

# [Education essays - accelerated learning](https://assignbuster.com/education-essays-accelerated-learning/)

## Teaching techniques and their effectiveness in developing ‘ accelerated learning’ within uk schools and colleges.

1. Research Background

The author of this report was taught using the traditional methods of teaching throughout the student life. The author came to know about a technique known as brain gym through an acquaintance and became aware of such techniques. This encouraged the author at a later stage to develop an understanding of accelerated learning and to see if it was considered effective by practitioners. Consequently, the author decided to base the dissertation on this topic within the context of English primary schools and colleges. After initiating the research the author realised that there was so much more to the topic of accelerated learning, and that there were numerous techniques associated with it that claimed to improve student’s learning. Hence the idea was to base the work on finding out how popular these teaching techniques were in relation to others and whether traditional teachers considered them effective.

2. Literature Review

There is a huge amount of literature surrounding accelerated learning theory and different teaching techniques that claim to help develop student’s learning. In this section the author will make reference to a variety of techniques that are linked to accelerated learning theory but will discuss their perceived effectiveness in different situations while conducting the detailed literature review. While doing the complete literature review he author will also explore the current literature that describes the brain’s structure and how learning occurs, in order to help the reader’s understanding of how these various teaching technique help learning.

Student centered education allow student to develop their real abilities by not distorting learning: this philosophy does not support traditional teaching techniques. The idea was originally conceived by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1762. It was thought that we should not focus on what information to teach students (primarily student’s), but teach subjects and skills in accordance to what natural talents a student possesses. The student will then develop in to a life long learner as each of them develops through stages (Sutherland, 1988). This idea has been associated with current educational policy that encourages us to become life long learners. Learning is not just about academic knowledge but is an experience that should be positive if it is to be effective. The author will now cite some of the techniques that were identified during the preliminary literature review.

Brain gym is one such technique that is used to promote learning and is supposed to be effective when used with academic skills. Brain gym is used in educational kinesiology (Edu-k). There are three main types of activity that promote different processes: Crossing the midline – essential for writing and reading, Lengthening activities – helps in expression of stored memory, skills such as test taking, speech and writing, Energy exercises – helps to decrease stress and fatigue, increases the flow of energy around the body (Magidson, 2004, p. 2). The ability to cross the midline refers to an individual being able to cross and use both hemispheres at once, where different types of information can be processed and moved from left to right and right to left. Some scientists suggest that this process is a key skill required for academic success (Dennison et al 1994). Brain gym activities have been created to help learners cross the midline in order to help improve co-ordination, breathing and stamina, enhance vision and hearing and improve spatial awareness (Cohen et al 2002). Skills that may improve include short-term memory and concentration (Drabben-Thiemann et al, 2001). There is some criticism of the technique because any form of physical activity seems to create a relaxed state (Adey et al, 2002).

Target setting has been used to help individuals learn more effectively by organising information in to sections in the form of a target to be achieved. It is supposed to help the learner make sense of information and feel as if the task can be achieved in small steps. The brain stores information, and then retrieves it when appropriate in the form of memory. The short-term or working memory has limited capacity, compared to our long-term memory that is much greater (Prashnig, 1998). Learning tends to be more effective when spread out over a period of time with numerous revisits (Long, 2000). Target setting should review work regularly and be connected with other work if it is to enhance long-term memory; this requires consistency and the allocation of time to ensure the technique is effective. Like a placebo, if success is created in learning it is likely to be recreated in a similar experience (Stockwell, 1992). Target setting is suggested to be difficult to use in practice because the system is time consuming to set up (Naughton et al, 2001).

VAK input technique uses different methods to present information and various activities to engage the student’s attention; depending on the way they prefer to process information. There are allegedly different types of learners: visual, auditory and kina-esthetic (Smith 1996). Neuro-lingusitic programming research has implied that in a class there are a certain percentage of learners who prefer one of the three types of input. Approximately 29% of learners prefer visual input methods, 34% auditory and 37% are kinaesthetic learners; teachers also subconsciously teach using their preferred method of input (IAL 2000).

The traditional assumption that learning is more effective in a quiet atmosphere has been challenged by research conducted in to the effects of music on learning. Research in New Zealand implied that 40% of high school students preferred noisy environments to silent ones (Prashnig, 1998). When this technique is used in lessons it appears to stimulate activity in both hemispheres (Schuster el al, 1986). Educators need to be trained on what type of music has different effects on the state created in learners, if this technique is to be used (Northumberland LEA, 2004).

Teachers tend to use a mixture of approaches depending on the situation in which they teach. Some are considered more effective than others, although each technique usually derives from a specific theory. There is an increasing amount of research being conducted on how we learn and what techniques may help. However one must remain cautious about how we apply these finding, because each one is dependent on the circumstances in which it was created.

3. Aims & Objectives

The primary aim of the research is to find out the different teaching techniques that are used and to determine if those associated with accelerated learning theory are popular, together with how effective they are in developing students learning. Additionally this dissertation will also provide with accurate, up-to-date, research-based information about possible future trends in accelerated learning techniques. And lastly, this research will try to provide possible suggestions and recommendations to be considered for the improvement of such techniques to develop ideas for further research in this context.   
To summarize some of the questions that will be addressed through this research are as follows:

* What teaching techniques are used to develop student’s learning?
* The need for such techniques to be used?
* Effectiveness and implications of such techniques?
* What are the possible alternatives?
* Student involvement in the use of such techniques?

4. Research Methodology & Analysis

A collection of methodologies will be used to carry out this research. Both primary and secondary data will be collected for this purpose. The secondary data will comprise of data from literature reviewed from books, journals, Internet and the annual reports of the institutions while the primary data will take the form of information/results collected from the case study and questionnaire. The researcher has chosen the Case study and Survey strategies for the research. Both of them are common and popular strategy in educational research.

“ A case study is a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single repository of documents, or one particular event [Bogdan and Biklen, 1982].” Case study approach is categorized as ‘ Non-Participant’ qualitative research. Therefore, the first stage of research will comprise of short listing of the educational institutions where the case studies will be carried out. The first criteria will be selecting those institutions that employ accelerated learning techniques. Educational institutions with traditional setting will also be included in the case study for comparative analysis.

Survey research is one of the most widely used forms of research among the educational researchers. It involves researchers asking a large group of people questions about a particular topic. All surveys possess three basic characteristics: (1) the collection of information (2) from a sample (3) by asking a question. A survey can be carried out by conducting interviews with individuals or groups and use of questionnaires. In the second stage of the research the researcher will use a detailed questionnaire, testing quantitatively a much larger sample of teachers. Based on the initial literature review the author will prepare a preliminary questionnaire which be circulated to a small sample. Based on the results of the initial response the questionnaire will be refined and will be sent to a much larger sample.

Research analysis will be done based on the method proposed by Hycner (1985). According to him, the analysis requires the researcher to read the transcripts; identify themes; confirm the accuracy of the interpretation and produce a final summary. Thus the information will be analyzed accordingly and a brief summary will be prepared.

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