

'Many children struggle in schools... because the way they are being taught is incompatible with the way they learn.'

- Peter Senge

## Best Practices for Diverse Learners: One Size Does Not Fit All!

UDL is an approach to curricular design and educational practice that leverages technology in shaping inclusive 21st century educational environments as proposed in Action for Inclusion. UDL aims to increase access to learning for all students by reducing curricular barriers.

UDL at a Glance (video) Center for Applied Science Technology (CAST) <http://www.cast.org>



The Alberta programs of study are the starting point for instruction for all students. Don't confuse the "means" with the learning goal...

**Instructional Supports** are a collection of teaching strategies and routines, and learning resource materials that create successful learning experiences for an individual student or a group of students.

We need flexibility in the methods (instructional strategies) in order to achieve the outcomes or goals.



### Principles of Universal Design for Learning

- **Multiple means of Representation** to provide learners with a variety of ways to acquire information and knowledge
- **Multiple means of Action and Expression** to provide learners with alternatives for demonstrating what they know
- **Multiple means of Engagement** to tap into students' individual learning styles and interests and providing them with choice as to how they participate in their learning.

*How can using a variety of materials and methods reach more of the learners within your classroom?  
What are the benefits of doing so?  
What are the challenges?*

### Multiple means of Engagement:

- Tap into students' individual learning styles and interests and providing them with choice as to how they participate in their learning.
- Knowing your students – **intentionally** reflecting on **who they are** and **how they learn** is an essential component of UDL.

Collect and organize individual student data on:

- Learning strengths
- Interests
- Learning preferences
- Learning styles
- Learning needs
- Working with others

*How can technology help teachers use flexible teaching materials to personalize learning and make it engaging and challenging for every student?*

**Understanding Medical and Disability Implications:** The critical information for teachers is **not necessarily what** the medical conditions or disabilities are, but rather **how they impact** a student's learning, social/emotional behaviour and the classroom environment.

**Inclusive Education Library:** <http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/ieptLibrary/index.html>

**OR** log in to Learn Alberta (<http://www.learnalberta.ca>) and search for Inclusive Education Library



## What other ways can we get to know our students?

### Multiple Means of Representation:

Providing learners with a variety of ways to acquire information and knowledge

- **SMART Video Player**
- **Document camera**
- **Digital Text**
- **Digital Repository of Textbooks for Students with Disabilities**  
<http://education.alberta.ca/media/842052/digr-info-flyer.pdf>
- **Text Compactor** <http://textcompactor.com>
- **Teachers' Domain**  
<http://www.teachersdomain.org>
- **Wonderville**  
<http://www.wonderville.ca>
- **Read Please** – free text-to-speech  
<http://www.readplease.com>
- **Shahi** <http://blachan.com/shahi>
- **Audio books**
- **Scholastic BookFlix** - online literacy resource; available through **Learn Alberta Online Reference Centre**
- **Modifying Word documents**
- **Text Compactor** <http://textcompactor.com>
- **CBC National** – available through Learn Alberta or at  
<http://www.cbc.ca/thenational/watch/ondemand.html>

### Multiple Means of Action and Expression:

Providing learners with alternatives for demonstrating what they know.

- **Kid Blog** <http://kidblog.org>
- **AlphaSmart Neo** <http://www.secrest.ca>
- **Fusion Writer** <http://www.writerlearning.com>
- **Word Prediction** – WordQ, ReadWriteGold, Kurzweil, Premier Literacy
- **Voice Comments in Word** (Works for Word 2003, 2007); search on Internet for instructions
- **Digital Voice Recorders**  
<http://sbinfocanada.about.com/cs/beforeyoubuy/bb/digrecranscrib.htm>
- **Big Huge Labs** <http://bighugelabs.com>
- **Photo Story 3** – free Microsoft download
- **Glogster** <http://www.glogster.com>
- **Comic Life** <http://plasq.com/comiclife-win>
- **Crazy Talk** <http://education.reallusion.com>
- **Kidspiration (K-5)** - <http://www.inspiration.com>
- **Inspiration (5-12)** - <http://www.inspiration.com>

### Always keep in mind the learning goal!

Get rid of barriers caused by the curriculum, and keep the challenge where it belongs!

**Attitude is Aptitude!** The smartest person in the room is the one who loves to learn. ~ Alvin Toffler

### Try different...

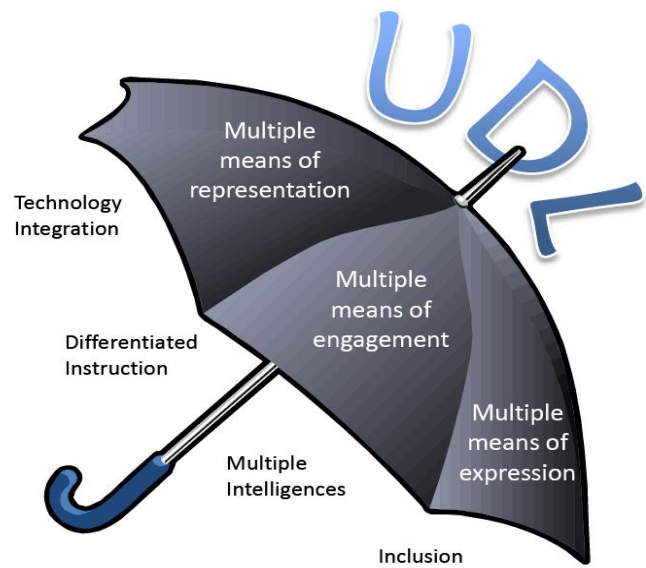
The usual mantra is to 'try harder'. Trying harder is impossible when you're already trying as hard as you can. But you can always try different. -Seth Godin



### Resources:

- **Making a Difference** <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/cross/making-a-difference.aspx>
- **Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia**  
Inclusive Education website: [www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.com](http://www.inclusiveeducationpdresources.com)
- **Building on Success** <http://education.alberta.ca/media/352661/build.pdf>
- **Teaching Refugees** <http://www.teachingrefugees.com>
- **UDLinks** – From the Maryland State University of Education, this **free app** provides a search for content specific online teaching resources aligned with Universal Design for Learning.
- **UDL Learning Wheel** - <http://udlwheel.mdonlinegrants.org>

Notes:



**Universal Design for Learning**