

Finding Your Child's Learning Style Can Help Them in School

By Valarie Bostic

Sammy got a B on his math test. I was extremely proud of him as it was the most well earned B I have ever seen. It was a test on geometry and together we studied for hours. It was difficult for both Sam and I because math is definitely not a strength for either of us. I didn't used to like to help him with his homework because it frustrated me to the point where I wanted to scream. But as usual in my life, the greatest lessons always come through my children.

When we began studying, I realized that I didn't know a right angle from a square knot. But together Sam and I learned about geometry, just in different ways.

Everyone learns things differently. Some are visual learners, some auditory and others need hands-on experiences to get through things. For instance, I am an auditory learner. I learn phonetically, and use word associations to remember things. I do well in a classroom setting and it helps me to hear things. My husband is a visual learner. He has to "see" something in order to process it. My oldest son, Chris is very hands-on, and learns best through actually doing something. Joey, who is in Middle School, uses both auditory and visual learning techniques.

Sam is a visual learner like his dad.

Many parents don't realize what style of learning their child has. They may not have the same style of learning so it's hard for them to help their children when they experience difficulties in school. When my oldest son was little, I struggled with the fact that he couldn't sit still and just listen. He was easily distracted during class and never seemed to be paying attention. However, if you gave him a project to figure out he mastered it easily. He was a whiz at anything he could actually learn "hands on." Unfortunately, that didn't always set right with his teachers. All through school he struggled at sitting through lectures and the traditional classroom styles.

Working with my son, Joey, has been rather easy because he and I share a common learning style. Joey also has a real love of learning, catches on rather quickly so it's easy to help him. Sam, on the other hand, struggles with certain concepts, making it more difficult for him at times. You actually have to present things to him visually so that he can understand. He then has to figure out how to apply the knowledge he has acquired to various situations. Sometimes you have to show him several times before he

grasps it. I have found that taking notes and repetitive homework exercises work wonders for him.

Children are all different, yet equally special. Each has their individual way of learning and their own unique gifts to share with the world. Sam has taught me that when you try to see things through someone else's eyes, you can better understand what they are going through. He also taught me that there are no limits to what you can learn in life as long as you apply yourself.

Someone once told me that children travel the pathway to knowledge in different ways. Some children skip merrily down the pathway, some run. Still others walk slowly, stopping to smell the roses along the way. I believe that's my Sam. But I wouldn't have him any other way.