



Five Suggestions for Multisensory Instruction

1. GET STUDENTS MOVING.

Example: Brainstorming prior knowledge and purpose(s) for learning

Instead of always handing students a K-W-L sheet, try a Round-Robin Brainstorm. Post large pieces of paper on the walls with the topic and subtopics. Place students in small groups to generate knowledge and questions on each sheet. At the end of a set time, have groups shift to the next paper, read what's written, and add more, to get exposure to and inspiration from others' ideas.

Example: Understanding Historical Concepts

Instead of only reading about a concept or looking at a diagram, try assigning students roles to research and act in for a simulation. To teach how a bill becomes a law, assign students roles to play, then simulate the process going from proposal to passage (or veto). To teach the impact of taxation without representation (the impetus for the American Revolution) assign roles to students and use pebbles or other small objects instead of money.

2. PRESENT ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS FROM THE SUBJECT IN MULTIPLE FORMATS.

Example: Understanding Shakespearean plays

Instead of only reading scenes, try watching different versions of them online and identifying the different interpretations, or try performing scenes.

Example: Understanding velocity and acceleration

Instead of reading about it and doing the calculations, try building ramps and vehicles, testing them out, and talking about how these activities make the math real.

3. MAKE SURE STUDENTS ARE DOING SOMETHING WITH INFORMATION AND IDEAS.

Example: Reading for homework

Instead of assigning only reading, try requiring students to list the main ideas on a sheet of notepaper, or place sticky-notes in the text with questions and ideas, or paraphrase the chapter summary.

Example: Reviewing for a quiz or test

Instead of reminding students to study, try putting key information or concepts on note cards or strips of paper, and ask students to categorize them (e.g., literary characters by quotes or traits, vocabulary with definitions, events with dates, or cause/effect).

4. INVITE OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR KNOWLEDGE.

Example: Finding alternative ways to demonstrate learning

Instead of always giving a multiple choice or essay test, try discussing with students other ways they can demonstrate what they've learned. (e.g., writing a song or creating a mashup, writing/performing a play, creating a tabletop display, or creating a short film can fulfill the objectives you set.)

5. SOLICIT INPUT ON WHAT HELPS STUDENTS LEARN & PERFORM BEST.

Example: Questionnaires

Give students questionnaires that help both them and you gain a better understanding of their learning styles. (e.g., Are they more visual or auditory learners?)

Example: Assignment reflections

Ask students to reflect on different types of lessons you've implemented. What did they enjoy? What was difficult? What types of activities helped them understand and remember new information?