

Student Learning Profile

Empower Students to Share Their Learning
Needs



Student Learning Profile

Empower Students to Share Their Learning Needs

DESCRIPTION

The “My Learning Profile” page is designed to empower students with IEPs and 504 plans to better understand their strengths, challenges, and learning needs. It also helps foster communication between students and teachers by sharing personal insights and necessary accommodations in the student’s own words.

PREP TIME

10 minutes

ACTIVITY TIME

30-60 minutes

MATERIALS

My Learning
Profile Worksheet

Implementation Guidance

The “My Learning Profile” worksheet is a student-centered tool designed to help students with IEPs or 504 plans reflect on how they learn best, understand their accommodations, and communicate their needs to teachers. The goal is to support students in becoming confident self-advocates and to provide teachers with meaningful insight directly from the student’s perspective.

Below are suggestions for how you might introduce, complete, and share this worksheet during your regular check-ins or advisory sessions.

1. **Introduce the worksheet during a check-in.** Begin by explaining the *why*: this activity is about helping students feel seen, heard, and supported. Emphasize that their thoughts and voice matters, not just their challenges, but also their strengths, interests, and goals.

A sample introduction might be: *“This is a tool to help your teachers get to know you better, not just what supports you need, but what you’re great at and how you learn best. We will work through it together so you can decide what you’d like to share.”*

2. **Work through each section together.** Use the worksheet as a conversation tool during your check-in. Support the student in thinking through each section. This can be completed in one session or spread across multiple shorter check-ins.

3. **Reflect and prepare to share.** Once the worksheet is complete with notes taken by you or the student, review it with the student to ensure they understand and feel confident about what they've written. Talk about when and how they might want to share it with their teachers (e.g., at the beginning of a new semester, after a schedule change, or during a student-led IEP meeting). You may consider role-playing what the student might say if that would help build their confidence.
4. **Share with teachers and parents/caregivers.** Collaborate with the student on how to share the worksheet. The student might hand deliver or email it or you might send it on their behalf with their permission.

Consider attaching a brief message to teachers to introduce the purpose. For example: *"As part of our work on self-advocacy and positive student-teacher relationship building, [Student Name] completed the attached "My Learning Profile" worksheet. It includes their perspective on how they learn best, what supports help, and what they want you to know about them this semester."*

The message can also be adapted for students to send to their teachers. For example:

*"Dear [Teacher's Name]
I am in your [Class Name, e.g. 3rd period Biology] class.*

I put together the attached Learner Profile. It shares a little bit about me, how I learn best, and things that help me do my best work.

*I just wanted to share with you so you know a little more about me. If you have any questions or want to talk about anything on it, please let me know.
Thank you,
[Your First and Last Name]*

5. **Ongoing use.** Consider revisiting and updating the worksheet during IEP/504 meetings, mid-year check-ins, or transition planning. Encourage students to reflect on whether their needs have changed over time.

Managing the Rollout

As you introduce the learner Profile, you won't be able to get to every student right away and that is completely expected! To keep your workload manageable, try using a phased approach:

- **Tie it to IEP/504 Meetings:** Roll out the activities organically as students' annual meetings approach. You can use this specifically to help them prepare to speak up and participate in their own meetings.
- **Start with a Single Cohort:** Pick one grade level to focus on first. For example, introduce the practice exclusively to your freshmen. This builds a strong foundation early, and you can expand to other grades as the process becomes smoother.

TIPS

- Frame the activity as an opportunity for students to take ownership of their learning and communicate what works best for them.
- Keep it conversational. Approach the worksheet as a dialogue and not just a form to be filled out. If students are reluctant, use some of the probing questions below and have shorter conversations over a few sessions.
- You know your students best, adapt the activity to fit their needs. For instance, providing the worksheet ahead of time for a student to review or complete, might make the conversation go more smoothly. You might also choose to remove the examples from the boxes to encourage students to generate their own ideas, though this may require a bit more guided discussion.
- Connect the form to students' IEP or 504 plan. Use the worksheet as a bridge between formal support and real-life classroom experiences. Help students see how their plan works for them, not just what's on paper.

My Learning Profile

Name: _____

1. My Strengths Are... (what I'm good at in school, in life, or with people)

Examples: *I'm good at math; I like helping others; I am creative; I work hard*

2. Some Challenges I Have Are... (What's hard for me or makes school tough sometimes)

Examples: *I get distracted easily; I struggle with reading out loud; Tests make me nervous*

3. What Helps Me Learn Best Is.... (e.g., strategies, tools, environment, people)

Examples: *When I can take breaks; Graphic organizers; Quiet spaces; Working with a partner*

4. What Doesn't Work For Me... (what makes learning harder or feels frustrating or overwhelming)

Examples: *Being called on without warning; Loud classrooms; Too many directions at once*

5. My Accommodations Are... (things that are in my IEP/504 plan)

Examples: Extra time on tests; Movement breaks; Audio books

6. I Wish My Teachers Knew... (something I want my teachers to understand about me)

Examples: I try really hard even when I'm quiet; I get overwhelmed easily but I care about school; I want to feel included

Learner Profile Probing Questions

It's completely normal for students to draw a blank when reflecting on themselves. If a student gets stuck or seems reluctant to share, use these probing questions to help guide them to their own answers.

My Strengths Are.....

- If a friend or one of your parents had to describe your best qualities, what would they say?
- When do you feel the most confident at school?
- What is something people naturally ask you for help with?
- What is something you are proud of at school?

Some Challenges I Have Are....

- What part of the school day takes the most out of you?
- When do you feel like giving up on an assignment?
- When are the times when you feel most nervous or worried at school?

What Helps Me Learn My Best Is.....

- If you could design the perfect classroom, what would it look, sounds, and feel like?
- Where is your favorite place to do homework, and why does it work for you?
- Tell me about a favorite teacher and what they did to help you learn best?

What Doesn't Work For Me....

- What is the fastest way for you to lose focus or feel overwhelmed?
- Is there a specific type of assignment that always makes you feel stuck before you even begin?
- Is there anything we can add here from the way you described the perfect classroom?

My Accommodations Are....

- These will come from the IEP or 504 plan however, a deeper discussion about the way the student likes to manage their accommodations could be helpful.
- How do you prefer to handle using these accommodations in class (e.g., quietly on your own, have the teacher check-in, talk about them before class instead of in front of students)

I Wish My Teachers Knew....

- If a teacher only sees your grades, what are they missing about who you are?
- What's one thing outside of school that impacts your energy inside school that you want your teachers to know about?
- What is something you enjoy doing outside of school that teachers wouldn't know about unless they asked you?



About Search Institute

We collaborate with schools, youth-serving organizations, programs, and communities to conduct applied research, co-design solutions, and build the relational infrastructure every young person needs to thrive. Through professional learning experiences, surveys, measurement tools, and support for continuous improvement, we help partners turn knowledge into action and create the conditions where young people can truly learn, grow, contribute, and thrive.

Search Institute

800.888.7828

info@searchinstitute.org
searchinstitute.org

Special thanks to the educators who shared their time, wisdom and lived experiences to co-design this resource.