

Do You Know How Your Students Want To Learn?

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Do You Know How Your Students Want To Learn?

By Brenda Townsend Hall

Learner power is the topic of this article. I wonder how many school directors think about asking

their students how they want to learn. The idea of conducting a needs analysis to find out what students want to learn is nothing new, but I'm not sure if we are quite so used to trying to find out their preferred learning styles. I mention this because it strikes me that so many teachers come from the same mould, having qualified through courses based very much on progressive western views of educational practice. Typically, these teachers want lots of classroom activity, learner participation and have a view of the teacher as a facilitator rather than pedagogue. On the other hand, the students will probably feel comfortable if the teaching style is in keeping with what they are used to.

I can remember my own astonishment when teaching a group of 30 students in a French university only to discover that they didn't expect to be involved in activities that required them to actually speak.

They were used to being passive receptacles of information which they would record and then work on using reading and writing as the means of learning. Of course, I wanted to change all that but I realized that I could only introduce change by finding out what they expected, what they wanted and by negotiating with them possible better ways of effective language learning.

It seems to me that we should conduct regular surveys of students to find out their views about how they think the classroom should be managed, what types of materials should be used and how they should be used, how work should be organized, what activities should be done in class, how the teacher should interact with students. The information gathered can be useful to teachers whose own ideas might be quite different. Once they know students' preferences they will be able to judge more clearly which aspects of their teaching style to modify and which aspects to try to introduce incrementally so as not to deter students.

Brenda Townsend Hall, a contributing editor to ESLeemployment, is a writer in the fields of English for business, cross-cultural awareness and business communications. Interested in receiving TEFL job listings weekly for free? To learn more visit

<http://www.esleemployment.com>

5 Great Benefits Of Online Learning

By Linda Emerson

Online courses offer more people than ever the ability to get a post secondary education. Because it is a self directed program, it may not be suited for people that aren't highly motivated and organised. Of course, no matter what education you choose you should make sure that it is accredited, or even better, internationally recognized. Getting an education online offers more than you might have ever thought possible.

1. Learn From The Comfort Of Your Own Home

One of the greatest things about online learning is that you can learn anywhere – even in the comfort of your own home. This will save you countless hours of transit that you would otherwise waste every day going to and from school by car or bus. Instead of enduring a boring – and often stressful – rush to get to class at a horrible hour of the morning, you can use those hours for actual learning, or even sleeping in!

2. Avoid Schedule Conflicts

Online learning is extremely flexible, allowing students to learn when they want. This is great for students who have a full time job or have children and wouldn't be able to attend classes any other way. You will get much more one on one instruction in the distance learning course because you can always contact your instructor by email or video conference.

3. Focused Learning

– Accommodates multiple learning styles and mediums – Students can connect via email, chat rooms, or wiki pages – Students vastly prefer online learning – Skip over material you already know and focus on topics you'd like to learn

4. Learn At Your Own Pace

It is possible for students to learn at their own pace – this means that some students will graduate from a 2 year program in 3 or even 4 years, whereas other students will graduate in 1 year, or even six months. This means you can be working much faster than you originally thought – meaning you can pay back any student loans faster too.

5. Vastly Less Expensive

If you look around the internet you will find classes that are very inexpensive compared to a regular college or university program. Be sure to research the program carefully before you enroll. Interesting materials such as video lectures, taped lectures, and such, may be mailed to you. At the end of their education, when students finally hold their degrees, most of them are laden with huge student loans. Don't let huge student loans get the best of you – get an online education instead and save vast amounts of money.

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For more great online learning related articles and resources check out

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