



Teaching Techniques

LEARNING STYLES IN REVIEW

By Darla Ryder

Next to the S word, “SAFETY”, hearing about your types of learners and your key elements in the lesson progression are mentioned at CHA clinics frequently. This article will revisit this information. I would also encourage you to review the valuable information found in your *CHA Riding Instructor and Trail Guide Manual*.

Understanding of how we or someone we are teaching learns increases our level of effectiveness. Because knowledge attained is not always retained, having the facts and an awareness of how we learn greatly increases our chances of remembering.

Dr. William Glasser, PhD, of the Institute for Reality Therapy gives us these statistics about learning. People learn:

- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see and hear
- 70% of what they discuss with others
- 80% of what they experience
- 95% of what they teach to others.

These statistics tell us that discussion, practice and teaching others what we have learned are the best methods of retaining information. So even if you are someone else’s student you might consider sharing what you just learned with someone else to boost your chances of remembering what you, yourself just learned. It boosts your chance of retention to 95% according to these statistics!

Learning styles are simply different methods and approaches to ways

we process and learn information. Understanding the way you or somebody else learns elevates the chance of success, and enhances the experience. Research has shown that there are as many as seven different learning styles, but we’ve narrowed it down to three basic types for simplicity. The Visual, Tactile (kinesthetic) and Auditory learning styles, are the three primary types with combinations of these making up the others. Recognizing the learning style assists in determining the method of presentation.

As a riding instructor, we must have in our repertoire a way to present a lesson to all three types of learners. Most adults, when given an understanding of the learning types, can evaluate themselves and give you feedback on what type they are.

Most children don’t have this capability as it is too abstract. Thus the progression of the teaching method must include, explanation, demonstration and finally application. Retention can then be enhanced by review either with verbal feedback or repetition.

For instance, say we are teaching the leg position for moving a horse’s haunches over to the right. We say to our audio learners, “move the left leg about four inches back from the girth and gently apply pressure until the horse responds.” As we are saying this we will have to bring our own left leg back for our visual learners and even assist the rider into moving the leg back into the correct position for our tactile learners. Once this is applied, all of our types are ready to apply what they have learned.

VISUAL LEARNER

Learns through seeing

About 29% of us are visual and a small percent are print oriented and can understand simply by reading

about it. In a classroom setting visual learners often take detailed notes to absorb the information. These learners do best when they can see the instructor’s body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of the lesson. They tend to prefer being close to the instructor for observation without any visual obstructions. Thus it’s important to always ask in a group lesson, “Can everyone see me clearly?” It is usually the visual learner who will be first to give a negative or affirmative response. They need a demonstration of the content for full understanding. They tend to think in visual pictures so always show the correct way to do something. If you show them what not to do, they may store that and next time, do it, incorrectly!

TACTILE LEARNER

Learns through moving, doing and touching

About 37% of us are this type of learner. They learn best in an experimental environment with application. In a classroom they are best given an opportunity to sit at the back and given permission to get up and move around occasionally if needed. As riders, breaking a lesson down into small sections and trying it as they go is the best method.

They learn best by a “hands-on” approach and you will lose them with long verbal explanation or demonstration. They will become distracted by their need for activity and exploration. They will be the first to give an affirmative response when asked “Is anyone ready to try it?” They are very good candidates for helping give the demonstration because they learn through the experience.

AUDITORY LEARNER

Learns through listening

About 34% of us are auditory learners and learn best through hearing an explanation and talking about it. Allowing them to repeat back during the explanation portion what

“ The visual learner believes what they see. The tactile learner believes what they try. The auditory learner believes what they hear. ”

they heard strongly enforces the learning process. You always want to ask “Can everyone hear me?” The auditory learner will tell you if they can’t. They learn best through verbal lectures, discussions, talking things through and hearing what others have to say. They interpret the underlying meaning of speech through the tone of voice, pitch, speed and other nuances. During your explanation you want to be sure to show excitement about the topic and use tone and volume to highlight the important points.

EXPLANATION

Short and includes the goals of the lesson. Be sure to explain “why” and not just “how” they are to do something. A long, drawn-out lecture loses about two thirds of your learn-

ers. Break the explanation down into small pieces touching on two or three key points which are beneficial for your auditory learner. Remember to use tone, pitch and volume to emphasize these points.

DEMONSTRATION

Explanation is much more effective if it’s demonstrated along the way. This gains the attention of two thirds of your students and meets the needs of your visual learners. Never show the wrong way to do something, but always in the demonstration show the correct way.

APPLICATION

By breaking your explanation into small pieces, with emphasis on two or three key points, (meeting the needs of your auditory learners) dem-

onstrating it, (meeting the needs of your visual learners) then have them try it before further explanation or demonstration is given (this meets the needs of your tactile learners). This method of teaching provides a learning environment for all types of learners and assures your success.

KEYWORDS TO REMEMBER:

VISUAL-demonstration TACTILE-application AUDITORY-explanation. I hope this information will bring back to you the importance of what you do as an educator and assist you in planning even more enjoyable and effective lesson plans. Have the best season yet. ☺

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Safety First!

*By Christy Landwehr
Master Instructor for CHA*

Some things to think about before, during and after you ride your horse for riders of all ages.

1. Make sure to wear an ASTM-SEI approved riding helmet, not a bike or ski helmet, and that you have it fitted correctly. You can visit YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/chainstructor> or the CHA website at http://cha-ahse.org/videos_cha.html to see ten safety videos about horses produced by CHA – one of which is how to fit a riding helmet.
2. Wear your boots when you groom, tack and ride your horse. This keeps your toes safe and your foot from going through the stirrup when you ride.
3. Wear pants! Shorts can cause all kinds of sores on your legs and you want that extra protection if you trail ride through brush.
4. Wear your gloves while you lead, groom and ride your horse. These will keep you from getting any blisters or burns and you get a better grip.
5. Make sure not to duck under the lead rope or in front of your horse if he is in cross ties. This can get you hurt if the horse comes forward on top of you.
6. Lead the bridled horse with the reins over his/her head and with them in a figure 8 and not wrapped around your hand.
7. Put up the irons on an English saddle when your horse is not being ridden so that he/she cannot get a hind leg caught in them or so the stirrups do not get stuck on a fence as you lead your horse by.
8. Dismount by sliding down on your right hip facing the head of your horse and not by facing the saddle. You could get your shirt caught on the saddle horn or scrap your saddle leather with your belt buckle or jeans button.
9. Feed your horse treats out of a bucket. Feeding by hand can get you nipped and also teaches your horse to disrespect you and try to push you for treats even when you don’t have any.
10. Pulling back while tied. If your horse does this, don’t try to stop him! Just move away from him until the lead rope or halter breaks or until he stops pulling. Then you can go and untie him afterwards. If you have a horse that pulls in your lesson program think about just wrapping the lead rope to tie him if you have your students groom and saddle as part of your lesson program. ☺