

## Reading



David Kolb

### David Kolb

- David Kolb's learning styles model and experiential learning theory are today acknowledged by academics, teachers, managers and trainers as truly seminal works.

### Acronyms

*What's Your Style* features some acronyms that many educators and learners are familiar with.

Here are some more for you:

#### ■ AKA (Also Known As)

A remarkable acronym that's now so well established that it's virtually become a word, and certainly requires no reference to the original source words to be immediately understood.

#### ■ BTW (By The Way)

One of the most commonly used abbreviations today, meaning "incidentally" or "in passing", and originally meaning "by the way of a secondary subject or matter", which was earlier shortened to "by the bye", which has now almost passed out of use. "By the way" is referenced in 1870's Brewer, so it's not a recent expression.

#### ■ DRIB (Don't Read If Busy)

Only the email generation could have developed the need for such an acronym....

#### ■ KISS (Keep It Simple & Stupid)

One of the all time great acronyms. A motto and reminder that simplicity works. Variations on the KISS theme include *Keep It Short and Sweet*, *Keep It Simple Sunshine*, *Keep It Simple and Straightforward*, *Keep It Simple Sister*, *Keep It Simple Sweetheart*.

1. In pairs, ask each other the following questions. Tell each other which method works best for you, and why.

- Do you like to learn from specific experiences, and from how you feel about these experiences?
- Do you like to learn from watching and listening, and make your judgments only after careful observation?
- Do you like to learn through a systematic analysis of a situation?
- Do you like to learn by doing things?

2. Read the following study to identify your personal style. Compare with your partner's.

### What's Your Style

Kolb's learning theory sets out four distinct learning styles (or preferences), which are based on a four-stage learning cycle. In this respect Kolb's model is particularly elegant, since it offers both a way to understand individual people's different learning styles, and also an explanation of a cycle of experiential learning that applies to us all. Kolb includes this "cycle of learning" as a central principle of his experiential learning theory, typically expressed as four-stage cycle of learning, in which "immediate or concrete experiences" provide a basis for "observations and reflections." These "observations and reflections" are assimilated and distilled into "abstract concepts" producing new implications for action which can be "actively tested" in turn creating new experiences.

Kolb's model therefore works on two levels – a four-stage cycle → and a four-type definition of learning styles, (each representing the combination of two dialectally linked preferred styles, rather like a two-by-two matrix of the four-stage cycle styles), for which Kolb used these terms →

Concrete Experience (CE)  
Reflective Observation (RO)  
Abstract Conceptualization (AC)  
Active Experimentation (AE)

Diverging (CE + RO)  
Assimilating (AC + RO)  
Converging (AC + AE)  
Accommodating (CE + AE)

The word "dialectally" is not widely understood, and yet carries an essential meaning, namely "conflicting" (its ancient Greek root means "debate"). Kolb meant by this that we cannot do both at the same time, and to an extent our urge to want to do both creates conflict, which we resolve through choice when confronted with a new learning situation. We internally decide whether we wish to **do** or **watch**, and at the same time we decide whether to **think** or **feel**.

3. Match the following learners to the right style.

**Adam:** An excellent problem solver and decision maker. Loves to experiment with new ideas, to simulate, and to work with practical applications.

## Vocabulary

**Helen:** Needs clear explanations, enjoys organizing input in tables, lists etc. Enjoys lectures, hates games and prefers to be given time to think things over.

**Chris:** Likes to watch and learn but also work in teams. Able to look at things from different perspectives. Takes feedback well.

**Michael:** Tends to act on “gut” instinct rather than logical analysis. Can be dominating. Needs to be kept busy with different practical tasks.

### 4. Find synonyms to the words and expressions below in the text on the previous page.

- to lay out systematically and graphically: .....
- relating to an actual, specific thing or instance: .....
- in due order or sequence: .....
- connected: .....
- an irresistible or impelling force, influence or instinct: .....
- leading to: .....
- drawing apart from a common point: .....
- flexible, friendly: .....

### 5. Fill in the blanks with words and expressions from exercise 4.

- He ..... a brilliant but nonetheless completely crazy plan.
- There is a strong ..... between one's eating habits and health.
- He helped me with the bags and, ....., I made him dinner.
- All of a sudden, she was overcome by an ..... to run away.
- Our efforts eventually ..... to an outstanding accomplishment.
- You keep complaining but how about some ..... ideas?!
- It appears that we have ..... opinions on this.
- Jane is the best room-mate! She is even more ..... than Mum!

### 6. In most blanks below, you will need to use the verb to set as a phrasal verb.

- They ..... at dawn, so as not to arrive after nightfall.
- Why did you ..... him .....? He didn't deserve to spend 10 years in prison.
- ..... the apples ..... on that shelf, our customers are used to finding apples there.
- His intervention ..... a lot of things in motion.
- His intervention ..... quite a time bomb.

### 7. Which type(s) of learner would be bothered by the following class rules and why? There may be more than one answer!

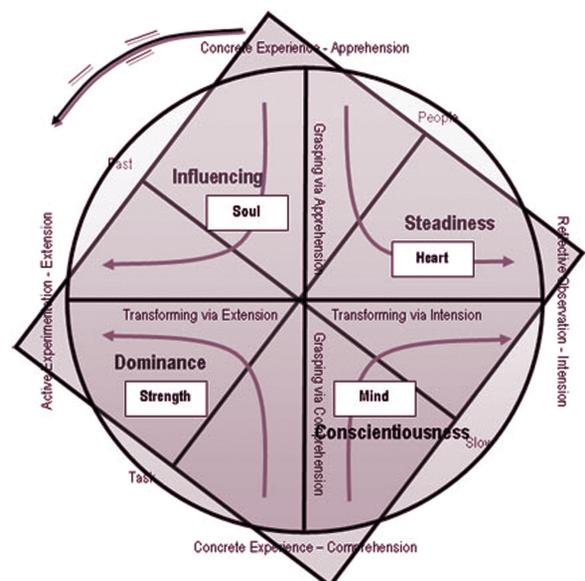
- All assignments are mandatory unless specified otherwise. Failure to turn in an assignment at the given deadline will result in a grade 2.
- Disrespectful language or behaviour to one's peers in class is absolutely forbidden; the penalty for breaking this rule is a grade 2.
- Repeated interruptions of colleagues' performance and class in general may result in a summoning of parents, a grade 2 or a trial by the teachers' council.

### Phrasal verbs

**Phrasal verbs are verbs whose meaning is changed by the addition of a preposition.**

- **To set:**
  - to arrange
  - to fix
  - to put stones in a piece of jewelry
- **To set out:**
  - to begin an earnest attempt
  - to undertake
  - to display for exhibition or sale
  - to plant
  - to start a journey (A.E.)
- **To set off:**
  - to start a mechanism (such as a bomb)
  - to start a journey (Br.E.)
- **To set up:**
  - to arrange things in a certain way
  - to cause a person to be accused of a crime they have not committed

Find other phrasal verbs in “What's Your Style.”



## English in use

### Tenses – revision

#### ■ Simple Present:

1. *Present action or condition*

I hear you.

Here comes the bus.

2. *General truths*

There are thirty days in September.

3. *Non-action; habitual action*

I like music.

I run on Tuesdays and Sundays.

4. *Future time*

The train leaves at 4:00 p.m. (scheduled)

#### ■ Present Progressive

1. *Activity in progress*

I am playing soccer now.

2. *Temporary situation*

He is living with his parents.

#### ■ Simple Past

*Completed action*

We visited the museum yesterday.

#### ■ Past Continuous

1. *Past action that took place over a period of time*

They were climbing for twenty-seven days.

2. *Past action interrupted by another*

We were eating dinner when she told me.

#### ■ Future

1. *With will/won't — activity or event that will or won't exist or happen in the future*

I'll get up late tomorrow.

I won't get up early.

2. *With going to — future in relation to circumstances in the present*

I'm hungry.



1. Read the following text. Use the words in the box (they are given in the order you need to use them) to form words that fit the spaces. The first one is done for you as an example.

Everyone seems to be talking about standards lately.

Parents want higher standards. Or they want to go back to the old standards. Or they complain about the lack of standards. Faculty say the students can't meet even minimal standards. Subject matter "experts" want more "authentic" standards. Business people want standards that help students become better 1..... .

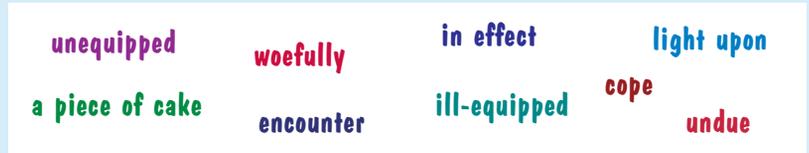
It is time to rethink standards in a fundamental way. To simply modify task-specific ones in subject areas - which is the current rage - is not enough. We must get to the root of the problem that plagues 2..... . We do this only by rediscovering and teaching 3..... standards useful to students wherever they go and whatever they end up doing.

What are these standards? They are not new. They are not even 4..... . In fact, once made explicit, they are quite 5..... . They enable us to make a matter clear when others are expressing it in a confused, vague or 6..... way. They enable us to be accurate and precise when we are facing the inaccurate, imprecise or 7..... . They enable us to get beneath the surface of an issue or problem when there is some 8..... to miss important complexities. They enable us to step outside one point of view into another when most are 9..... trapped within a narrow perspective.

Put most simply, I am referring to the intellectual standards of clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth and 10..... of thought. They are essential in all academic, professional and personal performances that require sound thinking.



2. Match the underlined words in the text to the ones in the box.



I left school and university with my head packed full of knowledge; enough of it, anyway, to pass all the examinations that were put in my path. As a well-educated man I rather expected my work to be easy, something at which my intellect would allow me to excel without excessive effort. It came as something of a shock, therefore, to face the world outside for the first time, and to realize that I was sadly unprepared, not only for the necessary business of earning a living,

## Grammar

## Tenses – revision

but, more importantly, to manage with the new problems which came my way, in both life and work. I was fortunate enough to find a first employer prepared to invest a lot of time in what was, actually, my real education. I will always feel guilty about leaving them at the end of our 10-year contract.

**3. Use words from the box in exercise 2 to complete the following sentences.**

- Teaching 3-year-olds can be a very tough job. Are you sure you can 1.....?
- The young widow was crying 2..... .
- As we hadn't eaten in days, we were quite ill-equipped for that serious 3..... .
- I understand you work for a large company but what do you do, 4.....?
- I kept strolling on the beach, hoping to 5..... an unusual artifact which was going to make me rich and famous.
- The police officer was fired because he had made 6..... use of power.

**4. Rephrase the following sentences, using the word given, so that the meaning stays the same.**

**Example:** I don't want you to buy me the car. (RATHER)  
I'd rather you didn't buy me the car.

- The cost of the meals is not included in the cost of the tour. (NOT)
- I get the impression that you are not enjoying yourself. (SEEM)
- I haven't seen Ann since she left for France. (LAST)
- I had a quick look at the letter while my wife was out of the bedroom. (WAITING)
- I had never seen such a good movie before. (BEST)
- He is currently working as a reporter for the Daily News. (ARTICLES)
- Not having met him before, I thought I should be careful. (HAD)
- I applied but have not had a reply yet. (THEY)
- He learned to drive when he was eighteen. (BEEN)
- She's always moaning about lack of room. (SICK)

**5. Find and correct the errors (if any) in the following sentences.**

- I have been to the cinema every day last week.
- I didn't see Spielberg's last film yet.
- Where have you been last summer?
- My parents work in the food industry right now.
- Why were you eating so much meat at Christmas? That's why you are so sick now!
- I'm working for Siemens. I have been with them for the past 5 years.

**6. What Romanian tenses can correspond to Present Perfect Simple? Think of different examples.**

### ■ Present Perfect

1. *To express an action that began in the past and continues up to and includes the present*

He has lived here for many years.

2. *To express habitual or continued action*

He has worn glasses all his life.

3. *To express events occurring at an indefinite or unspecified time in the past*

Have you ever been to Tokyo before?

### ■ Present Perfect Progressive

*To express duration of an action that began in the past, has continued into the present, and may continue into the future*

David has been working for two hours, and he hasn't finished yet.

### ■ Past Perfect

1. *To describe a past event or condition completed before another event in the past*

When I arrived home, he had already called.

2. *In reported speech*

Jane said that she had gone to the movies.

### ■ Future Perfect

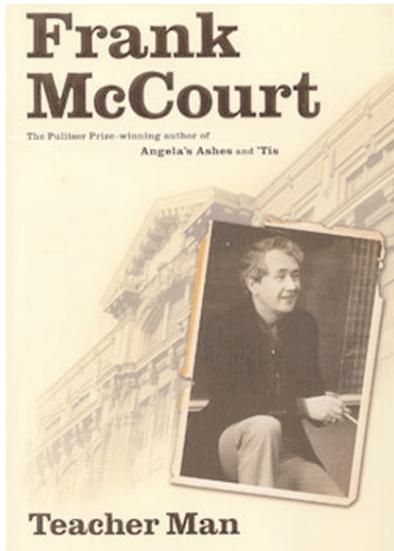
*To express action that will be completed by or before a specified time in the future*

By next month we will have finished this job.

He won't have finished his work by 11.



## Listening and speaking



### Frank McCourt

A Pulitzer Prize-winner, and one of the master storytellers of American literature, he is the author of the new memoir, *Teacher Man* (2006), an account of his thirty-year teaching career with the New York City public school system. Renowned for his irreverent charm and self-effacing wit, McCourt first became a literary star at the age of 66, after establishing himself as a dedicated and beloved English teacher at McKee Vocational High School in Staten Island, Seward Park High School on the Lower East Side, and Manhattan's famous, fiercely competitive Stuyvesant High School.

### Vocabulary

**Icicles** = pointed sticks of ice formed by the dripping and freezing of water (off rooftops, usually)

**To feel out of sorts** = to feel uncomfortable

**Not my kettle of fish** = not something I like

**Fishy** = dubious

**Sparkling** = fizzy (usually about drinks); lively (about funny, intelligent persons)

1. Teaching is one of the most paradoxical professions: the same people who hold it as a noble profession may sometimes refer to „those poor teachers” in clearly disdainful tones. But what makes a good teacher? In pairs, try to agree on the three most important qualities a good teacher should have. Then get together with another pair and try to agree on three essential qualities out of your combined list of six. Then get together with another group of 4 and try to agree on three qualities again! Let the class know what your group of 8 has agreed upon.

2. Listen to an interview with Frank McCourt, a contemporary Irish-American teacher turned writer after retiring. While you listen, write down the 3 qualities that made Frank McCourt a good teacher.

3. According to the interview, are the following statements true or false?

- Teaching is a simple profession.
- Frank McCourt does not have high school studies.
- Honesty and his Irish accent helped McCourt become popular with his students.
- Writing a book is like sculpting.
- Frank McCourt had to retire at 57.

4. Setting is essential for good learning. Rank the following in the order of the importance they have for you (1 — most important, 7 — least important). Compare with your partner.

- \_\_\_ Rapport with teacher and colleagues
- \_\_\_ Physical health
- \_\_\_ Teacher's pedagogical skill
- \_\_\_ Colleagues' gender (co-ed or segregated classes)
- \_\_\_ Ambience of classroom (colours, temperature, furniture)
- \_\_\_ Time of day
- \_\_\_ Class size

5. Read the letter of an 11<sup>th</sup> grade student who has recently changed schools. He is referring to many of the elements you've just had to rank. Use ONE word only to fill in each of the blanks.

Dear Mike,

Sorry I've been out of touch for so long. It's taken me longer than I expected to get settled in here, at Bentley High School. But I'm about to make it up to you — this is going to be one long letter! The toughest thing here is the ..... ! I wonder if that's why there aren't too many ..... around... Also, the ones I've met so far are more than just plump!... I've gotten used to the icicles in my nose, but I don't know that I'll ever go out with a girl twice as big as me...

What also made me feel out of sorts in the first month was the ..... classrooms. Great for staying warm, but 20 people in a 6 sqm room?! Not my kettle of fish! By the way, people also tend to smell rather “fishy” here...

## Writing

And then there is the 30-minute ..... at six a.m. to get there. I'm basically sound asleep for the first couple of classes! I hear we'll start one full hour later once we switch to daylight saving time. I can't wait!

The ..... are the one great thing here. They are friendly, knowledgeable and patient. A very different ballgame from crazy Miss Juniper and gloomy Mr Yellowduck, I'll say! Take my Maths teacher: he actually makes Maths fun!

Give my love to all at old Limerick High. I miss the sparkling wit of everybody there, I can see now that it was not only fun, but also ..... in a good way. Write soon!

Take care,  
Norman



6. A friend you made on a summer camp is considering moving to your school next year. The main reason for this is that your school has a better reputation and your friend feels she/he may get a better education there.

Write a 250-word letter about the opportunities for successful learning at your school and the advisability of a transfer. Refer to:

- school curriculum
- class size (how many students)
- classroom size
- labs, equipment, internet access
- library
- gym
- extracurricular activities available at your school.

Do not overlook your friend's natural inclinations, strong and weak points.

7. Describe 3 of the pictures on the right, pointing out similarities and differences.

Choose one of the three that you like most and say why. You should not speak for more than 1 minute. Your colleague should do the same for the remaining pictures.



## Cultural awareness

- In spring 2003, there were an estimated 1.1 million homeschool students, an increase from 850,000 in spring 1999. (National Center for Education Statistics, *1.1 Million Homeschooled Students in the United States in 2003*, July 2004)
- Concern about the environment of other schools motivated 31% of parents, while 30% of parents homeschooled their children to provide religious or moral instruction. (National Center for Education Statistics, *1.1 Million Homeschooled Students in the United States in 2003*, July 2004)
- Less than 10% of homeschool students live in a household with two full-time working adults. (U.S. Census Bureau, *Home Schooling in the U.S.: Trends and Characteristics*, August 2001)
- Homeschool students scored an average of 1093.1 on the SATs, compared to 1012.6 for public school students and 1123.8 for private-independent schools. (National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, *Home-Schooling in the U.S.*, January 2004)
- 47% of homeschool parents earned a bachelor's or graduate / professional school degree, compared with 33% of non-homeschool parents. (National Center for Education Statistics, *Homeschooling in the United States: 1999*, July 2001)  
Sixty-nine percent of homeschool graduates go on to postsecondary education. (Home School Legal Defense Association)



1. Read the title and opening words of the article below. What do you think the topic is? Choose 2 or 3 out of the following:

- Respiratory problems
- Taking an important exam
- NDE (Near Death Experience)
- Learning how to read
- An unusual child
- Pollution
- A victim of kidnapping
- An unconventional parent

2. Read this article to check your 2-3 predictions from the previous exercise. You should be able to verify at least 2 from the list above.

### I CAN BREATHE AGAIN!

by Carol Finkelstein

*Waiting to Exhale* was such an inspiring book. Have you ever caught yourself “waiting to exhale”?

I have spent so much of my life holding my breath. Raising my children has certainly been one of those situations. For me, every decision in parenting had to be thoroughly researched and then deliberated and discussed. And once the decision was made, I found myself holding my breath, worrying about how it would turn out.

One of the most deliberated decisions I made for my kids was the education decision—whether to homeschool or not, and how to homeschool. It wasn't a decision made once and then laid to rest, either. It was a decision deliberated daily for years. How much should I push them, how much should I let them be, what should I teach them and how and when?

When my first child was a baby, a friend learned about a method of teaching your 2-year-old baby to read. We decided to try it, envisioning our babies reading very young and growing up very smart and well educated. Neither of our babies took to the program well, even though we tried it with them again and again. My son, Chris, refused to read at two years, then at three years. I gradually tried more traditional ways of teaching him letters and sounds. Surely he would read by five years of age! But not Chris. Maybe by the time he was six years old, or by seven? But Chris refused to be forced or cajoled into reading. By now his friends were learning to read in school, but Chris still couldn't read. He struggled to decipher simple words and he hated trying to read because it was so frustrating.

I was holding my breath the whole time. I was battling tremendous self-doubt. I must be an awful mother. Some folks advised me to take Chris to specialists, test his hearing, eyesight, cognitive abilities, look into reading labs for him. Deep in my soul, those didn't feel right and I never took Chris to any of those things.

And then the miracle happened. Right on his ninth birthday, reading clicked in his mind and he just began reading. Within a month he was reading easily at his grade level. Within a year he had read every book on airplanes at the public library.

I breathed a sigh of relief. The muscles in my stomach could finally relax. I could let my shoulders drop and I could unfurrow my brow. At long last Chris was reading.

3. Chris is now a father. Will he send his 6 year-old son to school or not? Speak with a partner about this, then write 60-80 words about it.

## Cultural awareness

### Autobiography in 5 parts

by Portia Nelson

4. Read Susan's response to Carol Finkelstein's article. Why is homeschooling preferable to a conventional education, according to the two parents?

Dear Carol,

I am an unschooling mum, just like you. My now 12-year-old son was on the same path as Chris, refusing to read in kindergarten and then again in another kindergarten. Adam had absolutely no interest in learning letters period. I took him out of school in first grade and decided to unschool him since I had already had tremendous success with my now 16 year old daughter, Sasha. I tried... and my husband tried to interest him in books... in letters... in reading cereal boxes... all during that time I was reading to him during the day and at bedtime. I continued reading to him every night but even at age 8 1/2 he still didn't even recognize the letters.

Well, to make a long story short, Pokemon was the rage... and his birthday gift of a GameBoy was all it took. He sat in his room for about three days playing furiously and came out for air only to eat... And in those 3 days he learned to read!

Thank you for a great article. I laughed through and through and, what made it even better, was that I could relate only too well!

Best,  
Sarah

5. What do YOU think is better?

Below you have some criteria to help you decide. Tick each under "home" or "school," as appropriate.

	Home	School
Academic skills		
Social skills		
Physical comfort		
Psychical comfort		
Fun		
Costs		
Career prospects		

6. Read Portia Nelson's *Autobiography in 5 Parts* on the right. Cover Parts II-V then answer question a, then cover Parts III-V and do question b and so on.

a. The following words and expressions are used metaphorically. What are they synonymous with?

Street =

Deep hole =

b. What is the link between lines 3 and 6 of this stanza?

Here are some key words that might help you better answer this question. Keep your answer brief, 20-30 words.

ego

denial

immaturity

c. Has the situation improved? How?

If the hero/ine can see the difficulty coming, why is s/he not doing anything to prevent it?

d. Could this stanza introduce the idea of learning? What kind?

1.

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost ... I am helpless,  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

2.

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place,  
But, it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

3.

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in ... it's a habit,  
My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.

4.

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

5.

I walk down another street.



Think of an experience that either you or somebody you know had, that was unsuccessful, unpleasant or even tragic at the time it occurred. Does the cycle of learning illustrated by *Autobiography...* apply to your (friend's) experience? How?