

Wednesday 22nd April 2020

Dear Students,

I hope that you and your families are all keeping safe and well. I hope that you had a restful Easter break. With the last term underway,

**The theme of this week's newsletter is
'Learning'.**

There are some ideas on how to improve our learning as well as a link a Ted Talk on YouTube about a soldier who went back to school as an adult.

Your teachers are ready and waiting to engage with you on Edmodo and are looking forward to hearing from you. Don't hesitate to ask them for help if you need it. It's not too late to start. There's a popular Chinese proverb that says: "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now." In the context of your learning, this means that if you want success and growth in the future, the best time to act is now!

Please get in touch if you have any questions or any suggestions for the Guidance Newsletter. Email: lauraoflanagan@stkevinscollege.com

Warmest regards,

Ms. O'Flanagan
Guidance Counsellor

It's all about learning...

You hear the word in every one of your classes, every single day at school, at home, on TV; learn this, learn that, the learning objective is...

The word is everywhere!

But have you ever actually thought about what learning is?

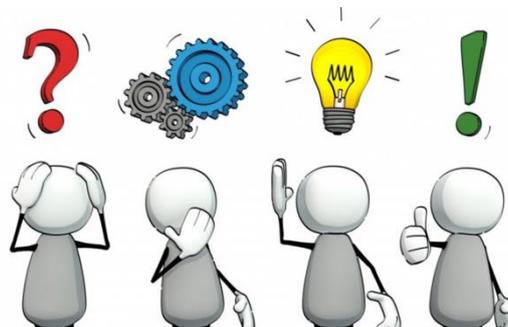
What **do** we mean when we talk about learning something?

Read on and find out. You never know, you might learn something!!!!....



Usually, we say that learning has taken place when we understand something, and can explain, teach or demonstrate it to others.

Thinking about this definition of learning, can you recall one thing that you learned yesterday?



How do we learn?

There are lots of different dimensions to how we learn.

Learning can be conscious or unconscious...



Learning is **conscious** when we are AWARE that we are learning, such as when we are memorising a phone number or quotes from a poem. Typical methods of learning consciously are:

- Repeating something
- Writing it out
- Checking that we have remembered it
- Telling someone else what we know

Unconscious learning occurs when we **don't realise** we are learning something. We may only realise that we have learned something later on, such as suddenly recognising which way to go on a car journey or surprising yourself by answering a question without thinking.



We don't always have to be switched on!...

Our mental and physical state affects how we learn.

If you are tired, it is a lot harder to learn. Likewise, **if we are in pain** (such as having a bad headache) that will also impact on our ability to learn. The way information is presented to us (textbook, videos etc) also affects the level of attention we pay to it.

Learning doesn't always require effort and great concentration; you will be able remember times when you tried hard to remember something, such as an important quote for English, or a chemical equation for Science, then forgot it quickly but at the same time you managed to remember a radio jingle or a quote from an advertisement you saw on a billboard! Very frustrating!

Can you think of a time when this has happened to you? What did you find difficult to remember? What is the last thing you learned unconsciously from listening to the radio or seeing it on a billboard?

We all use different senses to learn...

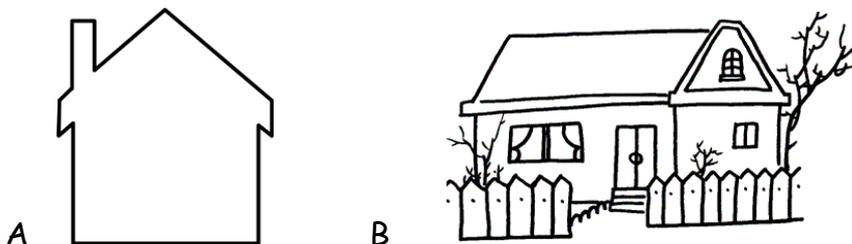
Everybody has their own preferred order for seeing, hearing, speaking, writing and using information in order to learn it. Do you know your own preference? Take a piece of information you need to learn (it could be an English quote, a biological term or a mathematical equation) and try learning it using different sense sequences;

1. Look at it: say it aloud; write it; check what you've written
2. Say it aloud; look at it; write it; check what you've written
3. Draw it: look at it; say it aloud; write it; check what you've written
4. Ask a friend to read it to you and listen; repeat it; write it; look at what you've written; check it

Which of these methods works best for you?

Do you need the whole story, or just a little piece of it?

Some people learn best when they see the overall picture first whereas others get confused and overwhelmed if they get too much information thrown at them at once. Other people learn best through building up details slowly, a little at a time.



Some people want to learn all the details in one go (house B), whereas others would prefer to start with the basics (house A) and then learn a bit more, a little at a time.



Search



This talk was given by Dr. Barbara Oakley. Dr. Oakley failed her high school maths and science courses, before enlisting in the U.S. Army immediately after graduation.

When she saw how her lack of mathematical and technical savvy severely limited her options—both to rise in the military and to explore other careers—she returned to school with a new found determination to re-tool her brain to master the very subjects that had given her so much trouble throughout her entire life.

[Click here for the video](#)