



Designing for Inclusion

Key Takeaways and Resources

This document is a summary of the core content found within the ISTE U professional development online course, *Designing for Inclusion*. It includes key points and relevant resources that guide educators in using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework to proactively plan and design learning experiences that are welcoming, accessible, and engaging for the widest range of learners. This document is intended to be shared with any and all K-12 educators.

[Foundations of Inclusive Learning Design](#)

[Engagement – The Why of Learning](#)

[Representation – The What of Learning](#)

[Action & Expression – The How of Learning](#)

[Reflecting on Your Practice](#)



Foundations of Inclusive Learning Design

The learning sciences have shown that there is no such thing as an average learner.

Learner variability recognizes that all students differ.

- Video: [The Myth of the Average](#)
- Video: [The Science of Learning and Development](#)

Key insights from the science of learning and development and from educational research suggest that teaching should:

1. build on children's prior knowledge and experiences;
2. support engagement, motivation and understanding; and
3. be designed to develop metacognitive thinking, agency, and self-efficacy

Universal Design for Learning, or UDL, is a framework developed by CAST that is grounded in research in the learning sciences. It provides a set of three principles that guide how educators can proactively design learning environments that support the widest range of learners.

- Resource: [UDL Guidelines](#)
- Resource: [UDL Tips for Developing Learning Goals](#)

[UDL Lesson Revision Template](#)

- Explore the [Learner Variability Navigator](#) and [Goalbook UDL Strategies](#) for some design strategies.



Engagement – The Why of Learning

The **Engagement** principle focuses on the “why” of learning and gives examples of how we can provide options for recruiting interest, sustaining effort and persistence, and self-regulation.

- Resource: [UDL Engagement Guidelines](#)
- Reflect on:
 - How can you proactively plan to create a welcoming environment that anticipates the range of student interest, motivation, and identities?
 - What barriers might exist for student engagement?

Examining practices to design more welcoming learning environments:

1. **Intersectionality** considers the multidimensional identities that people carry throughout their lives, and the ways that those identities present opportunities and challenges to thriving in our world.
Video: [What is Intersectionality?](#)
2. **Culturally Responsive Teaching** is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning.
Video: [Supporting Schoolwide Culturally Responsive Practice](#)
3. **Pronouns** are one of the ways we portray our identities.
Video: [Toilets, bowties, gender and me](#)
4. **Funds of knowledge** are the essential cultural practices and bodies of knowledge that are embedded in the daily practices and routines of families.
Video: [Funds of Knowledge](#)
5. **Welcoming Rituals** are openers that are intended to establish and maintain positive relationships.
Video: [Morning Meetings: Building Community in the Classroom](#)

Engagement Strategies with Technology:

1. Daily Check-ins ([example](#)) & Exit Tickets ([example](#))
2. Playlists ([example](#))



Representation – The What of Learning

The **Representation** principle focuses on the “what” of learning and gives examples of how to provide options for perception, language and symbols, and comprehension.

- Resource: [UDL Representation Guidelines](#)
- Reflect on:
 - How can you plan for the range of background experiences, vocabulary, and perceptions that your students will bring?
 - What barriers might exist to their comprehension?
 - What accessibility tools can you use to support your students?

Accessibility is “when a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally integrated and equally effective manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use.”

- Video: [Designing for Accessibility with POUR](#)
- Resource: [EALA Tech Tool Library](#)

POUR Principles:

- **Perceivable:** Content that will make it possible for all your learners to see and hear the information.
- **Operable:** Content that will help all your learners navigate the information independently using their preferred tools.
- **Understandable:** Content that will support your learners' understanding through a consistent and predictable design.
- **Robust:** Content that will work for your learners on a range of current and future technologies, including assistive technologies.

Action & Expression – The How of Learning

The **Action and Expression** principle focuses on the “how” of learning and gives examples of how to provide options for physical action, expression and communication, and executive functions.

- Resource: [UDL Action & Expression Guidelines](#)
- Reflect on:
 - How can you proactively design options for students to express their understanding and work towards a learning goal?
 - What barriers might exist for students to demonstrate what they know?
 - How might you support students who struggle with executive functioning?

Associated with the prefrontal cortex, **executive functions** allow humans to set long-term goals, plan effective strategies for reaching those goals, monitor their progress, and modify strategies as needed

- Resource: [UDL Guidelines on Executive Functions](#)

Action & Expression with Technology:

- Choice boards ([template](#))
- “Choose your own adventure” docs ([instructions](#))

CAST recommends that we design assessments that are engaging, aligned to the learning goal, and offer flexible ways for students to demonstrate what they know.

- **Formative:** Assessments FOR learning that are ongoing and embedded. They can create a dialogue between students and teachers about learning and should be used to support learners’ progress.
- **Summative:** Large, end of unit measures that are assessments OF learning.
- Resource: [UDL Tips for Assessments](#)



Reflecting on Your Practice

Resources – Asking for Feedback:

- **321 Exit Ticket** - 3 Things I Learned, 2 Questions I Have, 1 Piece of Feedback: This format is helpful for a quick exit ticket, particularly when working with large groups of teachers.
- **[Active and intentional listening](#)**: This one-pager is helpful in thinking about how you respond in conversations.
- **[Asking for Feedback](#)**: This document breaks down types of feedback and the ways that we might react to receiving feedback.

Reflection is a necessary part of our practice as educators and learners. By reflecting, we are able to pause and consider ways that we can better support all the learners in our classrooms.

- Video: [The Importance of Reflection](#)