Education & Learning

Deliver the same concept through three distinct cognitive modes — narrative, visual-spatial, and procedural — then adapt all future explanations to the learner’s preferred style.
Difficulty: Advanced
Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini
Use Case: Differentiated Instruction, Learning Styles, Cognitive Flexibility
Updated: May 2026
Why This Prompt Exists
Most AI tutors fail because they explain the same way every time.

You get:

- one mode of explanation regardless of learner
- no discovery of how the learner thinks
- frustration when the default mode doesn’t click
- no adaptation after failure
- teachers who blame learners instead of switching modes

But cognitive styles are not fixed traits.

They are entry points.

- Narrative learners need story and character
- Visual-spatial learners need diagrams and mental images
- Procedural learners need steps and sequences
- Most learners benefit from all three, but one unlocks the door

Without cognitive flexibility, AI tutors become one-size-fits-none.

This framework forces AI to be a shape-shifter who finds the learner’s door.

The Prompt

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Assume the role of a cognitively flexible tutor, learning style adapter, and multi-modal explainer.

Your task is to explain the same concept in three completely different ways, then discover and adapt to the learner's preferred mode.

Before generating, analyze:
- the concept's narrative potential (characters, conflict, resolution)
- the concept's visual-spatial structure (relationships, hierarchies, flows)
- the concept's procedural nature (steps, sequences, algorithms)

Then generate:

VERSION 1 — NARRATIVE
Explain the concept as a story with characters, a problem, and a resolution. Use metaphor and sequence.

VERSION 2 — VISUAL-SPATIAL
Describe a diagram, mental image, or spatial arrangement that represents the concept. Use relationships, containers, proximity, hierarchy.

VERSION 3 — PROCEDURAL
Explain the concept as a step-by-step process. Use "First, then, next, finally." Assume the learner will follow the steps.
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AFTER ALL THREE VERSIONS:
Ask the learner: "Which version made it click? Why?"

ADAPTATION RULE:
For all future explanations of related concepts, use the learner's
preferred mode first. If that fails, offer the other two again.

INPUTS:

Concept:
[INSERT CONCEPT]

Learner's Known Preferred Mode (if any):
[NARRATIVE / VISUAL / PROCEDURAL / UNKNOWN]

Previous Explanations That Failed (optional):
[LIST MODES AND WHY THEY FAILED]

Domain of Concept:
[SCIENCE / MATH / HUMANITIES / SKILL / OTHER]

RULES:
- All three versions must explain the SAME concept
- No version is "better" — they are different doors
- The question "Which version made it click?" is mandatory
- Adapt all future explanations to the chosen mode
- If the learner cannot choose, rotate modes until one works
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How To Use It

- Do not judge which version is “best” — let the learner tell you.
- A learner who chooses narrative mode may still benefit from visual-spatial as reinforcement.
- Keep a learner profile that stores their preferred mode for each domain (they may differ).
- If no mode works, the concept may need decomposition before explanation.
- Revisit the question periodically — preferred modes can shift with mastery.

Example Input

Concept: Supply and demand equilibrium

Learner’s Known Preferred Mode: Unknown (first session)

Previous Explanations That Failed: None — new learner

Domain of Concept: Economics

Why It Works
Most tutoring fails because it assumes one way of thinking fits all learners.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- multi-modal explanations as default
- explicit learner preference discovery
- adaptation as a structural requirement
- no penalty for having a different cognitive style
- permission to say “that explanation didn’t work for me”

Great tutors don’t have a favorite way to explain — they have many ways, and they watch for the click.

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