

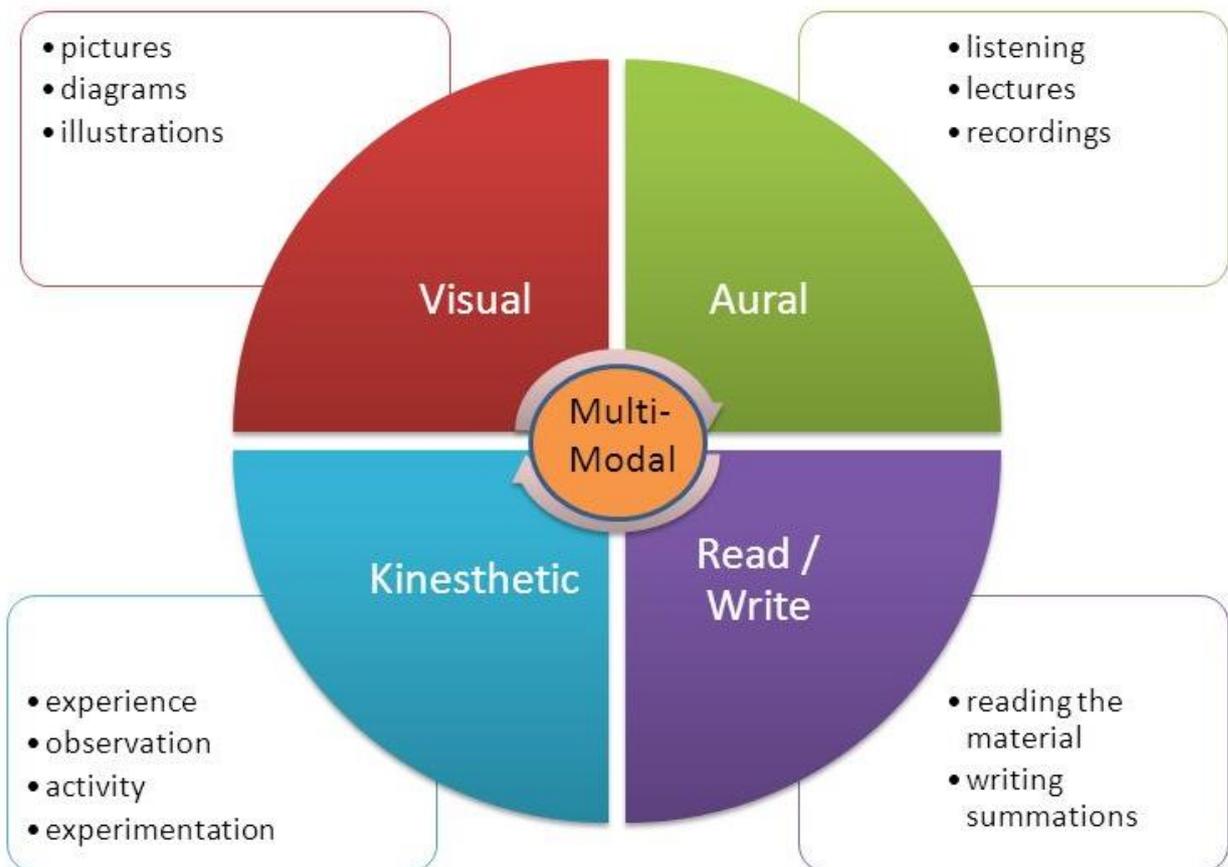
The VARK Modalities

(adapted from: <http://vark-learn.com/introduction-to-vark/the-vark-modalities/>)

The acronym VARK stands for

1. Visual,
2. Aural,
3. Read/write, and
4. Kinesthetic sensory modalities that are used for learning information. Fleming and Mills (1992) suggested four modalities that seemed to reflect the experiences of the students and teachers. Although there is some overlap between them they are defined as follows. Remember life (and work) are multimodal so there are no hard and fast boundaries.

VARK Learning Styles



Visual (V):

This preference includes the depiction of information in

- maps,
 - spider diagrams,
 - charts,
 - graphs,
 - flow charts,
 - labelled diagrams, and
 - all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices,
- that people use to represent what could have been presented in words.

Aural / Auditory (A):

This perceptual mode describes a preference for information that is *“heard or spoken.”* Learners who have this as their main preference report that they learn best from

- lectures,
- group discussion,
- radio,
- email,
- using mobile phones,
- speaking,
- web-chat and
- talking things through.

The Aural preference includes talking out loud as well as talking to oneself. Often people with this preference want to sort things out by speaking first, rather than sorting out their ideas and then speaking. They may say again what has already been said, or ask an obvious and previously answered question. They have need to say it themselves and they learn through saying it – their way.

Read/write (R):

This preference is for information displayed as words. Not surprisingly, many teachers and students have a strong preference for this mode. Being able to write well and read widely are attributes sought by employers of graduates. This preference emphasises text-based input and output – reading and writing in all its forms but especially

- manuals,
- reports,
- essays and
- assignments.

Kinesthetic (K):

This modality refers to the “perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice (simulated or real).” Although such an experience may invoke other modalities, the key is that people who prefer this mode are connected to reality, “either through concrete personal experiences, examples, practice or simulation” [Fleming and Mills, 1992, pp. 140-141]. It includes

- demonstrations,
- simulations,
- videos and
- movies of “*real*” things, as well as case studies,
- practice and applications.

The key is the reality or concrete nature of the example. If it can be grasped, held, tasted, or felt it will probably be included. People with this as a strong preference learn from the experience of doing something and they value their own background of experiences and less so, the experiences of others.

What about Mixtures? Multimodality (MM):

Life is multimodal. There are seldom instances where one mode is used, or is sufficient, so that is why there is a four-part VARK profile.