**Under Big Picture or Little Parts?**

* Some psychologists say that people view problems or new information in two ways: they either see a big picture or they see a group of little parts.
* For instance, some history students will think of the Civil War as one large event with a series of battles and a specific outcome. They seem to view things as "big picture" events.
* Other students will view the Civil War as a series of specific events that favored one side at times, and the other side at other times. The parts of the whole stand out most to these students: the battle places, individual victories, or maybe the soldiers themselves.
* Neither way is better. However, by understanding your cognitive style will help you in many ways.
* For instance, if you are a holistic or "big picture" learner, you are more concerned about understanding the entire chapter than one paragraph. If you read over a complicated or boring paragraph, you are more likely to [skim](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/reading/a/How-To-Skim-A-Book.htm) over information in an effort to get to the big message.
* If you come across a paragraph you don't understand, you are likely to shrug, go on reading, then (hopefully) re-visit certain paragraphs once you get a big picture in your head.
* On the other hand, an analytic or "little parts" person may be more likely to get hung up on a tough concept or paragraph. It is essential for this kind of learner to understand each part, in order to understand the whole.

**Are You a Holistic or Global Learner?**

* A holistic (big picture) person likes to start with a big idea or concept, then go on to study and understand the parts. In other words she may want to glaze over all the material in the beginning looking for the big idea.
* You may be more likely to respond to a problem with emotion first, instead of logic.
* You can accept a solution without understanding how it works.
* You think about everything. And you think while you do everything.
* You tend to remember faces, but forget names.
* You may act on impulse.
* You might be just fine about playing music while you study or can't concentrate while music plays.
* It takes you awhile to sort out your answer. When you eventually do come up with an answer, it is thorough.
* You are likely to read and read and become frustrated, and then suddenly “get it.”
* You may tend to spend a lot of time thinking.

**A holistic learner may benefit from the following.**

* **Pay attention to outlines.** Create outlines. Outlines will help you establish a framework for "storing" new information.
* **Make your own outline.** This is a good way to remember important details you'd otherwise miss. The [visual tool](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/tp/visual.htm), like a mind map, helps your brain organize more quickly.
* **Don’t skip introduction or summary.** You will benefit from reading these *before* you read the actual book. Again, it is important for holistic learners to establish a framework early for storing and applying concepts.
* **Look for boundaries.** Holistic learners may have trouble discerning where one concept or event ends and another begins. It might be helpful for you to establish concrete beginning and ending points.
* **Ask for examples.** Your brain likes to make comparisons, so the more examples, the better. Write down the examples, but label them as examples so you're not confused later. (Your notes tend to be [disorganized](http://homeworktips.about.com/od/makingthegrades/a/lecturenotes.htm).)
* **Use images.** Use pictures and charts if they are offered. When reading a long passage or explanation, make your own charts and pictures.
* **Draw timelines.** This is another way of creating boundaries. Your brain likes them.
* **Look at sample assignments.** Your brain likes to use examples as a frame of reference. Without them, it’s sometimes hard for you to know where to start.
* **Make drawings of concepts.** The more you can sketch out and characterize concepts, the better. Using political parties as an example, you could draw circles and label them. Then, fill in sub-circles of beliefs and established ideologies.
* **Use a time-keeper tool.** Holistic learners can get carried away thinking of possibilities and lose track of time.
* **Avoid thinking of all the possibilities.** Holistic learners like to make comparisons and find relationships. Don’t get distracted from the task at hand.

**An analytic person likes to learn things step-by-step, or sequentially.**

**Are You a Sequential Learner?**

* An analytic or sequential learner may be more likely to respond to a problem with logic first, instead of emotion.
* You may feel the need to understand each part of the instruction.
* You may be good with [time management](http://workingmoms.about.com/od/householdmanagement/a/What-Is-Time-Management.htm).
* You tend to remember names.
* Your notes may be divided and labeled. You categorize things a lot.
* You plan ahead.
* You may get hung up on details when reading.
You have to understand something before you move on.
* You might get frustrated easily with people who don't understand things as quickly as you do.

 **Analytic Learner May Benefit from the Following:**

* **Ask for clear rules.** You need clarity. Without rules, you might feel lost.
* **Don't get frustrated by opinions.** Some students may offer opinions in class, especially the holistic learners who want to make comparisons! It is just their way of understanding, so don't let it bother you.
* **Don't worry about not finishing a task.** You may not want to move on to a new task if something (like a lack of supplies) interferes with your work. Try not to get hung up. Sometimes it's okay to move on and re-visit a project later.
* **Don't worry if things don't seem logical.** We don't make the rules sometimes. If you come across a rule that doesn't make sense, don't let it bother you to distraction.
* **Group your information.** Analytic learners are good at categorizing information. Go ahead and place your information into categories. It will help you recall the information when you need it.
* **Don't worry about big concepts right away-give yourself time.** If you're [reading a book](http://classiclit.about.com/od/foryourreading/ht/aa_difficultboo.htm) or chapter and you don't seem to be "getting the message," give it time. You may need to know all the details first, and then put them together.
* **Take things step-by-step, but don't get hung up.** If get hung up and if you don't understand a certain step. Take a leap of faith!
* **Ask for specific goal.** Analytic learners may feel the need to understand the [specific goal](http://712educators.about.com/od/motivation/a/specific_goals.htm) before they can get into a project. Go ahead and ask for clear goals if you need them.

Source: http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/global.htm