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Special points of interest:

\*Students are more likely to succeed when they feel connected to school.

\*Teachers should have a variety of teaching styles. If a child does not master a skill the first time, try again, but not the same way you taught it the first time

\*Students do not come standardized, then, they should not receive a one-fits-all instruction.

This issue provides a glimpse into some of the topics worked at FEM during the last month. FEM is the official newsletter of the school Fundacion Educativa de Monelibano. Montelibano, Córdoba-Colombia. [www.colfem.com](http://www.colfem.com).

## ¿Learning Styles?

### Why should teachers know about learning styles?


Sue Davidoff and Owen van den Berg (1990) suggest four steps: plan, teach / act, observe and reflect. Here are some guidelines for each step.

- Students learn better and more quickly if the teaching methods used match their preferred learning styles.
  - As learning improves, so too does self esteem. This has a further positive effect on learning.
  - Students who have become bored with learning may become interested once again.
- The student-teacher relation-

ship can improve because the student is more successful and is more interested in learning.




**Some Styles**  
**Visual**

- ◆ People who have a visual learning style learn best if a major component of the material or lesson is something they see or watch.  can This learner works best with written material and instructions, diagrams, posters, and

demonstrations.

### Auditory

- ◆ People who have an auditory learn style best if there is an oral component to the material being learned. Verbal instructions, taped lectures and face to face instruction work best. 

### Kinesthetic

- ◆ People who have a kinesthetic or tactile

## Differentiating Learning styles at FEM



learning style learn best when they can touch or feel what they are learning about. The use of their body and feelings are

very important to these learners so hands-on projects work best for them.

Most parents at *Fundacion Educativa de Montelibano* are Cerro Matoso's base workers. Of the 850 employees, about 10 % are middle and upper scale employees who are either

specialized technicians or professionals with at least five years of studies at university level. Most base workers have scarcely finished their Primary, a few completed Secondary studies and an elite fulfilled technical studies. Though the company's wages largely exceed the average salaries in the country, parents with a low level of education tend to neglect exercising control on their children's free

To illustrate the situation, in spite of the company's and school's efforts to improve students safety in special when driving motorcycles, two years ago, a student killed himself in an accident; he stubbornly refused wearing a helmet. His father, a base worker killed himself less than a year after in the same motorcycle. He was not



wearing a helmet either.

As most children in the monolingual section are base workers sons, the teachers find it more challenging to persuade their parents to do their share in a responsible manner. In spite of the good salaries parents receive, not all provide the minimum conditions for their children to succeed. Many students, for instance, lack textbooks and other school materials, they are given motorcycles instead, and their parents invest their salaries and loans in luxury cars.

Another reason for the

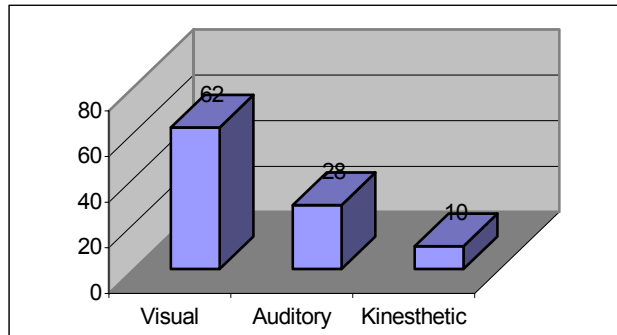
achievement gap between D, and A, B, and C groups is that the vast majority of students in the bilingual section (D groups), live in more spacious homes in the company's condominiums. They count on advanced computers at home.

Besides the low parental support A, B, and C group students more commonly face physical abuse, and lack of affection. They live in smaller homes with larger families. Only 45% of our student population lives in homes provided by the company, which assures adequate water, and energy supply, and air conditioning. The average temperature in the area is 40°C, which indeed has a powerful influence on students' academic performance.

Another cause for the low scores of our third grades in the National Standardized Exams is the teachers' preferred instructional styles, which simply fail to meet the learning needs of all children. Many of the teachers in third grade are self-contained and studied preschool not primary at the university, which limits their knowledge of subject areas.

The School Board levels of expectation regarding scores in stan-

dardized tests are too ambitious. As FEM has been ranked as one of the best one hundred schools nationwide,



board members, parents, and teachers take pride. Maintaining the standards and the school ranking affects slow learners who feel alien in the fast track. A lot of students are excluded as result of low academic performance.

Students learning styles are seldom thoroughly addressed. Only recently has a survey been applied to

**Students are more likely to succeed when they feel connected to school!!**

## Brain Based Learning

determine students' learning styles.

According to a survey passed last October, 62% of the school's students are Visual, 28% are Auditory, and 10% Tactile.

Scores will be presented to parents, students and teachers to measure implementation success and analyze



\*Teachers must immerse learners in complex, interactive experiences that are both rich and real. One excellent example is immersing students in a foreign culture to teach them a second language. Educators must take advantage of the brain's ability to parallel process.

\*Students must have a personally meaningful challenge. Such challenges stimulate a student's mind to the desired state of alertness.

\*In order for a student to gain insight about a problem, there must be intensive analysis of the different ways to approach it, and about learning in general. This is what's known as the "active processing of experience."

FEM is Published 12 times a year  
Arturo Rojas Ramirez, Editor