

# Who You Are Is How You Teach

## *Before you read on . . .*

Quickly journal your responses to the following prompts.

- List a few school projects or kinds of assignments you enjoyed as a student
- What are your favorite classroom activities as a teacher?
- How would you complete, "If only more teachers would \_\_\_\_\_, more students would succeed"?

Essay test or multiple choice?  
Hands-on projects or library research?  
Independent study or group work?  
Whole language or phonics?

Chances are, you have a clear preference for many of the above choices. Do you have a clear idea, though, where your preferences came from? What drives those particular choices around teaching and learning?

- Do they match with your own learning style? The successful experiences you had as a student?
- Are they particularly easy for you to manage in your classroom?
- Are they tied to how you were taught to teach?
- Are they school expectations?

Educators deeply disagree over many essential beliefs in education. Conflicts erupt over homework policies, rigor of assignments, whether to provide students with choices, classic literature versus relevant literature, forms of assessment, the amount of time designated for physical education and recess . . . the list is endless. However, our *educational beliefs* arise in great part from our own *experiences*, as teachers and as learners. You probably have fond memories of learning experiences similar to ones you favor as a teacher. Further, teachers seldom see what works in other classrooms because of the way they are naturally isolated by school schedules, norms, and ever-increasing demands of the job. We receive little input that would

cause us to question our beliefs. Who you are is how you teach. In fact, beliefs can be so ingrained that we might not even know we hold a particular belief until someone tells us to change it!

The first step in differentiation is examining whether our core beliefs leave out any students in our classroom. We want to ask the following questions—and more—to distinguish between style differences and actual learning problems.

- That student who makes multiple mistakes on practice problems: Is she lazy? Missing basic skills? Or, is she bored by assignments that require little imagination?
- The student who constantly asks, “Is this right?” or “Can I see an example?” Is he unwilling to think through problem-solving? Or, does he need different scaffolding to feel confident?
- What about the students who don’t share in discussions? Are they shy, or apathetic, or in need of different ground rules to join in?

Sometimes the above situations reflect developmental issues, lack of motivation, or resistance to authority, but sometimes the issues arise because of differences in the *natural, normal personality preferences* of the teacher and the student.

Let’s think for a moment about that word “preference.” Pick up a pen or pencil with your *nonpreferred* hand, the one you don’t usually write with, and sign your name in the blank below:

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Most people say that writing with their *nonpreferred* hand is awkward, difficult, messy. They have to think to complete the task correctly. Now, switch hands and sign again below:

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Most people say that writing with their *preferred* hand is easy, natural, flowing. They can do it without thinking. It’s part of who they are. And, it’s a relief to again write with one’s preferred hand after using the other.

We have a *physical* preference for left- or right-handedness. Parents often watch their toddlers to discover which hand they prefer. Neither hand is right or wrong. Further, for many tasks we can practice and become skilled with both hands—think of shooting hoops or fencing or running hurdles.

Type theory holds that we have similar *personality* preferences for how we

- Gain energy
- Take in information
- Make decisions
- Approach life.

In educational circles, considering these preferences involves asking, do all students have the energy they need for learning? Are they getting the information they need to make sense of new ideas and tasks? Are they learning to make informed decisions in ways that make sense to them? Are we giving them ways to approach assignments and tasks that honor their natural approach to life? If not, they may struggle to learn.

As we work through this chapter, you'll see that many teacher strengths are tied to personality types; because of our preferences, certain classroom tasks, learning activities, and procedures come more naturally than others. That makes it hard to distinguish between "truths" and "beliefs." However, a tension arises between our strengths as educators and the needs of students:

- We need to use our strengths in the classroom to avoid burnout.
- We also need to meet the needs of all the learners in our classrooms, ensuring that some students aren't always being asked to "write with their nonpreferred hand."

Clearly, it isn't desirable for children to always be taught in their own styles—effective learning, as we will see, requires some skill with *all* of the preferences. But, imagine if you always had to write with your nonpreferred hand and didn't understand why! The power of understanding "Who You Are Is How You Teach" is that you can consciously plan for avoiding burnout while not leaving out any students.

So, let's look at the preferences, what they mean for teachers, and which ones best describe you.

#### **Before you read on . . .**

For a moment, consider an ideal classroom for how you learn best. Draw a floor plan. How many students are there? Where do you sit to read, write, and work in groups? Describe the noise level. What other spaces are there? Compare your drawing with those of other teachers. What is similar? What is different?

## **THE FIRST PREFERENCE PAIR: EXTRAVERSION AND INTROVERSION**

### **Energy for Learning**

The first preference pair concerns how you are *energized*. Think about the kinds of environments that put you at your best—your most motivated and effective self. The two preferences are

Extraversion (E) Gaining energy through action and interaction, the outside world

Introversion (I) Gaining energy through reflection and solitude, the inner world

This preference pair is *not* about sociability. Note that in type language, Extraversion is even spelled differently. Introverts can be very social, but group gatherings can be draining even if they enjoy them.

It's not about shyness. Extraverts can be very shy around strangers, yet need contact with friends and the outside world to be energized.

It's not about being the life of the party. Introverts can be very entertaining; many actors, musicians, and sports figures are Introverts.

It also isn't about excellence at being reflective. Instead, ponder whether action and interaction energize you or drain you. Do quiet spaces and places for reflection jazz you up or make you nervous? Remember, this is a *natural* preference.

Yes, Extraverts can be quiet, but Extraverted teachers often long for chances during the day to have adult interaction to process what is happening in their classrooms.

Yes, Introverts can interact and collaborate. However, too much noise or required conversation leaves the Introverts drained of energy for teaching.

We all have an Extraverted side and an Introverted side—we need time with people and time for reflection. The question is, how much of each? How many people? How long for reflection before we're ready to talk?

Which best describes your *natural* style?

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*Extraverts prefer:*

- Talking things out
- Variety and action
- Forming thoughts through discussion
- Focusing on the outer world
- Activity before reflection

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*Introverts prefer:*

- Thinking things through
  - Concentration and reflection
  - Waiting to share until thoughts are formed
  - Focusing on the inner world
  - Reflection before activity
- 

To consider your own style, think of times that you needed help with a problem, or hoped to try something new in your classroom. Do you like to first talk it through with a trusted colleague or first think about your own solutions and ideas?

Back in the classroom, let's look at Extraverted and Introverted environments. When I have adults *or* students draw their ideal classrooms, as in "Before you read on. . ." on page 11, these are some common features for each preference. How do these compare with your drawing?

The ideal classroom for . . .

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*Extraverts:*

- Space for movement, doors to the outside
- Exercise mats and dance floors (students have added basketball courts and hot tubs)
- Many students (>15)
- Activities for five to six students to work on together
- Moveable furniture, chairs on wheels, etc.

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*Introverts:*

- Space for individual work—laptop stations, beanbag chairs
  - Books, windows to the outside, and flowers and other visual aids for reflection
  - Few students (1–12)
  - Activities for two students to work on together
  - Study carrels or individual desks (or their own room at home with online capabilities)
- 

Most Extraverted teachers run classrooms that have Extraverted characteristics. Introverted teachers run more Introverted classrooms. That shouldn't be surprising—the teacher needs to gain energy for teaching! However, without understanding we

can look with disapproval on the rooms of teachers who don't share our preferences. One Introverted teacher said, "When students come from *her* room, it takes me 10 minutes to settle them down!" whereas her Extraverted colleague said, "When students come from *his* room, it takes me 10 minutes to get them going!" Who we are influences how we teach.

Without an understanding of how our own preference for gaining energy influences our teaching style, we can easily fall into traps. Chances are, you've learned to avoid some of those given below for your preference. If so, consider how you became aware of the needs of students who aren't like you, perhaps through experience, mentoring, or a class you took.

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*Common traps for Extraverted teachers*

- Look for outward enthusiasm as a sign of student engagement.
- Not give enough wait time for Introverted students to process their thoughts. Some Introverted students describe it this way: "By the time I'm ready, all the good stuff has been said."
- Give second and third prompts when a student delays in responding, thinking the student needs more information. This actually interrupts the Introverted process and causes a longer delay.
- When trying to elicit enthusiasm from Introverted students, for whom just being in school all day is difficult, instead overwhelm and tire them out.

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*Common traps for Introverted teachers*

- Mistake the Extraverted need to share thoughts as rude blurting-out.
  - Require too much quiet, causing Extraverts to lose focus. All students need quiet for difficult tasks such as test-taking, but Extraverts often need more breaks in that quiet.
  - Overestimate how long Extraverted students can read or write quietly without sharing their thoughts.
  - Delay hands-on learning too long while providing background information or explanations.
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Which preference seems most like you?

Extraversion (E) \_\_\_\_\_ or Introversion (I) \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes people get the misunderstanding that they should be striving for balance. They want to be "ambiverts." Actually, mature people do know which preference to use in various situations, but we still *have* a natural preference. Several topographical brain-mapping studies, measuring brain activity while subjects performed different tasks, show that there are clear differences in brain electrical activity patterns for people who prefer Extraversion and Introversion (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998). Frame this exercise as figuring out your preference so that you can better understand what energizes you.

**TRY THIS!**

Use the "Red Card/Green Card" exercise (page 79) with students in your classroom.

Compare notes. Did students show preferences for Extraversion and Introversion?

**Before you read on . . .**

Put yourself back in sixth grade. If you had a choice of the following two unit project assignments for Greek mythology, which one would you choose and why? What might you do?

- A. Choose from the following topics:
- Ceremonies for worship of Greek gods
  - Compare and contrast two Greek temples built for different gods
  - The importance of the gods in Athens vs. Sparta

Your report should be 3 pages long, double-spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt. font. 4 bibliographical references, at least one drawing, chart, or other illustration. Related oral report to be 5 minutes long and include at least 1 visual aid. Aids may be pictures, a model you construct, or a video clip (less than 1 minute).

- B. To conclude this unit, design your own project to demonstrate your knowledge of the gods of ancient Greece. Your project may take any form but must include a class presentation.

## THE SECOND PREFERENCE PAIR: SENSING AND INTUITION

### Getting the *Information You Need to Learn*

This second preference pair describes two normal processes for gathering information. Your choice in the above assignments might hint at your preference for

- Sensing (S)      *First paying attention to what is, to information you can gather through your five senses—the facts*
- INtuition (N)\*      *First paying attention to what could be, to hunches, connections or imagination—a sixth sense*

As with Extraversion and Introversion, this isn't an either/or. Instead, Sensing and Intuition describe a person's *preferred* starting place for gathering information. Sensing types start with the facts, defining what is. They usually pick Choice A above, saying, "Plunging in without being sure of the requirements can lead to a lot of wasted time if you guess wrong." Getting the details right seems sensible.

Intuitives start with their hunch, or a connection or insight. They usually pick Choice B (unless they struggle with or dislike the subject area). As soon as they read the assignment, they get an idea for a myth to write or a game to construct, saying "I've got great ideas and I can't wait to start!"

\*Note that the I was used for Introversion, so the N stands for INtuition.

Learning takes both Sensing and Intuition—think of using facts to support big ideas or conclusions. However, it's easy for educators to favor classroom activities that emphasize their own preference.

Which best describes your natural style?

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*Sensing types prefer:*

- Accuracy
- Using experience as a guide
- Following the steps (orderly directions and information)
- Paying attention to reality
- Working with proven methods and curriculum

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*Intuitive types prefer:*

- Insights
  - Using imagination as a guide
  - Plunging in (using hunches to fill in missing steps or information)
  - Paying attention to possibilities
  - Working with innovative methods and ideas
- 

Teachers sometimes discover their own style by thinking about curriculum. Sensing teachers, especially in their first few years in the classroom, often view curriculum as their lesson plans. They may work straight from it, perhaps not feeling comfortable skipping over sections for fear of leaving out an important concept. In contrast, Intuitive teachers often view curriculum as a platform for brainstorming. Their actual lesson may or may not bear much resemblance to the original materials.

There are advantages and pitfalls to both approaches to curriculum. For Sensing teachers, the danger is failing to make curriculum relevant to particular students, or thinking that what has worked in the past will always work. For Intuitive teachers, the danger is failing to cover certain standards, or overlapping with assignments students will receive in other grades. They may also rush to try new ideas rather than perfect lessons they've tried.

Our preference for Sensing and Intuition, then, influences the kinds of assignments we're most comfortable with, the information we need to proceed with them, and the content of lessons we enjoy the most.

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*Sensing types like assignments where:*

- Facts and details are valued
- Expectations are clear
- Motivation comes from safety in specificity
- Set materials are covered
- Connections are made to real life

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*Intuitive types like assignments where:*

- General concepts launch opportunities for imaginative or critical thinking
  - Expectations are to dream big
  - Motivation comes from room for individuality
  - Themes are tapped and opened
  - Knowledge is interesting even if it isn't useful
-

Think about it: Do you tend to give choices (Intuition) or structured tasks (Sensing)? Do you give clear directions (Sensing) or are students always asking for clarification (Intuition)? One Intuitive teacher said, "By my last hour class, I finally know how to explain assignments because students have pointed out everything I omitted!"

Below are a few common traps teachers often fall into without an understanding of this preference pair. If you've learned how to avoid some of these traps, think about the strategies you use. How do you meet the needs of students who aren't like you?

<i>Sensing teachers might:</i>	<i>Intuitive teachers might:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Think that Intuitive students are sloppy or heedless of directions	<input type="checkbox"/> See a student's need for clarity as a lack of creativity
<input type="checkbox"/> Overstructure assignments, believing that practice and procedures will help students discover underlying concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> Understructure assignments, not wanting to stifle the imagination or individuality of students
<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize factual learning or basic skills so that students have the foundation for higher level thinking	<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize themes and projects or drama more than teaching or reinforcing fundamental skills
<input type="checkbox"/> Grow almost too comfortable with lessons, strategies, and techniques they've developed over time.	<input type="checkbox"/> Embrace almost any change, jettisoning techniques or curriculum that should be kept

Another way to put the trap each side might fall into is that when things aren't going well, Sensing teachers tend to do more and more of the same, hoping that by repetition it will finally work, whereas Intuitive teachers tend to try something new, then something else, then something else, searching for anything that might help.

**TRY THIS!**

Use the "Object Lesson" (p. 171) exercise with your students. Can you see the differences between Sensing and Intuitive students? Share examples of student work with your colleagues.

In truth, a middle ground of keeping what is working and replacing what isn't, through reflective practice on what is really going on, is the best approach.

The differences between Sensing and Intuition are key to differentiation, as explained more fully in Chapter 4. What *information* do students need to learn? We need to build a bridge, step by step, for Sensing students, until they grasp the big concepts being taught. Intuitive students often grasp the big idea, but need to learn to build arguments and use details to support reasoning.

Which describes you best?

Sensing (S) \_\_\_\_ or INtuition (N) \_\_\_\_



**Before you read on . . .**

What are your rules when students don't finish assignments or fail to turn in homework on time?

## THE THIRD PREFERENCE PAIR: THINKING AND FEELING

### How We Make *Decisions*

This third preference pair describes two normal, rational approaches to making decisions:

Thinking (T) Making decisions through objective, logical principles

Feeling (F) Making decisions by considering the impact of each alternative on the people involved

Thinkers have feelings; Feelers can think. Remember, this pair is about how we decide what we believe, choose courses of action, form guiding rules, or determine likes and dislikes. Sometimes comparing the ideal world for each preference pair helps clarify the difference:

*In an ideal world for Thinking types, one set of rules, principles, and truths would work for everyone. No exceptions would be necessary.*

*In an ideal world for Feeling types, there would be different sets of rules, standards, and values for each person, depending on individual needs and circumstances.*

Neither ideal world can truly exist, can it? Most situations call for balance. If homework rules are too lax, some students declare, "You're not being fair!" If homework rules are too rigid, some students give up trying. We need balance, the wisdom of both preferences, to make good decisions.

Which best describes your natural style?

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*Thinking types prefer:*

- Objectivity, logic
- First seeing what's wrong
- Striving for competency
- Analyzing
- Sticking to rules

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*Feeling types prefer:*

- Subjectivity, values
  - First seeing what's right
  - Striving for harmony
  - Sympathizing
  - Making room for exceptions
- 

Teachers often recognize whether Thinking or Feeling describes them best by considering how conflict affects them. How do you react to a phone call from an angry parent? Most Thinking types report that they calmly work through a standard protocol for shifting the conversation back to facts without placing blame. After the call ends, they think through needed follow-up and then move on.

Most teachers with a preference for Feeling work through a similar protocol, but after the call their calm often dissolves into a jumble of emotion. Did they handle things right? Is it their fault that the parent is upset? Could they have avoided the problem? Conflict stays with them for awhile before they can move on.

Thinking and Feeling in the classroom involve rules, the subjects we enjoy most, our level of need for praise and feedback, and much more. In the classroom, clues to preferences include

<i>Thinking types prefer:</i>	<i>Feeling types prefer:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding why	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding people
<input type="checkbox"/> Math and science	<input type="checkbox"/> Stories and culture
<input type="checkbox"/> Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/> Caring
<input type="checkbox"/> Debate and competition	<input type="checkbox"/> Consensus and cooperation
<input type="checkbox"/> Being in charge	<input type="checkbox"/> Being liked

When I interview Thinking and Feeling teachers about their ideal classroom, Thinking teachers often say something like, "The bottom line is learning. Life is about meeting expectations. These should be clear so students know where they stand. I shouldn't be making things easier for them when the real world won't." Feeling teachers might say, "I'd do away with grades, both A, B, C, and grade levels. Students should each be allowed to learn at their own natural pace and evaluated on the basis of progress from where they were, not someone else's standard."

Below are common traps that Thinking and Feeling teachers naturally fall into, although you may have developed strategies to avoid them:

<i>Thinking teachers might:</i>	<i>Feeling teachers might:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Underestimate the impact of put-downs and sarcasm on learning for Feeling students	<input type="checkbox"/> Get drawn into unproductive arguments, trying to reason with a Thinking student who just enjoys verbal sparring
<input type="checkbox"/> View the Feeling need for positive reinforcement as ploys for attention	<input type="checkbox"/> Offer too much nonspecific praise
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail to bend rules when exceptions would help motivate students or when rules actually affect different students in different ways because of their varying needs or reactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Not hold fast enough on rules, which can undermine authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Strive for rigor over building relationships, when both are essential	<input type="checkbox"/> Strive for building relationships over providing rigor, when both are essential

Which seems more like you?

Thinking (T) \_\_\_\_\_ or Feeling (F) \_\_\_\_\_

Thinking and Feeling are key to communication and motivation, as well as to developing a productive classroom culture. A few implications for education:

- Although 78 percent of principals have a preference for Thinking, 68 percent of elementary and 60 percent of middle-school teachers have a preference for Feeling.<sup>1</sup>
- 71 percent of art, drama, and music teachers have a preference for Feeling, whereas 70 percent of industrial arts teachers have a preference for Thinking.
- Math teachers are almost evenly split between Thinking and Feeling. However, “math anxiety” may be found most often in Feeling students (Huelsman, 2002).

### TRY THIS!

Have students write a response to one of the following “Dear Abby”-style letters:

I don’t think my sports coach likes me. What should I do?

Or,

My mom says I’m too sensitive. What should I do?

In your study group, compare student work. Can you see differences in Thinking and Feeling?

### Before you read on . . .

Picture yourself as a student. You’ve got a big project to complete, due three weeks from now. Which statement is most true for you? Why? Give an example.

- I’d choose a topic and get started right away. If I’m behind, I struggle to enjoy other activities. Besides, if I finish early, I have time to check my work. I like that.
- I’d start thinking about the project right away, but I wouldn’t want to lock into a topic too quickly. Something more interesting might come up! Besides, I can’t really start early. It’s the pressure of a looming deadline that spurs me on to do my best work.

## THE FOURTH PREFERENCE PAIR: JUDGING AND PERCEIVING

### *Our Approach to Work, School, and Life in General*

The final preference pair describes our natural approach to life, through

Judging (J)      A preference for planning their work and working their plan

Perceiving (P)    A preference for staying open to the moment

Judging types are *not* judgmental. Instead, they like to come to closure (judgments). Perceiving types are *not* more perceptive. Instead, they like to remain open to new information (perceptions). The preferences often approach tasks entirely differently.

Judging types are often adept at estimating how long things take, sequencing tasks, planning their approach, and sticking to that plan as they work at a steady pace to wrap things up.

Perceiving types search out options, continually gather information, and digress from their initial plans—if they thought it was necessary to make any. Their plans often emerge as they work from ideas, in bursts of energy.

<sup>1</sup>Occupational data are from the Center for Applications of Psychological Type database.

<i>Judging types prefer to:</i>	<i>Perceiving types prefer to:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan your work and work your plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Stay open to options
<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy finishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy starting
<input type="checkbox"/> Work before they play	<input type="checkbox"/> Let work and play coexist
<input type="checkbox"/> Have things settled	<input type="checkbox"/> Search for more information
<input type="checkbox"/> Know what will be happening	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience surprises and variety

Which preference pair describes you best?

Judging teachers often find lesson planning a natural process. In contrast, a Perceiving teacher said, "Why plan when classroom activities never take the amount of time you think they will?" For Judging types, a curriculum map is a way to avoid problems: supplies can be ordered on time, the computer lab reserved. For Perceiving types, a curriculum map can be a straightjacket. What if the new Newberry winner is from your town or a news event piques student interest? All that planning, wasted!

In classrooms,

<i>Judging types prefer:</i>	<i>Perceiving types prefer:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear deadlines and goals—no surprises because they start working right away	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility and surprises—they process longer before moving to production
<input type="checkbox"/> A workload that allows for steady effort	<input type="checkbox"/> A workload with high and low activity levels
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear expectations so they know when they're done	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible timelines so they can stick with something that interests them
<input type="checkbox"/> Produce product quickly (perhaps rushing the process)	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy the process, forgetting to move on to producing something
<input type="checkbox"/> Knowing what is coming so they can plan ahead	<input type="checkbox"/> Concentrating on what they need to do now

At all levels of education, nearly 70 percent of teachers have a preference for Judging; for principals, it's 85 percent! In school, deadlines and timeliness matter. Below are common traps that Judging and Perceiving teachers might fall into.

<i>Judging teachers might:</i>	<i>Perceiving teachers might:</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> "Rush" Perceiving students toward completion	<input type="checkbox"/> Change deadlines and plans, frustrating Judging students
<input type="checkbox"/> Stick to schedules, cutting short exploratory time	<input type="checkbox"/> Under- or overestimate how long activities might take
<input type="checkbox"/> Lock into a lesson idea too soon, not seeking other possibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Not give parameters; students don't know when they're done
<input type="checkbox"/> See Perceiving students as unmotivated or one step from irresponsible	<input type="checkbox"/> See Judging students as too rigid or complaining

Consider where you naturally fall on the continuum below for when you might begin a project (if you feel stuck in the middle, go back to your college mindset when you first called your own shots).

J	I	I	I	I	P
Start project right away, finish ASAP	Start early, work steadily	Goal: Halfway at halfway point	Think all along, start producing when deadline adds pressure		Put things off until last-minute adrenaline inspires

Judging and Perceiving are key to understanding how to ensure work quality and work completion for all students, as Chapter 6 explains in detail. Also, teachers often find it easier to collaborate with colleagues when everyone understands that people actually do their best work when they approach tasks in ways that honor their natural preference.

Which seems more like you?

Judging (J) \_\_\_\_\_ or Perceiving (P) \_\_\_\_\_

Take a moment to record your four preference letters below. If you're still unsure on one of the pairs, read through the next chapter, "What Type Looks Like in Students." Often, adults verify their preferences by recognizing patterns from their own childhood. The more you know about your own style, the more you'll recognize when you need to adjust so that students who are very different from you can develop academic confidence.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Extraversion or  
Introversion

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sensing or  
Intuition

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thinking or  
Feeling

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judging or  
Perceiving

### Population Patterns for the Preferences

In the United States, numerous studies have shown the following distributions of type preferences in the general population (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer 1998):

- Extraversion and Introversion: just about equal
- Sensing and Intuition: 65–70 percent Sensing
- Thinking and Feeling: just about equal, but about 60 percent of men prefer Thinking and 60 percent of women prefer Feeling
- Judging and Perceiving: 60–65 percent prefer Judging

Which preferences work best in teaching? In truth, every preference is an asset when we teach from the strengths of our personality, but can adjust when either the task or the students' needs require us to use the other preferences. However,

historically, there are patterns in the preferences of people who choose teaching as a career, as shown in Table 2.1, below, which summarizes numerous studies on thousands of teachers.

Because the preferences aren't equally distributed in the population (remember that 65–70 percent prefer Sensing, for example), more important than the absolute percentage of teachers of any type is that percentage in relationship to the general population. Shaded are the personality types that are underrepresented in teaching, using this measure.

**Table 2.1** Percentage of Elementary Teachers of Each Personality Type

<b>ISTJ</b> 10.7 % Gen pop. 11.6 %	<b>ISFJ</b> 17.9% Gen. pop. 13.8%	<b>INFJ</b> 5.1% Gen. pop. 1.5%	<b>INTJ</b> 2.1% Gen pop. 1.9%
<b>ISTP</b> 1.7% Gen pop. 5.4%	<b>ISFP</b> 4.7% Gen pop. 8.8%	<b>INFP</b> 4.6% Gen pop. 4.4%	<b>INTP</b> 1.5% Gen pop. 3.3%
<b>ESTP</b> 0.9% Gen pop. 4.3%	<b>ESFP</b> 5.7% Gen pop. 8.5%	<b>ENFP</b> 10.2% Gen pop. 8.1%	<b>ENTP</b> 1.5% Gen pop. 3.2%
<b>ESTJ</b> 8.5% Gen pop. 8.7%	<b>ESFJ</b> 12.4% Gen pop. 12.3%	<b>ENFJ</b> 7.2% Gen pop. 2.5%	<b>ENTJ</b> 5.2% Gen pop. 1.8%

SOURCE: Elementary school teachers type table data in *Psychological Type in Education* by Mary H. McCaulley, 1993. Used with permission of the Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc.

At higher levels of education, there are more Thinking and Intuitive types. The four SP types (on the left-hand side of the table) remain underrepresented at every level. As we move on to Chapter 3, "What Type Looks Like in Students," you might begin to see some reasons why these people may not be attracted to traditional school environments.

## CONCLUSION

Look back to the list of activities you journaled about at the start of the chapter. How are these tied to your personality type? Can you see that how you teach in many ways reflects who you are? As we move to "What Type Looks Like in Students," we'll see that who they are is how they learn. Although teachers cannot (and should not) meet the needs of all children at all times, type becomes a tool for examining our practices, not in terms of right and wrong, but in terms of "What children will this reach?"