The Principles of Multimedia Education (as compiled by Richard E. Mayer and Ruth Colvin Clark) can help you choose a variety of content presentation methods to maintain student attention and enhance learning.

- **The Multimedia Principle**: Use words and graphics rather than words alone. There is growing evidence that well-designed visuals and text used in combination can benefit your students, especially those with less experience in lesson content.

- **The Contiguity Principle**: Align words and corresponding graphics for greatest impact. When using text and graphics to illustrate a lesson, it is best to use those elements in an integrated fashion, next to one another, as opposed to above or below one another.

- **The Modality Principle**: When feasible, present words as audio as opposed to printed text when combining text and graphics in a lesson. There is a large body of evidence that supports the use of two separate cognitive channels, the visual for the graphics and the auditory for the words, when presenting words and graphics together.

- **The Redundancy Principle**: Explain visuals with words in audio format or text, not both! This is the rule most frequently violated. The instinct is to present information as often as possible in as many different ways as possible to our students. Research indicates that material presented in this redundant fashion overloads learner’s visual channel, which impedes learning.

- **The Coherence Principle**: Adding interesting material not directly tied to the educational objectives can hurt learning. This is another principle commonly violated. Most empirical evidence shows that adding graphics, background music, or other entertaining elements to eLearning can overload working memory. These elements are called "seductive details" because they can be more interesting and more memorable than the educational materials they supposedly enhance.

- **The Personalization Principle**: Use conversational style and virtual coaches when creating eLearning. Students in an online environment can feel isolated or disconnected from their instructors and peers. This can improve your student’s sense of connectedness.

- **The Segmentation Principle**: Manage complexity by breaking a lesson into parts. This principle is also called "chunking" by some instructional designers. The more complex the lesson or new to the material your students, the smaller the units should be. By breaking the lesson into manageable pieces, students are better able to cognitively "digest" the material.

- **The Pretraining Principle**: Introduce key concepts or vocabulary before complex lessons. This principle is closely related to the segmentation principle. This is also sometimes called pre-teaching. This principle is particularly valuable for students new to a topic or subject matter.