

From the author

Every journey begins with the first step, and mine began in Portland, Oregon, in July 1996. I was attending a course by Michael Grinder on new trends in teaching and in a pairwork activity sat next to a young woman from Seattle, Washington, named April Bowie.

We were asked to try out the Swassing-Barbe diagnostic test which determined our preferred input, output and storage channels. While working together, we began talking about our experiences with learning styles – and discovered that we had arrived at this seminar through both similar and dissimilar experiences.

The first time I had heard about the concept of styles was several years earlier in a course in Salzburg on ‘superlearning’ techniques, based on the idea that we need to make use of both hemispheres of the brain in language learning rather than concentrating on the more analytical left hemisphere.

One afternoon, we were given a task to decide if we were visual, auditory or kinaesthetic learners – and suddenly a world opened up for me. I was finally presented with a concept that helped me to understand that my failure to learn a foreign language in high school may have had to do with the way I was taught rather than my own abilities.

Suddenly, experiences from my time at school began to make sense and I continued on my own to explore various models and ideas connected with styles.

April had taught language arts in a high school in the US and tried to figure out why some of her students learned so much more easily than others. Her curiosity led her to investigate a number of models, and her own research into the area of adolescents and learning styles left her convinced that how people perceived and organised new material played a major role in their success.

We began to collaborate and explore the different possibilities of opening the eyes of both teachers and students to the fact that *how* we learn as individuals is as important as *what* we learn. School systems today are under enormous pressure to demonstrate their achievements, and sometimes this individuality is forgotten along the way.

True innovation and learning take place when the strengths of a learner are built on, and the encouragement given to learners in a ‘learning-styles’ aware classroom can be exactly what they need to develop and grow. By making use of the three models in this book – Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic sensory perception; Global–Analytic cognitive processing; Mind Organisation, based on concrete or abstract perception and systematic or non-systematic organisation of material – April and I put together seminars to spread the word and encourage other teachers to try out these new ideas in their classrooms.

Our teacher training activities took us to the mountains overlooking Innsbruck, to a seminar venue next to the Danube in Vienna, to Edmonton, Canada, and to small towns in the state of Washington, north of Seattle. We both continued looking into ways to help learners find their place in the world of learning, April returning to Auburn, Washington, and me to Graz, Austria, where I still live, teaching students and training teachers.

When April passed away in 2006, continuing in her footsteps became a mission which has continued until today – and the more I learn about the individuals I work with, and the different ways in which each of them learns, the more convinced I am that this was the right path to choose.

My hope with *Spotlight on Learning Styles* is to share the journey with you and to pass on thoughts, ideas and concepts that have been a major part of my life for the last two decades.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'e'.

Contents



From the author Page 3

Part A Page 7

Spotlight on styles Page 15

Spotlight on success Page 25

Part B Page 27

1 Spotlight on strategies Page 29

Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic learner strategies Page 30

Global–Analytic learner strategies Page 32

Mind Organisation learner strategies Page 34

Teacher strategies Page 37

2 Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic learning styles Page 39

Visual

What have I changed? Page 40

What have we changed? Page 40

What are they wearing? Page 41

Find the shapes Page 41

Putting it together Page 42

I'm looking at something ... Page 42

If I fly to the moon ... Page 43

Whose line is the longest? Page 43

Auditory

Pass it on! Page 44

Puzzle it out! Page 44

Reconstructing cartoons Page 46

Reconstructing texts Page 46

What's the joke? Page 47

Secret identities Page 48

Let me be your guide Page 48

Jigsaw listening Page 49

Kinaesthetic emotional

Emotional objects Page 49

Positive personalities Page 50

Horoscope Page 50

It's in the cards Page 52

Planning a trip Page 53

Outlines Page 53

Roll a mood Page 54

It makes me feel ... Page 54

Kinaesthetic motoric

It's in the bag Page 55

Creating a machine Page 55

Back-writing telephone Page 56

Mime artist Page 56

Acting out adverbs Page 57

Sticky-note body Page 58

This is my knee Page 58

Becoming a statue Page 59

Mixed VAK

Becoming a picture Page 59

Back-to-back drawing Page 60

Memory Page 60

VAK bingo Page 61

Your last holiday Page 61

Look: no mistakes! Page 62

Interesting definitions Page 62

Who went where? Page 64

Run and dictate Page 64

Run and draw Page 65

Contents

3 Global–Analytic learning styles Page 66

Global

Write a story	Page 67
Complete the conditionals	Page 67
What would you do ...?	Page 68
Circle faces	Page 68
Listen and change	Page 69
Buzz words	Page 69
You–Robot	Page 70

Analytic

The ‘yes-no’ hotseat	Page 70
Do you want to bet?	Page 71
Mark the map	Page 72
Detective story	Page 74
Logic puzzle	Page 74
What are the rules?	Page 76
Five in a row	Page 76
Ask the right question	Page 78

Mixed Global–Analytic

Initial adjectives	Page 78
Animal, vegetable, mineral	Page 79
Coded interviews	Page 80
Roll an answer	Page 80
Word hunt	Page 81
It’s on the box	Page 82
The envelope game	Page 82

4 Mind Organisation learning styles Page 83

Flexible Friend

Personal goals	Page 84
Emotional dictation	Page 85
Deep impact	Page 86
All about my partner	Page 86
Personal mindmaps	Page 87
What we have in common	Page 87

Expert Investigator

The perfect page	Page 88
Just give me the facts	Page 88
Nothing but the facts	Page 90
Internet investigation	Page 90
Researching an excursion	Page 91

Power Planner

How does it work?	Page 91
Is everything in order?	Page 92
Group grammar	Page 92
Confirming information	Page 93
Setting priorities	Page 93
Linking ideas	Page 94

Radical Reformer

Radical roleplay	Page 95
Act out the characters	Page 96
Can you sell it?	Page 97
The restaurant game	Page 97
When I was a child ...	Page 98
Our ideal home	Page 98

Mixed Mind Organisation

The department store	Page 99
Our type of trip	Page 99
Don’t say the word!	Page 100
My first time ...	Page 101
Your last chance	Page 102

Part C Page 103

Further approaches	Page 105
Further activities	Page 109
Further reading	Page 114
From spotlight to springboard	Page 116

From the editors	Page 117
From the publisher	Page 118
