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Learning to learn

1 SNAPSHOT

Continuing Education

Some popular evening classes in the United States

Ballroom Dancing

Dealing with Difficult People

Overcoming Stage Fright In Everyday Life

Starting Your Own Business

Make Anyone Fall in Love with You

Change Your Voice, Change Your Life

See the World for Free

Success Without Stress

Talk about these questions.

Which of these classes sound interesting to you? Why?

What other evening classes would you be interested in taking?

Source: The Learning Annex, New York City

2 CONVERSATION

A  Listen and practice.

Paula: Do you want to take a class with me at the community college?

Jason: Maybe. What are they offering?

Paula: Well, here's the course catalog. Take a look.

Jason: Hmm. They've got a lot of language classes – Chinese, German, Japanese. Would you rather learn an Asian language or a European one?

Paula: Um, actually, I think I'd rather take an art class. They have one on landscape photography and another on making videos.


Jason: That sounds OK. But I think I'd prefer studying video to learning about photography.

Paula: Oh, wait. It says here that you need to provide your own video equipment.

Jason: Oh, I'd rather not spend a lot of money. Let's see what else they're offering.



CLASS
AUDIO
ONLY 

B  Listen to the rest of the conversation.
What course do they decide to take? Why?

3 PRONUNCIATION Intonation in questions of choice

 Listen to the intonation in questions where there is a choice. Then practice the questions.

Would you rather take auto repair or carpentry?

Would you rather study German or Chinese?

Would you prefer to learn the guitar or violin?

Do you prefer to study in the day or at night?

4 GRAMMAR FOCUS

Would rather and would prefer

"Would rather" is followed by the base form of the verb. "Would prefer" is followed by a gerund or an infinitive. Both are followed by "not" in the negative.

Would you rather learn an Asian language or a European one?
Actually, I'd rather take an art class than study a foreign language.

Do you want to take an evening course?
I'd rather not./I'd prefer not to.

Would you prefer to take a video or a photography class?
I'd prefer studying video to learning about photography.
I'd prefer to study video.

A Complete these conversations with appropriate forms of the verbs in parentheses. Then practice with a partner.

- A: Would you rather a course in literature or science? (take)
B: I'd prefer for a science course because it's more useful for me. (register)
- A: Would you rather English in Australia or Canada? (learn)
B: I think I'd prefer in Australia because it's warmer there. (study)
- A: If you needed to learn a new job skill, would you prefer a class or a private tutor? (attend / have)
B: I'd rather for a class than a tutor. Private tutors are too expensive! (sign up / hire)
- A: Would you rather a choir or an orchestra? (join)
B: I'd prefer in a choir to in an orchestra. (sing / play)
- A: Would you prefer a craft or a new sport? (learn / attempt)
B: To tell you the truth, I'd rather not either. I'd prefer TV. (do / watch)



B Pair work Take turns asking the questions in part A. Pay attention to intonation. Give your own information when responding.

5 LISTENING



A Listen to three people talking about the part-time courses they took recently. Complete the chart.

	What course each person took	What each person learned
1. Linda
2. Rich
3. Gwen

B Pair work Which of the courses in part A would you prefer to take? Why?

6 LEARNING PREFERENCES

Pair work Ask about your partner's learning preferences. Use these questions and your own ideas. Give reasons for your preferences when answering.

Would you rather attend a daytime or an evening class?
 study an Asian or a European language?
 learn a new sport or some type of art or craft?

Would you prefer to study in a class or with a private tutor?
 listening to a tape or watching a video in class?
 to take a course on literature or music appreciation?

A: Would you rather attend a daytime or an evening class?
 B: I'd rather attend an evening class. I'm busy during the day.

interchange 8

Learning curves

What would your classmates like to learn how to do?
 Take a survey.
 Turn to page IC-11.

7 CONVERSATION

A Listen and practice.

Won Gyu: So how's your French class going?
 Jan: Not bad, but I'm finding the pronunciation difficult.
 Won Gyu: Well, it takes a while to get it right. You could improve your accent by listening to tapes.
 Jan: That's a good idea. But how do you learn new vocabulary? I always seem to forget new words.
 Won Gyu: I learn new words by writing them on pieces of paper and sticking them on my bedroom wall. I look at them every night before I go to sleep.
 Jan: Maybe I should try something like that!



B Listen to two other people explain how they learn new words in a foreign language. What techniques do they use?

C Class activity How do you learn new words in a foreign language?

8 GRAMMAR FOCUS

By + gerund for manner

You could improve your accent by listening to tapes.
 I learn new words best by writing them on pieces of paper and sticking them on the wall.
 A good way to become fluent is by living in a country where the language is spoken.


A Complete the phrases in column A with appropriate information from column B. (More than one answer is possible.) Then compare with a partner.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> You can improve your English accent A good way to learn idioms is You can improve your writing skills A good way to learn new vocabulary is You can learn to read faster One way of practicing conversation is You can learn to use grammar correctly You can develop self-confidence in speaking English | <p>B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> by doing translation exercises. by talking to native English speakers. by reading magazines in English. by studying a "learner's dictionary." by practicing dialogs with a partner. by watching American movies. by having a private tutor. by talking to yourself in the shower. |
|--|--|

B Group work Complete the statements in column A with your own ideas. Then compare. What's the best suggestion for each item?

9 WAYS OF LEARNING

CLASS AUDIO ONLY 

A  First, discuss how you would learn to do the things in the chart. Then listen to two people describe how they developed these skills. How did they learn?

	First person	Second person
1. become a good cook
2. become a good conversationalist

B Group work Talk about the best ways to learn these things. Then try to agree on the most effective method.

What's the best way to learn to . . . ?

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| dance better | use a new software program |
| ride a motorcycle | play a musical instrument |
| write a short story | be a good public speaker |

- A: I think the best way to learn to dance better is by joining a dance class with a good instructor.
 B: If you're shy, you can learn by practicing with a friend who's a good dancer.



10 WORD POWER *Personal qualities*

A Pair work How do we learn each of these qualities? Talk with a partner and check (✓) your answers. Then think of three other things we learn from our parents, from our school, and by ourselves.

	From our parents	From school	By ourselves
artistic appreciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
competitiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
concern for others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
perseverance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
tolerance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B Group work What skills or knowledge can you gain from doing the activities listed in the box?

A: By studying world religions, you can learn tolerance.

B: And you can learn to understand different cultures.

C Class activity Which of the things on the list would you be interested in doing? Which wouldn't interest you? Why?

Some activities

studying world religions
volunteering in a hospital
taking a course in poetry
performing in a play

11 WRITING

A Write about a skill, hobby, or craft you have learned in recent years. First, read these questions and make notes. Then use your notes to write a composition.

What is required to be successful at it?

How did you learn it?

What are some ways people learn to do it?

What was difficult about learning it?

I enjoy cooking, and many people say I am a very good cook. To be a good cook, you need both knowledge and practice. You need to learn how to choose fresh ingredients...

I first learned how to cook by watching my mother and by helping her in the kitchen. Then I bought a cookbook and started practicing by trying different recipes....

B Group work Take turns reading your compositions aloud. What did you like best about your classmates' compositions? Can you suggest any ways to improve them?

12 READING

Learning Styles

Have you ever had trouble learning something? Were you able to overcome the problem? How?

Have you ever sat in class thinking that you would never understand what the teacher was trying to teach? Maybe the presentation didn't fit your learning style.

Traditionally, schools present information in two ways – through language and through formulas involving numbers and logic. Psychologists, however, now say there's a problem with this. People have different strengths and different learning styles to match these strengths. For example, one person might struggle with information in a paragraph but understand it immediately in a diagram. Another person will struggle with the diagram but not with the paragraph.

Psychologist Howard Gardner of Harvard University has said there are at least seven learning styles:

Linguistic These people learn by using language – listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

Logical These people learn by applying mathematical formulas and scientific principles.

Visual These people learn by seeing what they are learning.

Musical Instead of finding music a distraction, these people learn well when information is presented through music.

Kinesthetic Movement and physical activities help these people to learn.

Intrapersonal These people have a good understanding of themselves and can learn best if they can relate what they are learning directly to themselves.

Interpersonal These people have a good understanding of others and learn well by working with others.



If schools present information in all these ways, psychologists say, all students will benefit. Students who have a linguistic or a logical learning style will be able to develop new strengths. Students with other learning styles will learn more and have more success in school – and possibly in life.

A Read the article. Then talk about these questions.

1. For which learning styles are traditional teaching methods most appropriate?
2. What learning style do you think each of these students has?

Todd – When he looks at countries on a map, he's able to remember facts about history better.

Alex – He always feels he learns a lot from group research projects.

Diane – She really enjoyed English when she was in second grade because the teacher used a ball game to teach vocabulary.

3. Which learning styles do you think are best for you?

B Group work Think about a recent classroom lesson that worked well for you. Why did it work well? Which learning styles did it use? Tell the group about it.