overwhelmed by the abundance of resources in online learning?

Answer: *Provide resources which incorporate the four VARK® modalities to help students with streamlining their learning of different ideas and concepts. After initial (verbal) direction towards key resources, lecture outlines and supplementary materials can be supplied which contain color coding, diagrams, and symbols as well as text.*

Question: What strategies can be employed to combat feelings of disconnection among online learners?

Answer: *The feeling of disconnection can be a particular issue for those learners with an Aural or Kinesthetic preference. Creating opportunities for interaction and collaboration, such as group projects and peer discussions, help students to engage with learning programs. Aural learners will benefit from online tutorials where students can ask questions and receive feedback. Providing audio clips from teachers and other experts is another useful online teaching tool. Those with a Kinesthetic preference like real-life examples and experiences to support the understanding of concepts and can access these through links to live demonstrations on YouTube or other video-sharing websites. It is essential that students have multiple ways to ask for help and receive feedback to reduce feelings of isolation. Email, video conferencing (in groups or one on one sessions) and chat apps can help to promote connectedness between students and teachers as well as students and their peers.*

Question: What measures can be taken to support students struggling with motivation and time management in an online learning environment?

Answer: *Incorporating different presentation formats using the four VARK® modalities will help with student engagement by providing a range of learning materials that students can select from according to their learning preferences.*

With the advancement of technology, a variety of assessment measures are now available which allow educators to provide regular feedback to enable students to gauge their progress. Rather than an emphasis on one formal assessment at the end of the course, consider including regular learning tasks which contribute to overall grades and help students to maintain their focus. These tasks can incorporate all VARK® modalities, for instance drawing a diagram to summarize an idea, answering a short quiz, a one-on-one presentation and giving a concrete example to explain a concept.

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Teaching in Different Contexts



Even at earlier developmental stages, it is important to actively involve and engage learners in the process of learning. The New Zealand Curriculum for instance, refers to the process of “learning to learn” which incorporates the “*skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that, together with metacognition, enables people to take control of and improve their own learning.*”

Modern approaches to the education of younger learners suggest that students learn best when teachers:

- create a supportive learning environment
- encourage reflective thought and action
- enhance the relevance of new learning
- facilitate shared learning
- make connections to prior learning and experience
- provide sufficient opportunities to learn
- inquire into the teaching–learning relationship

Read more about teaching in different contexts including Early Childhood and Primary Levels (0-12 years), Secondary Level (12-18 years), Tertiary Level (18 years) and education in other contexts

[Learn more](#)

Carol's Corner



This month I started to learn Portuguese in preparation for a trip later in the year. I researched the best options and ventured forth into the app world. The first topic was helpful – “Greeting People” then “Food” and now “Animals”. While I have now learned 100 words, achieved Sapphire Level and have over 600 gems I am not sure if the phrase “the ant drinks water” is going to be that helpful!!

*My next attempt was to listen to a podcast which was initially great but as the lessons became more difficult, I was reminded of my low AURAL **VARK**® score! I was constantly stopping the podcast, reaching for my notebook, and using my strong READ/WRITE preferences, until it wasn't really a podcast at all!*

But I will stick at it and find something that works. Luckily, I still have 6 months!

Tchau Carol

Please let me know if you have some **VARK®** stories, experiences to share or questions you would like answered.

Email Carol

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VARK Learn Limited
115 Aldinga Avenue, Nelson 7011, New Zealand

General Enquiries: contact@vark-learn.com
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