

4 Using different ways of learning

You may assume that people learn in the same way as you did. However, a little reflection will remind you that you learned knowledge and skills in different ways.

Think about how you learned Algebra. Then think how you learned how to tie shoelaces, how to change a light bulb or how to separate an egg yolk from an egg white.

Learning a new language means learning different sounds and rhythms, different words and different ways of putting words together. It also means learning what is the right or wrong thing to say in a given situation. To be able to make the right choices at speed means constant practice without feeling rushed or stupid.

As a teacher, your task is to support learners who want to learn for themselves. This might be boring for you but it is not necessarily boring for the learner. Anyone learns better if they are enjoying the experience but if you are trying hard to hear something new, you might be glad of a chance to do so at your pace. A teacher needs to help make learning feel effortless. It is your task to give time and encouragement generously. People need to be allowed to forget and remember without you rushing in to answer your own questions.