

MIndful Education
2009-2010 Teaching Tip

My upper level undergraduate sociology course, *School and Society*, attracts a lot of students who are enrolled in our K-8 teacher education program. I always learn at least as much from them as they do from me. This year, they got me thinking more about ways to enhance the classroom experience for students with different learning styles. In their excellent and very practical handbook, *MIndful Education for ADHD Students*, Proulx-Schirduan, Shearer and Case (2009) encourage us to teach to students' strengths rather than their weaknesses.

Although their book is primarily aimed at K-8 teachers and learners, those of us who teach college-level students should also explore ways to adjust our classroom learning approaches to accommodate these students. Here are a few examples:

- During a break in the class period or at the start as students are arriving, play a piece of music or show a music video (easy enough to find on the 'net). If you can find something that connects to your class topic, so much the better. Appeals to musical intelligence.
- Use photographs or other colorful graphics shown on a projector screen to illustrate concepts. Appeals to spatial intelligence.
- Give writing assignments that encourage students to engage in self-reflection or to articulate personal goals and propose steps they might take to achieve those goals. Appeals to linguistic and intrapersonal intelligences.
- Have students work in teams or small groups for at least part of each class period. Provide an opportunity for them to stand up and move around as they get into their groups. Appeals to interpersonal and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences.
- Challenge students to look for and explain cause-effect relationships and to consider the various ways that parts combine into wholes. Appeals to logical-mathematical and naturalist intelligences.

Reference:

Proulx-Schirduan, V., C. Branton Shearer and K.I. Case (2009). *MIndful Education for ADHD Students: Differentiating Curriculum and Instruction Using Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Teachers College Press.

PLEASE NOTE: The word MIndful is shown with both the M and the I capitalized to represent Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, which informs this book.

Donna Bird
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