



# Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Fact Sheet

## UDL is...

- ✓ A way to optimize teaching to effectively instruct a diverse group of learners.
- ✓ Based on insights from the science of how people learn.
- ✓ Flexible in how students access material, engage with it and show what they know.

## UDL is *not*...

- ✗ A curriculum or technology platform.
- ✗ One method of teaching all students. A variety of methods are used to give all students an equal opportunity to succeed.
- ✗ An “us” vs. “them” resource. UDL benefits all kids, not just those who struggle.

## UDL’s three core principles help optimize lesson plans for all learners

- 1 **Representation:** Provide information in more than one format—like audio, video and hands-on learning—to help students access material in ways best suited to their learning strengths.
- 2 **Action and expression:** Offer flexibility in how kids interact with the material and show what they’ve learned, such as choosing to take a test, give an oral report or do a group project.
- 3 **Engagement:** Look for different ways to motivate students and sustain their interest, like letting them make choices and giving them assignments that feel relevant to their lives.

## Teacher training in UDL can help schools work on...

Providing **more than one way** to interact with material and express knowledge

Using **technology platforms** and other materials that align with UDL principles

Making assessments accessible to all and providing **timely interventions**

Maintaining **high expectations** for kids with IEPs and English language learners

## Spotlight: Transitioning to UDL

UDL involves educators learning new skills and collaborating. Here are some ways New Hampshire’s [D.J. Bakie Elementary School](#) started transitioning to UDL in 2009:

- Made time for teachers to work together to identify which skills they want to target
- Piloted different presentation formats and different options to demonstrate learning
- Enabled teachers to meet regularly to help evaluate and refine these approaches

# Getting Started With Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Use the three main UDL principles when you're planning a lesson, daily routine, or activity for your students.

## Provide multiple means of engagement

### *How can I engage all students in my class?*

- In what ways do I give students choice and autonomy?
- How do I make learning relevant to students' needs and wants?
- In what ways is my classroom accepting and supportive of all students?

### Examples:

- Survey students about their interests, strengths, and needs. Incorporate the findings into lessons.
- Use choice menus for working toward goals.
- State learning goals clearly and in a way that feels relevant to students.



## Provide multiple means of representation

### *How can I present information in ways that reach all learners?*

- Have I considered options for how printed texts, pictures, and charts are displayed?
- What options do I provide for students who need support engaging with printed texts and/or with auditory learning?

### Examples:

- Make it easy for students to adjust font sizes and background colors through technology.
- Provide options for engaging with printed texts, such as text-to-speech, audiobooks, or partner reading.
- Give options to accompany auditory learning, such as guided notes, pictures, or manipulatives.



## Provide multiple means of action and expression

### *How can I offer purposeful options for students to show what they know?*

- When can I provide flexibility with timing and pacing?
- Have I considered methods aside from paper-and-pencil tasks for students to show what they know?
- Am I providing students access to assistive technology (AT)?

### Examples:

- Provide calendars and checklists to help students track the subtasks for meeting a learning goal.
- Allow students to show what they know through a variety of formats, such as a poster presentation or a graphic organizer.
- Provide students with access to common AT, such as speech-to-text and text-to-speech.

