Study Skills for Students with Dyslexia
SAGE was founded in 1965 by Sara Miller McCune to support the dissemination of usable knowledge by publishing innovative and high-quality research and teaching content. Today, we publish over 900 journals, including those of more than 400 learned societies, more than 800 new books per year, and a growing range of library products including archives, data, case studies, reports, and video. SAGE remains majority-owned by our founder, and after Sara's lifetime will become owned by a charitable trust that secures our continued independence.
Developmental objectives

This chapter:

- gives an overview of the concepts of thinking (cognitive) and learning styles
- encourages you to reflect on how you currently think and learn, and to develop an active approach to studying (metacognition)
- presents strategies to help you to improve your approach to study to become a more effective learner
- suggests a skills inventory (Digital-Download) and learning styles questionnaires to help you to reflect and explore how you learn best
- explores a range of strategies and techniques associated with the main learning styles – e.g. students who work best with concepts, emotions and interpersonal experience, and/or the sensory input: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

Understanding your thinking process and how it informs your learning styles

To get the most out of the chapters in this book, you need to reflect on yourself as an individual learner – what do you do well, what do you find more challenging? It is important to explore how you approach different tasks, and what thinking and learning strategies you might find useful.
Taking control of your learning: metacognition

Mortimore observes that ‘developing knowledge of one’s own mental processes, or metacognition, is seen as a major part of personal development and essential to the acquisition of learning strategies’ (2008: 99). The word metacognition means becoming more aware of and reflective about how you think, what you know, what you don’t know and how you learn best.

Developing metacognition also means recognising when you require additional skills, inclusive or alternative assessment (see Introduction) or support – either from course tutors, online resources, specialist study tutors, librarians, peers, assistive technology, dictionaries and so on (see Introduction).

Being aware of your strengths and areas of difficulty is crucial for developing metacognition: exploring thinking and learning styles can help you choose the most useful approaches to tackling your problem areas. In the Digital-Download the ‘How do I learn best?’ Mind Map™ provides an overview of some of the thinking and learning styles explored in this chapter. In addition the Skills Inventory can help you identify specific strengths and areas of difficulty.

Table 2.1 below suggests general strategies to encourage metacognition that will help you become more in control and reflective of your learning process.

**TABLE 2.1 Metacognitive strategies**

| Copy          | • Find good models for writing formats and procedures.  
|              | • *Imitate* the models and *practise* the procedure until you are confident. |
| Break it down | • Divide assignment tasks into easy-to-manage stages.  
|              | • Do this with new formats or procedures but in general it gives you control. |
| Predict      | • Relate new information to what you already know – subject and general knowledge.  
|              | • Be active when faced with new information – prepare for new topics before the lesson or lecture. |
| Ask/review   | • Use questions to check understanding of texts.  
|              | • Go over items frequently to refresh memory. Little and often is a good principle. |
| Plan         | • Find formats to organise your tasks (Chapter 1).  
|              | • Look ahead and manage time and workload (Chapter 1).  
|              | • Get feedback. Note strengths and areas for development in assignments. Record strategies that work well. |
| Evaluate     | • Review your strategies often and get ideas for study methods from books, tutors, online resources and peers. Prepare to adopt new working methods as your skill requirements change. |
Thinking (cognitive) and learning styles

Just as people demonstrate different personalities in social situations, there are various theories that suggest that we have preferences in how we approach new information and experiences. Thinking (cognitive) and learning styles have been much debated. The scientific validity of learning styles has been questioned, as the evidence for them has been largely through self-reporting (Pashler et al., 2008). Should you want to know more about the learning styles debate, refer to Dyslexia and Learning Style (Mortimore, 2008: chapter 1) and the research paper ‘First year medical students prefer multiple learning styles’ (Lujan and DiCarlo, 2006).

This chapter introduces a number of thinking and learning style theories. An exploration of these theories is not about restricting your study methods with a fixed label: explore them to understand more about your strengths and challenges as a student and how they may help you discover useful strategies.

(W)holistic and analytic

Some theorists (e.g. Riding and Rayner, 1998) suggest four important approaches (Figure 2.1).

- (W)holistic thinkers like to have an overview of information from the ‘top down’, enjoy ‘big picture’ ideas and prefer making connections rather than breaking information down into smaller units.

FIGURE 2.1 Four cognitive and learning styles
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- **Analytic** thinkers prefer a step-by-step sequential approach (bottom up) and enjoy taking information ‘apart’ to ‘see how it works’. They may struggle with seeing patterns and connections between different items.
- The other major contrast in thinking styles is between **verbalisers** and **visualisers**. For example, do you prefer to think in words or images or do you use both modes?

The (w)holistic style is associated with the right side of the brain; the analytic with the left. Virtually all tasks require the use of both of these approaches. For example, drawing a plan for a house would be a holistic activity and making a list of all the materials needed and the stage of construction would be analytic. Each individual will experience preferences for these two styles to different degrees. To explore the holistic and analytic learning styles model further, see Katherine Benziger’s theory: http://businessballs.com/benzigerpersonalityassessment.htm

**Experiential learning models: Kolb, and Honey and Mumford**

Experiential learning styles theorists such as David Kolb (2015) and Honey and Mumford (1992) focus on the student’s **personality** as a learner based on tendencies to approach experience in different ways. For example, do you like to dive into practical activities or would you rather watch and reflect before and after taking action. Are you more engaged by the emotional or intellectual aspects of information and experiences?

For example, if you are strong in the areas of reflection and observation, you may be comfortable with finding content for a theory-based essay or personal journal but panic when faced with a practical task that requires instant responses. You then need to find strategies to

![Experiential learning model](image-url)

**FIGURE 2.2** Experiential learning model
help you with those aspects you find more challenging. To explore Kolb, Honey and Mumford’s learning styles model further see: www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm.

**Style mapping: Dunn and Dunn**

Rita and Kenneth Dunn (1978) have developed a comprehensive map of learning preferences, which addresses many important aspects of study (Figure 2.3).

![Dunn and Dunn Learning Style Model](image)

**FIGURE 2.3** Dunn and Dunn learning style model reproduced by kind permission from Susan M. Rundle

**The elements**

- **Environmental** relates to whether you prefer to study in silence, with music or background noise, and your preferences for lighting and temperature.
- **Emotional** relates to your sources of motivation, your desire to conform or not conform, your level of persistence and preference for structured or less structured study.
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- **Sociological** relates to whether you work best alone, in pairs or in a group. It explores your attitude to authority figures such as teachers and preferences for variety or stability in working methods.
- **Physiological** relates to the uses of the senses for taking in information, whether you prefer to be still or on the move when you think, and issues such as the time of day when you study best, how eating affects your study.
- **Psychological** relates to whether you like to respond quickly (impulsive) or more slowly (reflective) to new information, and to holistic (global) and analytical thinking styles (see above).

The style mapping approach may help you understand more about your study preferences as well as how you may respond to the way a course is delivered and assessed. **For example, a student who prefers social contact should avoid distance learning.**

For an inexpensive **Learning Styles Mapping Questionnaire** based on the Dunn and Dunn model which can help you explore your unique learning style strengths and preferences go to: www.learningstyles.net/.

**Summary of thinking styles and learning preferences**

We have looked at **holistic and analytic, verbal and visual and experiential learning models**, which address your approaches to new experiences and information. These models can be useful tools to explore in order to become more reflective of how you learn best. Below are some strategies that draw from the four experiential learning elements: thinking – holistic and analytic, feeling, observing and doing (practical experience).

**Holistic (global) thinking strategies**

- **Compare** (similarities) and **contrast** (differences) new ideas with ideas you already know in your subject. For example, how does Jung’s theory of extroversion and introversion compare to that of Eysenck?
  - **Compare** (similarities) – both men believe that introverts have an internal focus and extroverts an external focus.
  - **Contrast** (differences) – Jung’s theory is based on introspection and observation whereas Eysenck uses questionnaires and physiological tests to identify the types.
- Consider future social **consequences** of an idea. What other ideas does it challenge? How does it challenge them? For example, utilitarianism was the greatest happiness for the greatest number so what would a society based on that be like?
- Create **imaginary situations** to test the strength of the idea. For example, social alienation (not feeling part of a given society). **Imagine the implications** of an
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alien who is unfamiliar with shops and money having to cope with a job in a supermarket.

- **Relate facts and detail to an imagined whole process or concept.** For example, when studying a biological process imagine an animal going through it.
- **Find appropriate metaphors to make abstract ideas more memorable.** For example the Freudian idea of repression. Imagine the conscious mind as a dictator locking up and refusing to listen to the cries and pleas of the unconscious.

**Analytic thinking strategies**

- **Break big ideas down into smaller components** and make flowcharts, lists or a Mind Map\textsuperscript{TM} with headings and subheadings. For example, subheadings for the effects of Social Alienation might include:
  - Education
  - Family
  - Self
  - Culture
  - Work

- **Develop critical thinking skills and follow logical steps to construct arguments** (see Chapter 8). For example, global warming causes the melting of the polar ice caps resulting in rises in sea level, flooding and loss of species (extinction).

It can be helpful to holistic thinkers to look at analytic techniques to learn how to break down their ideas: it is equally helpful to analytic thinkers to try some holistic strategies to see how ideas connect.

**Strategies for Feelers**

- Relate information and ideas to personal experience and situations.
- Examine your reactions to information or ideas. For example, Darwinism. Does natural selection seem mechanical and cruel or full of possibilities? Why?
- Create characters and stories for facts, biological processes and abstract ideas. For example, cell division. Give the cell a name and compare its different stages to a child growing up and doing different things.
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Strategies for Do-ers (practical experience)

- See section on kinaesthetic strategies below.

Strategies for Observers

- Plan your approach to practical activities.
- Reflect on a topic of study or an activity using a notebook or a note making, audio or video recording App on a tablet/smartphone – what works and what doesn’t?
- Use video media or podcasts to gain insight into new material or practical procedures.
- Exploit your reflective abilities by having recording media handy on a day-to-day basis.

If you enjoy working with other people, consider pairing up or forming a group with students whose learning preferences complement yours. For example, Do-er with Observer, Thinker with Feeler.

The main senses – visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (VAK)

In this section we will look at using the senses to choose helpful learning strategies. Some people favour one or more sense modes over the others and it is a good idea to use strategies that appeal to your preferred modes. Kinaesthetic covers touch and movement, physical activity; taste and smell might also be added to this category. Many creative study techniques are multi-sensory, involving all three senses. All these senses can relate to virtual online environments as well as real world physical experiences.

What are your sensory preferences?

If you have completed the Learning Styles Mapping Questionnaire mentioned above then you will already have a clear idea of your learning strengths and sensory preferences. There are also many free VAK questionnaires available online, for example: http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/. As you will see from the examples of VAK strategies and the techniques provided below, many do not suit just one learning preference, but are in fact multi-sensory.

Visual learning preference

Visual learners learn best by seeing. People who prefer this type of learning prefer to see information presented in a visual form. They tend to understand information best by learning
through pictures, illustrations and graphic displays such as charts, diagrams, illustrations and hand-outs. This includes videos, films and demonstrations.

**Visual learning strategies**

- Use **colour highlighting**, **bolding** or **underlining** to differentiate different topics, evidence and examples. This can be done with marker pens or the 'highlight' tool option in Microsoft Word. In addition, try using coloured cards to structure ideas for different relevance.
- Try **different formats for note taking** (see Chapter 4). Create a **Mind Map™** (often also referred to as concept maps) to identify key ideas/concepts and group subcategories together using visual representation. These can be drawn by hand or created using assistive software such as Mindview, Inspiration® or XMind. Figure 2.4 shows an example that was created using Inspiration®. Download and explore XMind (free) from www.xmind.net/ to create your own Mind Map™ of the visual strategies you have read about.

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**FIGURE 2.4** Mind Map™ of visual formats created using Inspiration® 9. (Inspiration® 9 is a product of Inspiration® Software, Inc. Inspiration is a registered trademark of Inspiration Software, Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.)
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- Try **different visual formats to frame, understand and explain ideas** (see Figure 2.4). Seeing information in different formats can help understanding and memory.
- Make instructional text such as course notes, handbooks, reading lists and assessment information **visually accessible**. This is easily done electronically using bold headings, colour, text size, bullet points, text boxes, spaces, graphics, tables, flow charts and timelines.
- Create **flashcards** on index cards or use a tablet/smartphone App such as STUDYBLUE, Quizlet or Anki, to help **understand and memorise information** – these are particularly useful for revision (see Chapter 11).

**GO to www.dnamatters.co.uk/resources/ and search for ‘Revision’ for flashcard Apps**

- Use a **writing template when planning your writing**. This could be as simple as headed boxes with prompts. You can create your own writing frame by looking at other people’s writing (see Chapter 7 for examples).
- Use your tablet/smartphone to **take photographs of relevant information, lecture notes on whiteboards, or research**. Using assistive technology tools such as Evernote you can personalise your ideas using annotation, symbols, photographs and sketches.
- **Picture association** can be used to create pictures literally or in the ‘mind’s eye’. When listening to someone talk it helps if you break eye contact, listen and create mental images of what you hear. You can create your own **visual symbols/icons** see Google Images: https://images.google.com/ or use graphical symbols such as SmartArt graphics, in Microsoft Word. These visual symbols are thinking tools and can represent processes, relationships and hierarchies.
- Try using visual memory aids, often called **image mnemonics**. For example, when structuring paragraphs there are two mnemonics that can help. The first represents a paragraph as made up of four parts, associated with the four layers of a burger (Figure 2.5). It is referred to as **PEEL: Point, Evidence, Explain and Link**. The second visual mnemonic represents a paragraph as made up of three parts, and a visual association is made to the three layers of a sandwich. It is referred to as **PEC: Point, Evidence and Comment** (see Chapter 7).

**FIGURE 2.5 Four-part paragraph mnemonic: Point, Evidence, Explain, Link**
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Visual mnemonics are explored further in Chapter 11 – visual revision techniques.

- **Use visual pegs** to convert abstract information to images. Visual pegs are explored further in Chapter 11 – visual revision techniques and see also: http://bit.ly/SkillsToolboxVisualPegSystem.
- **Use organisers, planners, wall charts and calendars** and synchronise your timetable with your computer and tablet/smartphone for visual time management including pop-up reminders and alerts (see Chapter 1).
- **Explore materials and websites with interesting visual design** and features such as textbooks and dictionaries with attractive fonts and visuals. The Oxford Dictionary WordFlex App is an excellent example: http://wordflex.com/.
- **Be aware if you prefer teacher-led lectures where you can see body language** as opposed to e-learning recording where the teacher may not be visible.

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**GO to Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic (VAK) Learning Strategies Mind Maps™**

- Use the Internet to search for video resources to help you understand concepts and ideas. YouTube and Khan Academy www.khanacademy.org/ are excellent examples.

**Auditory learning preference**

Auditory learners are more responsive to spoken communications and tend to take in more when they listen to someone speak rather than by reading or taking notes. They tend to get a great deal out of lectures, group discussion, radio, speaking, web-chat and talking things through. The use of listening, discussing, talking, questioning, recalling are important parts of a learning strategy for those with this preference. The aural preference includes talking out loud as well as talking to oneself.

**Auditory learning strategies**

- **Listen** to audio books and also web-based broadcasting where you can hear lectures, radio programs, discussions and interviews.
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- **Record** your thoughts, summaries of your notes, lectures, seminars and tutorials using a Dictaphone or Smartphone App. Listen to your [audio files](#) on your Dictaphone or smartphone ‘on the go’ to support and reinforce memory.
- Use **OCR and text-to-speech software** to scan and hear text read to you, or proofread your work using a synthesised voice (see Chapter 5).
- If you have difficulty writing/typing but are confident in articulating your ideas verbally, you might benefit from using **voice recognition software** built into most computers, smartphones/tablets, free Voice Typing in Google Documents: [http://bit.ly/GoogleDocsVoiceTyping](http://bit.ly/GoogleDocsVoiceTyping), the free Dictation.io website [https://dictation.io](https://dictation.io) or Dragon Naturally Speaking (PC) or Dragon Dictate (MAC) commercial software. Voice recognition can be used for anything you would normally write or type.

**GO to www.dnamatters.co.uk/resources/ and search for ‘Voice Recognition’**

- Use different **audio alert sounds/reminders** on your smartphone/tablet for different tasks and time management. That way, you are less likely to tune out to a predictable sound.
- Be aware of how **environmental sounds** and background sound supports your concentration. For example try the environmental sounds at [www.calm.com/](http://www.calm.com/).
- **Read information aloud,** especially if it is complex or challenging. **When proofreading** try **reading your work aloud,** get someone else to read it aloud for you, or use text-to-speech software (see Chapter 5).
- Use **verbal rehearsal and repetition to recite** information in order to reinforce what you have heard. You can do this aloud or to yourself in your head.
- **Ask yourself questions about what you are learning** and then answer them. This is useful in all study situations from reading to revision.
- Form a **study group or work with a study-buddy** – discuss concepts and technical information, questioning, listening and presenting key points and summaries.
- Use **auditory mnemonics** to help remember, learn and recall information such as sequences, factual terms, numbers or even how to spell a word. For example, there is ‘a rat’ in ‘separate’ to help you remember the ‘a’.
- Use **acronyms:** for example, RICE is an acronym for the instructions to treat a sprain:
  
  | R     | Rest the injured area |
  | I     | Ice the sprain        |
  | C     | Compress with a wrap or bandage |
  | E     | Elevate the injured area |

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- Use **catchy phrases**; they can be something that you have made up – which may even make information more memorable. For example, for remembering the bones of the wrist:

  ‘Some Lovers Try Positions That They Can’t Handle’ relates to Scaphoid, Lunate, Triquetral, Pisiform, Trapezium, Trapezoid, Capitate, Hamate.

- Try **rhyme, rhythm, melody and/or song** to help with memory and recall. Using rhythm is helpful when learning new vocabulary. You can try beating out the syllables. In addition, when spelling correctly words with ‘ie’ and ‘ei’, the following rhyming mnemonic can be used, ‘I before E except after C or when sounding like A in neighbour and weigh, and also for weird, which is really just weird’.

- Many learners have made **songs** of information when a list of items must be learned. This YouTube video ‘Periodic Table Mnemonic Song’ uses song to memorise the periodic table: http://bit.ly/YouTubePeriodicTableMnemonicSong.

- The **rhyming peg system**, which has similarities to the visual peg system which uses rhyme in combination with **visual association** to help memorise information. The rhyming peg system is explored further in Chapter 11 – auditory revision techniques.

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**Kinaesthetic learning preferences (including tactile)**

Kinaesthetic learning involves the physical and practical hands-on experience of touching, moving, holding, doing and also taste and smell. This preference uses the learner’s experiences and the things that are real even when they are shown in pictures and on screens. They learn best in multi-sensory and practical exercises or working with cases or examples and with trial and error situations.

Moving the body and also imaginary actions are a big part of this learning style. Some kinaesthetic learners find they study best while **moving, manipulating materials or objects, listening** to music, or **chewing** gum or **eating** something. Further suggestions are provided below.

**Kinaesthetic learning strategies**

- **Audio record your notes and reading material** using a Dictaphone or smartphone/tablet recording App and listen to recordings ‘on the go’, at the gym or travelling.

- **Alternate reading and action**. Read one or several paragraphs, taking reading notes of the main ideas. Then take an exercise break of 5–10 minutes to reflect on what you have been reading, recall key points, themes and questions you may still have unanswered.
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- **Doodle** or make drawings to help concentration during lectures. Be sure that you use doodling in order to focus on the lecture, not to take your mind off the lecture.
- Use **fidget toys**. For example, a stress ball (one that is hard to squeeze) helps release pent-up energy and helps focus on lectures. You might also try tensing individual body-parts and muscles and relaxing them, and finally tensing the whole body. At home you could try throwing a soft ball or juggling to help concentration.
- If you enjoy a **hands-on approach**, you may like to experiment with **plastic letters or modelling letters** in clay to learn words and letters you find difficult. An effective multi-sensory spelling strategy is the **Look, Say, Cover, Write, and Check** method (Chapter 9).
- Create your own **personalised dictionary** of key words and their meanings.
- Use your **physical environment** including **objects** by moving around or standing as you read aloud or study, as you may think best when on your feet. Act out as you read or speak aloud, using feeling and voice fluctuations.
- Explore **listening to music** whilst studying to aid relaxation and focus.
- Use your **physical study spaces** and your **familiar objects**. Walk to different rooms as you study the various concepts, chapters, or segments of information that you need to know. For example, in your living room, place sticky notes with bullet points of information and/or drawings on different objects. When trying to remember information elsewhere, visualise yourself in that room to trigger recall. You can make large posters and use them in the same way as sticky notes.
- Use a room to create **physical time lines** for historical facts using the physical space to remember events in time. Divide a room into different time periods and populate it with objects associated to the information to be learnt. You could apply this to learning new concepts as well.
- Use **real objects you can manipulate**. Create hands-on learning when possible, including field trips, lab work and visits to museums or places related to course content. Gather examples and first-hand experience in order to relate concepts to real-world examples. Construct, dismantle and re-build your own **physical models** to help you remember more, try out and test practical ideas, and problem solving. The materials could be recyclable and inexpensive, objects or even food. The YouTube video ‘Mousetrap Photosynthesis’ is an example of a DIY model using the board game Mousetrap to explain photosynthesis: http://bit.ly/YouTubeMousetrapPhotosynthesis
- Use **interactive websites** and **touchscreen media** including smartphone/tablet Apps.
- Use **role-play, walk-throughs and rehearsal** involving study topics or new procedures. These can be with or in front of others, or in the mirror or recorded on video. Give presentations on topics to a study group.
- Make the **format** of study materials as **interactive** as possible (see Visual learning strategies above), for example make flash cards, use sticky notes, organise material in spreadsheets, tables and charts, type up notes, summarise your notes into a PowerPoint presentation, use large paper, posters, write out key topics on A4/A3 white boards, use a Mind Map™ to brainstorm construction ideas, cut up and rearrange paragraphs, make posters and draw diagrams.
• Some excellent colouring books are available to learn anatomy and physiology.
• Experiment with the body-peg technique. This technique is similar to the previously mentioned peg techniques and in this instance associates information with actions and body parts. When preparing for a presentation some students have found using parts of our hand as memory pegs useful. Body-peg are explored further in Chapter 11 – kinaesthetic revision techniques and see also: www.brainboxx.co.uk/a3_aspects/pages/bodypegs.htm.

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CASE STUDY

Corinne, a psychology student, took a VAK learning preference questionnaire, which identified her preference for visual and kinaesthetic learning. She also looked at the Dunn and Dunn style mapping with her specialist tutor to help her consider the range of other factors contributing to her learning. For example, she realised that she is most effective when dealing with studying complex tasks and assignments first thing in the morning. It also became clear to her that she prefers to study in a more informal setting, such as a comfortable chair, with her feet up or even sitting on the floor.

Corinne’s case study assignment

Gary Frost is a 49-year-old married father of two, who has worked shifts as a long distance lorry driver for the past 20 years. He spends most of his time in his cab, travelling across England. He finds his job isolating and quite stressful at times. He often becomes agitated and restless, feeling hostile towards other drivers on the road when spending long periods of time sitting in traffic on the motorway. He eats mainly fast, fatty foods whilst he is on the road and finds little time to exercise. Mr Frost smokes 30 cigarettes a day and has recently suffered with chest pains. His wife is becoming increasingly worried about his health, but Mr Frost thinks that his wife is worrying over nothing and that his recent chest pains are simply a result of indigestion caused by eating and driving simultaneously.

Identify and refine problems or issues related to this individual. Identify the roles of a health psychologist and other health care professionals dealing with this case. Develop an appropriate treatment/intervention plan.

Corinne produced a case study Mind Map™ and said this about the process of producing her treatment/ intervention plan assignment:

(Continued)
GO to Case Study Mind Map™ Example created by Corrine

The key to this Mind Map™ is organisation by colour. By isolating the issues that need to be addressed in the brief in different colours I was able to see at a glance what I needed to cover and how the various issues were linked. The Mind Map™ also gave me the structure for the essay. The left of the Mind Map™ (the issues not related to an intervention) formed the basis of my introduction and how I was going to address the question. This delineated how I conceived the issues and the agencies I thought should be involved in the intervention. On the right-hand side of the Mind Map™ are those issues that are related to the proposed intervention. As you can see the issue of shift work is mentioned but no intervention is proposed. This is part of the job description and not possible to change; my reading, however, indicted that it was a significant risk factor and therefore should be mentioned in the write-up.

To help her check the content and order of her ideas, she role-played her treatment plan with her psychology supervisor. This was also an opportunity for her to be asked questions about the plan. At the final stage before submission, she proofread her work. She didn’t look at her final draft for a day and then she printed a copy to proofread. She did this in stages using different colour highlighters to mark up changes to make for content, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Corinne found these visual/kinaesthetic approaches helpful. The Mind Map™ helped her visualise all the ideas and issues involved before moving on to the outline of the essay and the essay itself (see Chapter 6). The role-play helped her ‘think on her feet’ and rehearse a future real-life interaction.

How to apply thinking and learning styles and use this book

One of the first steps is to try to make a realistic but positive assessment of your existing skills across all the tasks demanded on your course. Completing a skills inventory such as the one provided in the Digital-Download with a tutor or friend can help you identify strengths and areas for development. It also provides an opportunity to discuss what strategies you currently
use when performing different tasks. Use this or a similar checklist to identify your strengths and challenges across a range of tasks. You can then choose the most important sections to read in this book. The ‘How do I Learn Best?’ Mind Map™ provides an overview of some of the thinking and learning styles explored in this chapter, which may be useful to explore alongside the Skills Inventory.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

• Understand your thinking (holistic, analytic, feeling, observing, doing) and your learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic or multi-sensory) to develop techniques that will help you.
• Explore emotional, cognitive and multi-sensory methods – use different approaches for different study tasks.
• Use materials or software that appeal to your own styles and be prepared to adapt them if necessary.
• Don’t be surprised if you prefer to work in a range of methods and techniques – try them and use what is successful.
• Evaluate and update your use of strategies throughout your course.

Please go to the Digital-Download accompanying this book to find the following documents:

Case Study Mind Map™ Example  Image
‘How Do I Learn Best?’ Mind Map™  Word Document
Metacognitive Strategies Checklist  Word Document
Skills Inventory  Word Document
Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic (VAK) Learning Strategies Mind Maps™
Chapter web links

**Assistive technology**

Diversity and Ability (DnA) – Assistive technology resources

www.dnamatters.co.uk/resources/ search for:
- Mind Map™
- Revision (for flashcard Apps)
- Voice Recognition

**Thinking and learning styles**

‘First-year medical students prefer multiple learning styles’ (Lujan and DiCarlo, 2006)

http://advan.physiology.org/content/30/1/13

Katherine Benziger – Thinking Styles

http://businessballs.com/
benzigerpersonalityassessment.htm

Kolb, Honey and Mumford – experiential learning styles

www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm

Learning Styles Mapping Questionnaire (based on Dunn and Dunn model)

www.learningstyles.net/

Visual Auditory Kinaesthetic (VAK) Learning Styles Questionnaire

http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/

**Strategies**

XMind Mind Mapping

www.xmind.net/

The Oxford WordFlex visual dictionary App

http://wordflex.com/

Google Documents Voice Typing


Dictation.io – free voice recognition

https://dictation.io/

‘Periodic Table Mnemonic Song’ YouTube video

http://bit.ly/YouTubePeriodicTableMnemonicSong

‘Mousetrap Photosynthesis’ YouTube video – using the board game Mousetrap to explain photosynthesis


Brainboxx Body Pegs memory technique

http://www.brainboxx.co.uk/a3_aspects/pages/bodypegs.htm

SkillsToolbox Visual Pegs Mnemonic system


Khan Academy – educational video resources

www.khanacademy.org/