

Differences between Children and Adults as Learners

Lois B. Hart (1991) shared a clear overview of the most important differences:

Children	Adults
Rely on others to decide what is important to be learned	Decide for themselves what is important to be learned
Accept the information being presented at face value	Need to validate the information based on their beliefs and experiences
Expect that what they are learning will be useful in their long-term future	Expect that what they are learning is immediately useful
Have little or no experience upon which to draw – are relatively 'young and innocent'	Have much past experience upon which to draw – may have fixed viewpoints
Have little ability to serve as a knowledgeable resource to teacher or fellow classmates	Have significant ability to serve as a knowledgeable resource to the facilitator and group members
Are content centered	Are problem centered
Are less actively involved	Actively participate
Learn in an authority-oriented environment	Function best in a collaborative environment
Planning is teacher's responsibility	Share in planning

You'll find more information in:

Hart, L.B. (1991) *Training Methods that work. A Handbook for Trainers*. USA: Axzo Press.