



Helping Your Child Analyze His or Her Learning Style

By Janice Jones, TLC Tutoring Supervisor

Teaching students to analyze their own learning style and figuring out which strategies work is an important skill that tutors work on with students of all ages. There are some simple ways parents can begin to help with this skill also.

First, to help him notice things that work you might say something like:

- “I notice that you read better when you use your finger to follow along as you read.”
- “You did really well on this test. How did you study for it?”
- “It seems like you get your homework done more quickly when you have music to shut out other noise. Why don’t we try some different kinds of music and see what works best?”
- “You did better on the spelling test last week when you spelled the words aloud and walked around while studying. Why don’t you try that again?”
- “I have noticed that you understand better when you read aloud to yourself. Why don’t we take turns reading the material aloud and then we can discuss it?”

Also, point out noticeable difficulties (gently) and strategize ways to help:

- “I notice that you have trouble with the *sh* sound when you read and spell. Let’s highlight it in your books for a while and see if that helps.”
- “Let’s look at what kinds of problems you missed on the test and try to find a pattern. Then we can think of a better way to study or practice.”
- “Last night when you started your homework late, you got frustrated trying to get it done. What do you think is your most alert time? Can you plan to study then?”
- “When you work too fast you seem to make more mistakes. Try to do ten problems carefully and then proofread them and give yourself a reward (a short break or a snack) if they are all correct.”

Talk to your child’s teachers or tutor for more ideas and more information on his learning style and strategies to suggest. You may need to try a few different strategies to find what works. The important thing is to make your comments specific and positive. Make it a collaborative effort, working together to help him feel better about homework and studying, rather than criticism. Your goal is to help your child understand himself and his learning style so that he can figure out strategies to complete his work independently.