

## **The Curse of Being Right Brain Dominant**

**By Lisa Harp**

If you think about almost all of the important achievements in history, you will notice that they have all been done through the right side of the brain. Michelangelo, DeVinci, Mozart, The Great Pyramids; even the massive bridges that required expert technical and math skills first required the vision of the creation. Yet, in today's modern society, the right side of the brain is being scorned.

Right brain dominant children are dying a slow death every day at school. These bright, beautiful children are forced to sit at their desks listening to the teacher give a lecture about something that doesn't hold their attention. Many are misdiagnosed as having ADD. Others think they are dumb. Most of them are failing in school. And we, as educators and parents can only seem to watch on helplessly, unable to take on a school system that is leaving these children behind by hordes.

If we are going to remedy this situation, it is important to know what each hemisphere of the brain is responsible for. It's even more important to know how to meet the needs of the right brain dominant student so that he/she can succeed in school and in life.

What is the right side of the brain responsible for? Creativity to start with. The right side of the brain sees the whole picture. It loves color, pictures, shapes, emotion, yes, even some drama. Daydreaming is a right brain activity as well as rhythm, music and motion. Problem solving, believe it or not, is a right brain activity.

The left side of the brain likes order. It is the bit by bit processor. Linear thinking is left brain all the way. The left side of the brain is responsible for conscious control, words, phonics, numbers, reasoning, math, lists, categories, and analysis. It also processes auditory information.

Can you see that schools are predominantly left brain dominated? The mode of learning is primarily auditory with bit by bit presentation of skills. Children must learn to read through phonics and memorize math facts with flash cards. Students must show conscious control by sitting in their desks all day long and focus on what the teacher is doing or saying.

There seems to be an influx of right brain dominant children right now. I believe it is because as humans, our brains are changing. The kids we are seeing in

school now have had exposure to the internet, video games, computers, television, and a wide variety of other technological advances. This constant exposure to graphics (color and picture) pleases the right side of the brain so much that it is getting stronger. Kids who used to play outside (movement) now sit in front of computer screen.

And, sadly, with budget cuts, the very components of school that kept the right brain dominant student happy and learning are being cut. Art, music, drama, and physical education are being put on the back burner while the emphasis on academics continues to grow. The poor right brain dominant child is lost in this maze of left brain dominant expectations.

So, if you have a right brain dominant child, what should you do? I have found the best thing to do is to teach the student how to access the left hemisphere of the brain. This is done through a brain retraining process. It takes at least a year, but the results are amazing. Once they have been through this brain training, these students can access both sides of their brains and perform well in school and in life.

Kids should not have to feel stupid because they learn differently than others. The right brain dominant child has many gifts to offer. We need to sit up and take notice of these gifts and encourage more of them. After all, isn't that where almost all great things come from?