

The Challenge

How to use student's strengths to meet their needs.

Step 1: Identify student's strengths, talents, interests.

- * Watch what the student likes doing in his free time.
- * Ask people who know the student what strengths and interests he has.
- * Have a conversation with the student and talk about what he likes.
- * Ask friends of the student what he is good at doing.
- * Have a family meeting and brainstorm a list of the child's gifts.
- * Complete a learning styles or multiple intelligences survey. Click on the links.

[Learning Personality Quiz](#) [Multiple Intelligences Inventory](#)

Step 2: Connect strengths, talents, and interests to general education curriculum, instructional strategies, assessments and extra curricular activities.

- * Brainstorm ways to build on student's previous experiences, curiosities, and areas of confidence.
- * See examples on the next page.

Step 3: Work with your child's team and write a list of his strengths and corresponding strategies to use.

Strengths and Strategies Profile

Adapted from Kluh, P. & Dimon-Borowski, M. (2003)

It is important for educators and parents to build on students' strengths. However, it is not enough to merely identify a student's abilities. There also must be thoughtful consideration of how to capitalize on each of their strengths, interests and talents.

Results You Will See

- * Increased motivation to learn
- * More engagement in educational and extra curricular activities
- * Higher levels of achievement
- * Greater self-confidence
- * More genuine friendships

Here are a few examples.

Todd's Strengths, Interests, Talents	Corresponding Strategy
1. Likes reading to younger children.	1. Have Todd read to kindergartners. Have him volunteer at local library in the summer for story time.
2. Learns by watching others.	2. Use peer tutors, cooperative learning
3. Likes looking at astronomy magazines.	3. Take Earth and Space science class.
4. Can do simple addition & subtraction with TOUCH math.	4. Use TOUCH math for more complex addition & subtraction problems.
5. Loves using the computer.	5. Have appropriate educational software for Todd.
6. Wants to do public speaking.	6. Take Speech class as an elective.
7. Has wrestled on school team for 2 years.	7. Todd can show new wrestlers his favorite moves.

Your Turn: work with your child's team and write a list of his strengths and corresponding strategies to use.