

**TEACH** Presents:  
*Universal Design for  
Learning (UDL)  
During Distance  
Learning*

Elizabeth Lewis, Director of Education

[Elizabeth@dscba.org](mailto:Elizabeth@dscba.org)





# What is UDL?

- Framework written into IDEA in 2004
- Finally "officially" recognized and endorsed in ESSA of 2015
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that — (A) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and (B) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient.

# UDL & Education Law

- December 2015, Congress passed "Every Child Succeeds Act" (ESSA), which replaced "No Child Left Behind." For the first time, the nation's general K-12 education law defines and endorses UDL.
- *"UDL is referenced numerous times throughout the ESSA bill, and states are encouraged to design assessments using UDL principles, to award grants to local education agencies who use UDL, and to adopt technology that aligns with UDL."* - **National Down Syndrome Society**
- NDSS and the 45+ fellow members of the National UDL Task Force, which was formed in 2006, have played a critical role in raising awareness on Capitol Hill of UDL's potential to support better teaching and learning with high expectations for all students, including those with disabilities. In fact, the Task Force was instrumental in helping Congress write a definition of UDL for the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, the definition now embedded in ESSA.

---

## WHY UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING?

Classrooms are filled with students who:



## Universal Design for Learning

### Recognition Networks

The "what" of learning



How we gather facts and categorize what we see, hear, and read. Identifying letters, words, or an author's style are recognition tasks.



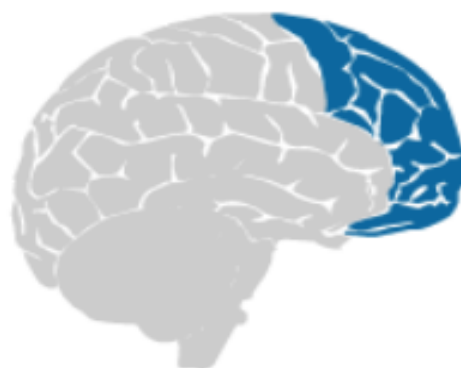
Present information and content in different ways



**Principle #1:  
Provide Multiple Means of  
Representation**

### Strategic Networks

The "how" of learning



Planning and performing tasks. How we organize and express our ideas. Writing an essay or solving a math problem are strategic tasks.



Differentiate the ways that students can express what they know



**Principle #2:  
Provide Multiple Means of  
Action and Expression**

### Affective Networks

The "why" of learning



How learners get engaged and stay motivated. How they are challenged, excited, or interested. These are affective dimensions.



Stimulate interest and motivation for learning



**Principle #3:  
Provide Multiple Means of  
Engagement**

# UDL & Students with Down syndrome

- Removes barriers by creating an accessible learning environment for students of all abilities
- Multi-sensory, meaningful instruction supports the learning profile of a student with Down syndrome
- Strength-based approach fosters independence, empowers students, and builds confidence



# UDL in Action – Defining Roles

## **Parent**

- Healthy home/school communication
- Understand and communicate present levels, strengths, and areas of need (all about me)
- Know key components of IEP (one page)
- Home learning environment

## **Teacher / Education Team**

- Healthy home/school communication
- Understand present levels, strengths, areas of need
- Discover "mismatches" in teaching style w/ facts about the student
- Know key components of IEP
- Planning and collaboration with team and family
- Make appropriate modifications that align with student's IEP goals

# Variability vs. Disability

---

[www.udlcenter.org](http://www.udlcenter.org)



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
UNIVERSAL DESIGN *for* LEARNING

Acknowledging learner variability  
Changes in UDL Guidelines 2.0

at  CAST



# Four ways to differentiate instruction



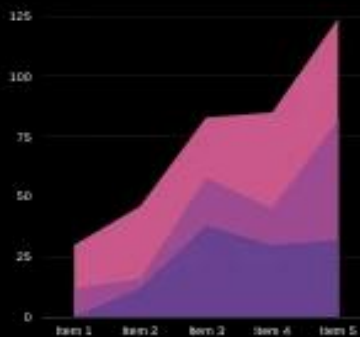
## Content

- Match vocabulary words to definitions.
- Read a passage of text and answer related questions.
- Identify an author's position; provide evidence to support this viewpoint.
- Create a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the lesson.



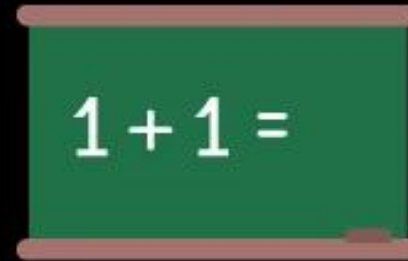
## Process

- Provide textbooks for visual and word learners.
- Allow auditory learners to listen to audio books.
- Give kinesthetic learners the opportunity to complete an interactive assignment online.



## Product

- Read and write learners write a book report.
- Visual learners create a graphic organizer of the story.
- Auditory learners give an oral report.
- Kinesthetic learners build a diorama illustrating the story.



## Environment

- Break some students into reading groups to discuss the assignment.
- Allow students to read individually if preferred.
- Create quiet spaces where there are no distractions.

# How Would You Differentiate?

## **Facts About the Student**

- Reads 75 site words, IEP goal is to attain 25 new site words
- Science & Social Studies IEP goal - identify five key vocabulary words that connect to core unit content
- IEP fine motor goal – copy five-word sentences.
- Loves music, singing, and dancing
- Strong visual learner
- Needs lots of repetition
- Thrives with peer support (enjoys the attention of peers)
- Needs frequent movement breaks

## **Facts About the Class/Teacher/Lesson**

- 5th grade class
- 5th grade reading materials
- Teacher gives auditory lectures
- Teacher gives tests in essay form
- Class reads weekly science magazine with embedded quizzes, word searches, and essay questions
- Teacher gives pop quizzes
- Virtual class sessions can last up to 2 hours

# Troubleshooting

- Who is modifying my child/students work?
- How is my child being graded/assessed?
- What do I do if I feel my child/student is still not able to access learning?

