

Teacher's Sensory Preferences

As a teacher, you've most likely met students who approached or saw things differently from you. In trying to understand and teach them, you were forced to be creative and perhaps modify your teaching style.

Teachers can also misunderstand students with sensory processing deficiencies. A student who has a need to be touched could cause discomfort for a teacher who needs a lot of space. Understanding your own sensory needs can help you better understand those of your students.

The following questionnaire created by Diana Henry, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA (www.ateachabout.com) is a quick way to begin the process.

YOUR PERSONAL SENSORY TOOLS

Hearing Seeing Touching Moving Pushing/Pulling Smelling Mouthing

1. To wake up in the morning, I _____.
2. To help me regulate throughout the day, I need _____.
3. What I like best about my classroom _____.
4. What I do not like about my classroom _____.
5. What I like about my colleague's classroom _____.
6. What I like about my home that I would like to have in my classroom _____.
7. I could make my classroom better by _____.
8. Throughout the typical teaching day, I sit approximately a total of _____ minutes.
9. My students sit up to _____ minutes at a time.
10. When I do sit, my favorite chair in the classroom (rocks? Is on wheels? Is high up?)

11. When I was in college, I preferred to study (in what position? where? with what?)

12. When I have to listen at a meeting/workshop I like to (doodle? eat? drink? chew gum? play with small objects like pens/paper clips?) _____.
13. When I need to concentrate now, the environment I create includes (quiet/sound? Food/drink? bright light/dim light/natural light? stationary chair/rocking chair?) _____.
14. When I prepare for bed to calm down, I (take a warm shower or bath? snuggle under a blanket or quilt? Put on a heavy robe or light night clothes) _____.

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