

Multiple-source integration task RUBRIC

The texts you have just read presented different perspectives about learning styles. Now, please write a short essay stating your informed opinion on the topic you just read about by describing and evaluating these different perspectives, supporting your arguments based on the web pages you have just visited. Write your answer in a concise and elaborate manner, using approximately half a page. Give your text a title.

- 1) Identifying a **position** on the issue. There are 3 possible positions: participants who are a) contrary to the idea of LS, b) favorable to the idea of LS and c) arguing that this is an unsettled issue or that it is relative – i.e. “the idea of LS not all wrong but it is not effective for teaching”. If participants’ position is unclear, check column E.
- 2) Identifying and counting the **number of reasons** used to support the position taken either from “texts that are contrary to LS”, “texts that are for LS” or “from prior knowledge” (columns F, G, H).

Arguments FOR LS	Source
A1 “Just like there are different teaching methods, many individuals also believe there are different ways to learn and understand new information”.	Learning styles and homeschooling < www.homeschoolyourchild.com/learning-styles >
A2 “We all experience the world in unique ways, and with that comes variation in the ways we learn best. Understanding these different types of learning styles can drastically impact the way we handle our students, set up group projects and adapt individual learning.”	Teacher Christine’s blog < www.teacherchristinemalvik.blogspot.com >
A3 “Without understanding and acknowledging these different ways of learning, teachers might end up with a handful of students lagging behind their classmates—in part because their unique learning style hasn’t been activated.” “Part of our responsibility as an educator is to adjust your lessons to the unique group of students you are working with at any given time.”	Teacher Christine’s blog < www.teacherchristinemalvik.blogspot.com >
A4 “VARK model. This model identifies four types of learners: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and reading/writing.”	What are the four Learning Styles in education? < www.infoedu.com/learning-styles >
Arguments AGAINST LS	Source
A5 “By placing students in categories that reflect “preferred learning styles,” we run the risk of oversimplifying the complex nature of teaching and learning to the detriment of our students.”	Learning Styles – Ineffective for learning and teaching < www.universityofkansas.edu/learning-styles-what-teachers-need-to-know >
A6 “matching instructional mode to a student’s supposedly identified “learning style” does not produce better learning outcomes.	Learning Styles – Ineffective for learning and teaching < www.universityofkansas.edu/learning-styles-what-teachers-need-to-know >
A7 “A single student may learn best with one approach in one subject and a different one in another. The best approach for them may even vary day-to-day. Most likely, students are best served when a variety of strategies are employed in a lesson.”	Learning Styles – Ineffective for learning and teaching < www.universityofkansas.edu/learning-styles-what-teachers-need-to-know >
A8 “Researchers are not sure how the concept of learning styles has spread, but it is probably associated with the self-esteem movement of the late ’80s and early ’90s. Everyone was special—so everyone must have a special learning style too.”	Learning styles – Why are they so popular? < www.journaleducation.edu/articles/learning-styles-preferences/ >
A9 “People like to identify themselves and others by “type.”	Learning styles – Why are they so popular? < www.journaleducation.edu/articles/learning-styles-preferences/ >

A10 LS IS NOT A METACOGNITIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING: "metacognition is focused on planning, monitoring, and evaluating any kind of thinking about thinking and does nothing to connect one's identity or abilities to any singular approach to knowledge."	Learning styles – Why are they so popular? < www.journaleducation.edu/articles/learning-styles-preferences/ >
A11 "when teachers work to accommodate learning styles, they divert attention and effort away from instructional strategies that are supported by a substantial body of research"	Are Learning styles harmful? < www.educationnext.org/learning-styles-harmful/ >
A12 "If a student believes she or he has a particular dominant learning style, the student may avoid effective learning strategies or even entire subjects they believe are a better fit for a learning style they don't think suits them."	Are Learning styles harmful? < www.educationnext.org/learning-styles-harmful/ >
A13 "students who are taught they have a dominant learning style may attempt to process information in their preferred style, even when the method does not fit the task."	Are Learning styles harmful? < www.educationnext.org/learning-styles-harmful/ >
A14 "teachers who attempt to accommodate multiple learning styles in a lesson, rather than focusing on the most effective methods to present the specific material, can negatively influence student learning by causing cognitive overload."	Are Learning styles harmful? < www.educationnext.org/learning-styles-harmful/ >

- 3) Identifying whether or not the participant mentioned the two **opposing perspectives** to state the problem (column "I")
- 4) Identifying and count whether the participant made direct references to the 6 texts read (document references, column J) or indirect references to the studies and authors cited in each text (content references, column K) ~~—especially in the case of texts refuting LS, which might mention texts 2 "Learning styles – Ineffective for learning and teaching" and 4 "Learning styles – why are they so popular?"~~
- 5) Rating the text 1-7 according to the argumentation scale (column L)

Rubric for scoring the essays for argumentative reasoning

Score	Description
7	The essay contains five argument components: positions, supporting reasons, opposing reasons, elaborations, and rebuttals. There is a consistent discussion of opposing perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the issue. The essay is well-structured and focused. No irrelevant information is included, repetition is low.
6	The essay states a clear position on the issue supported by elaborated reasons. There is a consistent discussion of opposing perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the issue. The essay is well-focused.
5	The essay states a clear position on the issue supported by three or more elaborated reasons. There is some consideration of alternatives of chosen position and the unsettled nature of the issue, but it is not well-developed. There is little or no attempt at reconciling the alternative positions in own argumentation. The essay may contain irrelevant or repetitive information.
4	The essay contains a position on the issue supported by three distinct or elaborated reasons. Alternative perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the issue may be mentioned but are not discussed.
3	The essay contains a position on the issue supported by two distinct or elaborated reasons. Alternative perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the

	issue are not mentioned or discussed. There is a lot of irrelevant and/or repetitive and/or inconsistent information.
2	The essay contains a position on the issue supported by one reason. The reasons are not elaborated. Alternative perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the issue are not mentioned or discussed.
1	The essay is underdeveloped, and it is not possible to identify a position on the issue. The essay may contain irrelevant information. Alternative perspective(s) and the unsettled nature of the issue are not mentioned or discussed.

Note. The rubric is adapted from Reznitskaya et al (2009).