



# UNIVERSAL DESIGN & UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

By Beth Gordon

# Beth Gordon~

**As both a reading teacher and a teacher of the visually impaired, Beth taught for over 25 years in the Miami-Dade County Public School System and served as the District Chairperson for the Programs for the Visually Impaired for 8 years. Beth worked with VSA Florida (now arts4all Florida), to develop the position of Cultural Access Coordinator. In that capacity she focused on several initiatives; including the use of universal design and assistive technology for inclusive programming, professional development which targeted access strategies for staff and docents in a variety of cultural venues, and the development of audio description and open captioning programs in the state of Florida. Beth has been a presenter on inclusive strategies including universal design for learning, sensory friendly cultural events, assistive technology, and cultural accessibility for teachers, universities, cultural organizations and at numerous state and national conferences. Beth is a founding member of the All Kids Included (AKI) steering committee and now works as an independent Inclusion and Accessibility Consultant.**





# UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Jessica Park: The Mark  
Twain House with  
Diamond Eclipse and  
Venus, 1999 from *Drawing  
Autism* by Jill Mulin



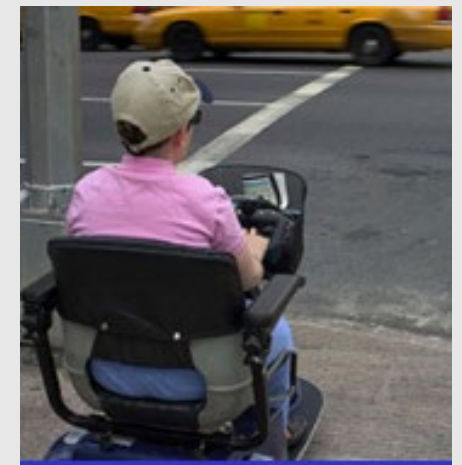


## Universal Design Video

- Michael is a deaf and native American Sign Language speaker working as a creative designer for Amazon. Throughout his career, Michael's visual/conceptual way of thinking and problem solving have served him both as an asset and a challenge. He finds solutions around his disability through Universal Design.
- <https://youtu.be/bVdPNWGMGyZY>


# Examples of Universal Design

- Curb cuts
- Automatic doors
- Ramps
- Captions on video or TV
- Lever or loop handles on doors
- doors
- Scissors designed for right or left-handed users

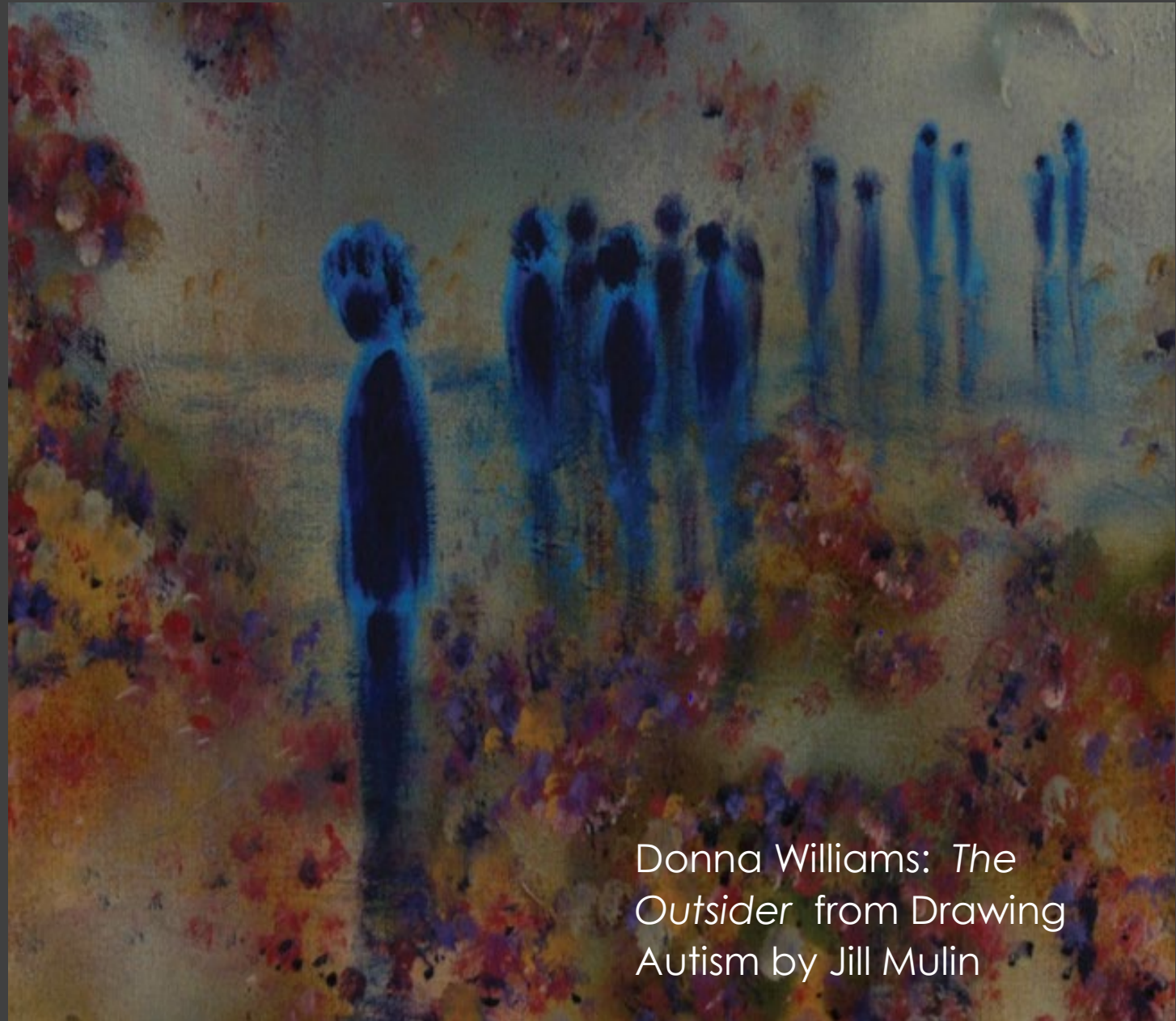




Begin with the end in  
mind – Universal  
Design for Learning



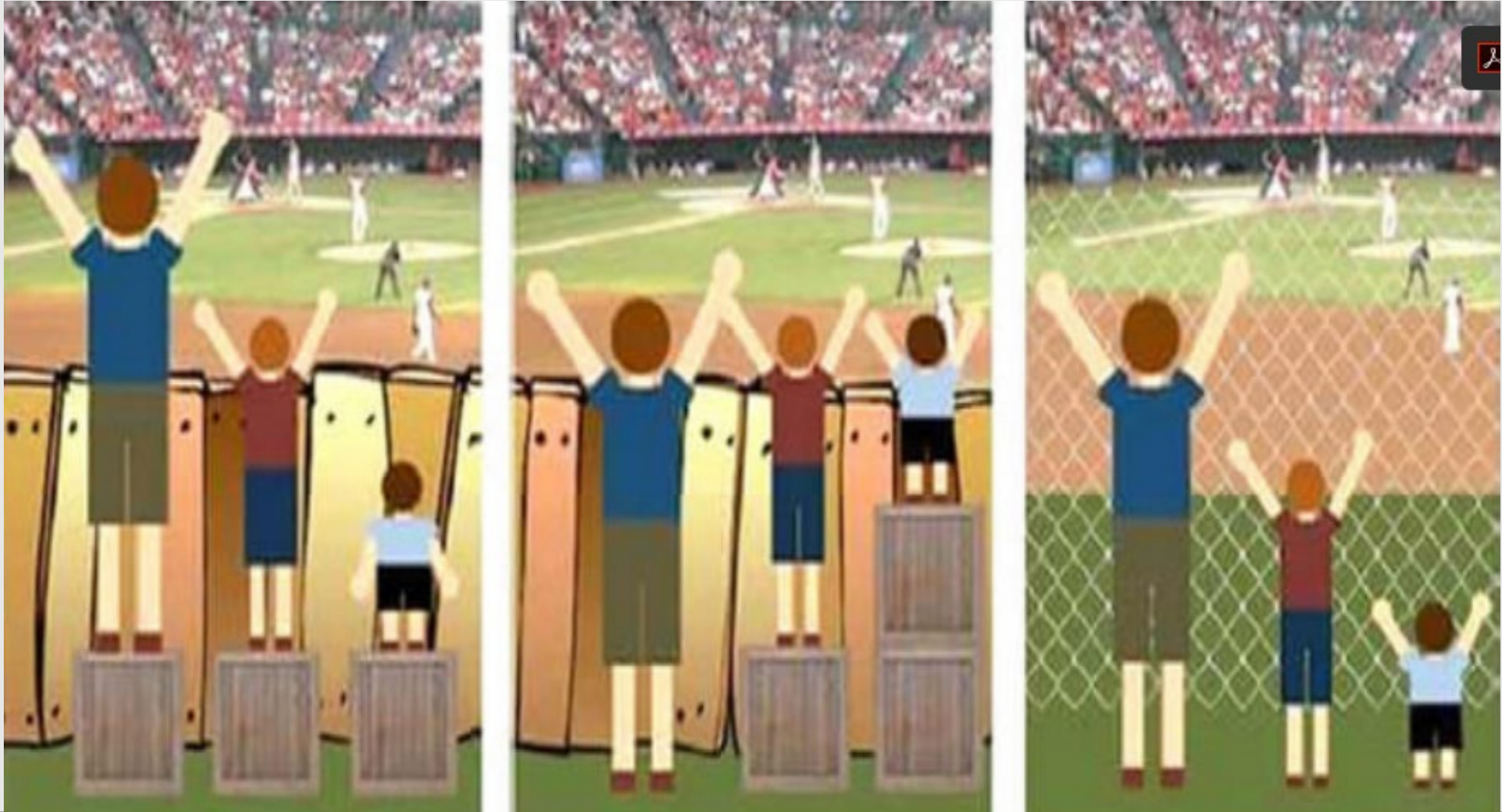
“The Outsider” is about joining in from the periphery. It's about being able to join because one has retained the right to also leave. It's about treading the boundaries between two worlds. I think it's universal. We have all been the outsider.”



Donna Williams: *The Outsider* from Drawing Autism by Jill Mulin



# EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY





## EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



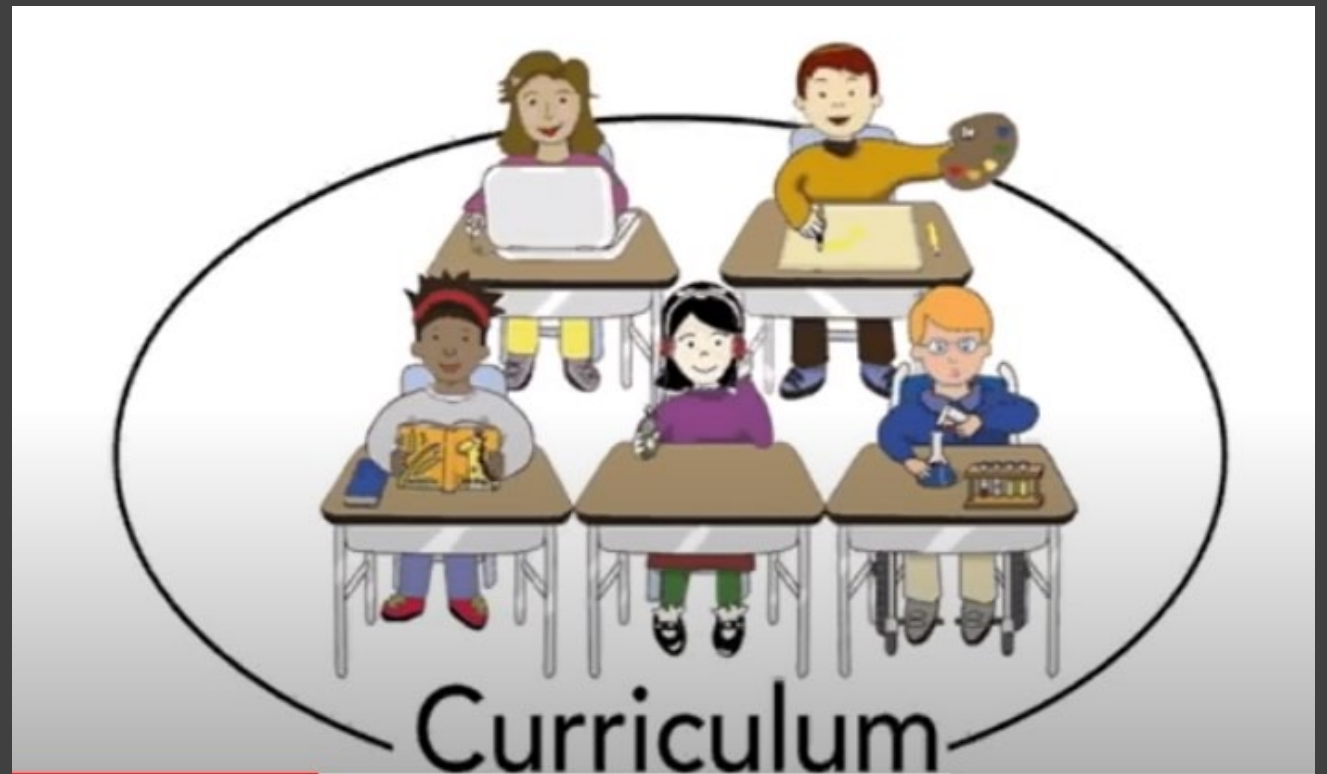
In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.



In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

# UDL AT A GLANCE VIDEO

<https://youtu.be/bDvKnY0g6e4>





No Single  
Pathway  
works for  
every  
student



# Universally Designed Programs

## **Multiple means of engagement**

~ taps into learners' interests, challenges them appropriately and motivates them to learn.

## **Multiple means of representation**

~ Gives learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge

## **Multiple means of action and expression**

~ Provides learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know

# UD and UDL

## UD – Universal Design

- Physical Environment
- Physical barriers may exist in our architectural environment
- Proactive design of physical space
- Physical retrofitting can be costly and is often inelegant

## UDL- Universal Design for Learning

- Instructional Environment
- Learning barriers may exist in our curricular environment
- Proactive design of curriculum and instruction
- Instructional accommodations can be time consuming and difficult to implement

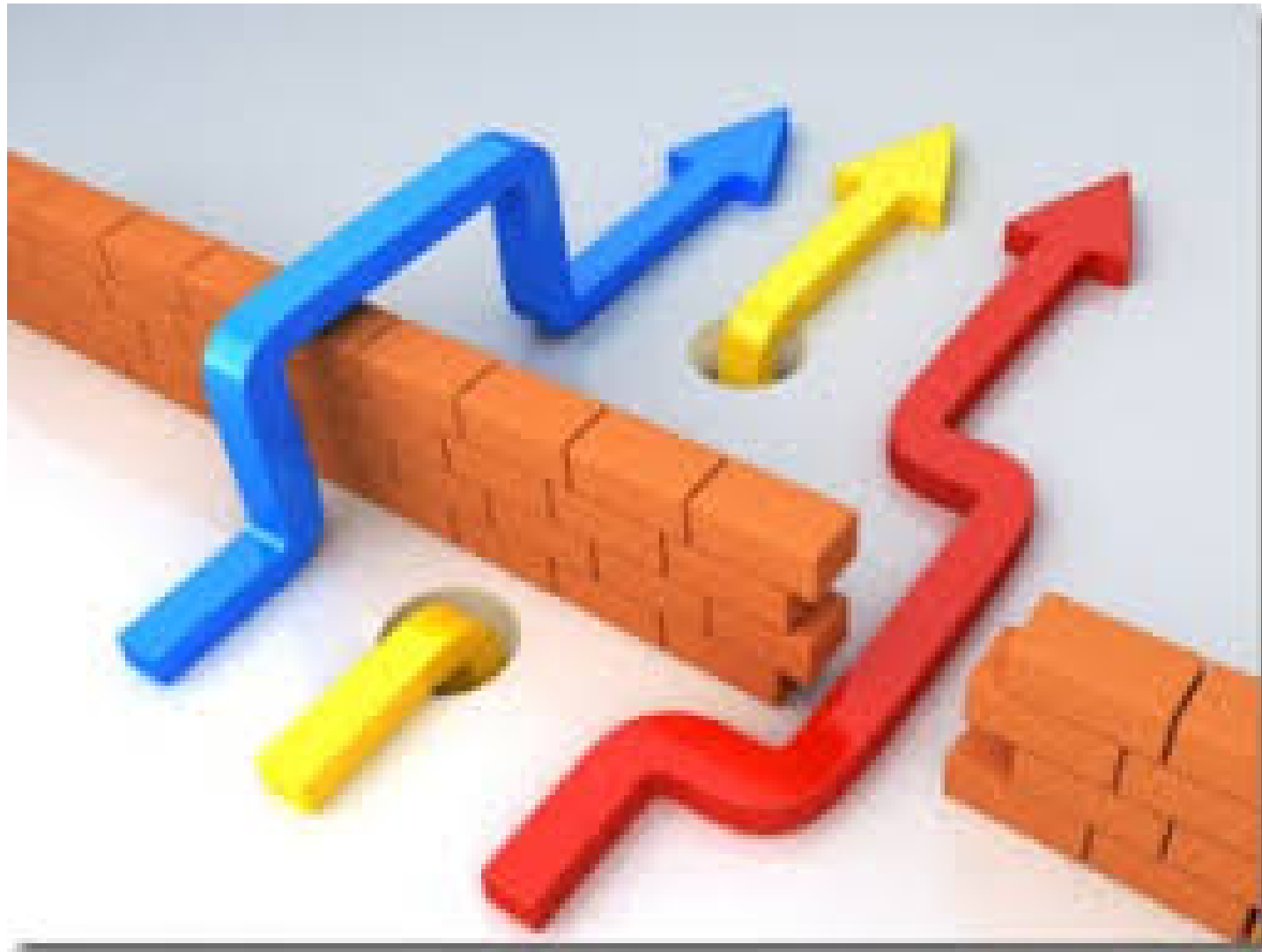
## *Is UDL a Special Education Initiative?*



NO!

UDL recognizes every learner is unique and embraces variability in learning as the norm around which to design future learning environments.





WHAT BARRIERS  
CAN PREVENT  
STUDENTS FROM  
FULLY  
PARTICIPATING  
IN YOUR  
PROGRAMS?



UDL in  
action in  
the  
classroom

Video

<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/for-educators/universal-design-for-learning/video-see-udl-in-action-in-the-classroom>

# UDL Video questions

What did you notice about his classroom design?

What did you notice about his program design?

What could you implement in your program to provide more flexibility for a variety of learning styles?



# BARRIERS

What can we do to address barriers to success in inclusive educational programs?



# **FOUR CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF UDL PROGRAM DESIGN**

From: UDL-IRN

# Goals

Goals and desired outcomes of the lesson/unit/program are aligned to the established standards.

Goals are clearly defined and separate from means. They allow multiple paths/options for achievement.

Teachers have a clear understanding of the goal(s) of the program and specific participant outcomes.

Goals address the needs of every student, are communicated in ways that are understandable to each learner and can be expressed by them.

# SMART Goals

**S – Specific**



**M - Measurable**



**A – Attainable by all students**

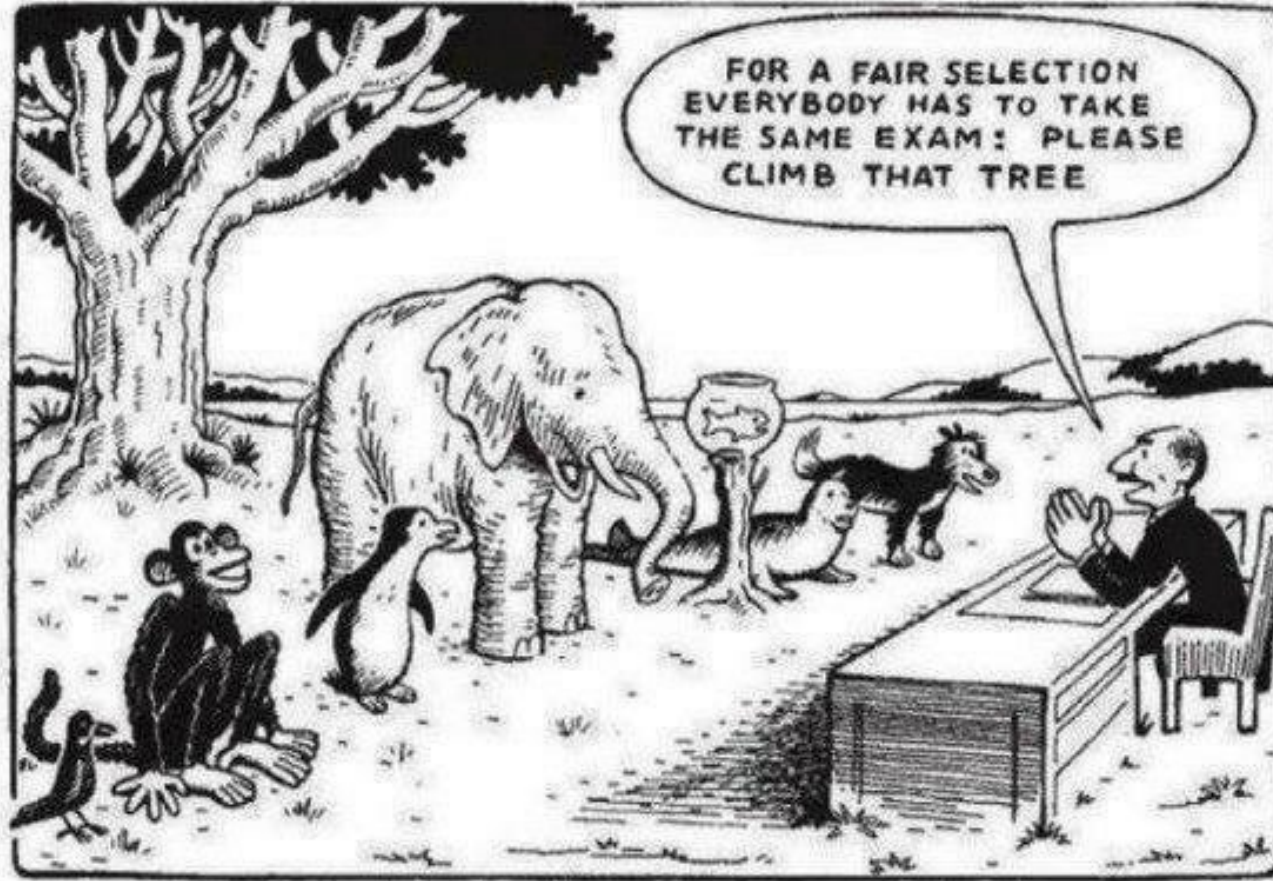


**R – Results oriented, yielding student-based learning**



**T – Time bound and regularly measured**





Our Education System



# Assessment



Assessments should be designed to improve both teaching and learning.

Illustration by Chris Vallo, © 2013 CAST, Inc.

# Timely Progress Monitoring



Formative assessments are frequent and timely enough to plan/redirect instruction and support intended outcomes.



A variety of formative and summative assessments are used to demonstrate knowledge and skill.



Frequent opportunities exist for teacher/student reflection and new understandings

# UDL Assessment

Clarify	Clarify goals
Do not embed	Do not embed the means in the goals
Do not embed	Do not embed the means in assessment
Align	Align assessment with goal
Use	Use UDL guidelines to inform design, selection and evaluation of assessment tasks, methods and materials •Don Glass 2012

# Intentional Planning for Student Variability



Proactive planning that recognizes every participant is unique and that meeting the needs of students in the margins - from challenged to most advanced - will likely benefit everyone.



Addressing student strengths and weaknesses,



Anticipate the need for options, methods, materials and other resources - including personnel



Maintain the rigor of the program - for all learners - by planning efforts (1) that embed necessary supports and (2) reduce unnecessary barriers

# Flexible Methods and Materials



Teachers use a variety of media and methods to present information and content.



A variety of methods are used to engage students (e.g., provide choice, address student interest) and promote their ability to monitor their own learning (e.g. goal setting, self-assessment and reflection).



Students use a variety of media and methods to demonstrate their knowledge.



# Universal Design for Learning

- At the core of UDL is the premise that often the program is disabled (and disabling!). It is not flexible; it often poses barriers, and consequently prevents rather than supports optimal learning experiences
- The essence of UDL is flexibility and the inclusion of alternatives to adapt to the myriad variations in learner needs, styles, and preferences.



# Universal Design for Learning

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The "universal" in UDL implies not one method or medium for all participants but multiple methods and media to achieve one goal - success for all.

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UDL is an educational approach to curriculum/program design and implementation, drawing on new brain research and new media technologies to respond to learner diversity.

# UDL Principles

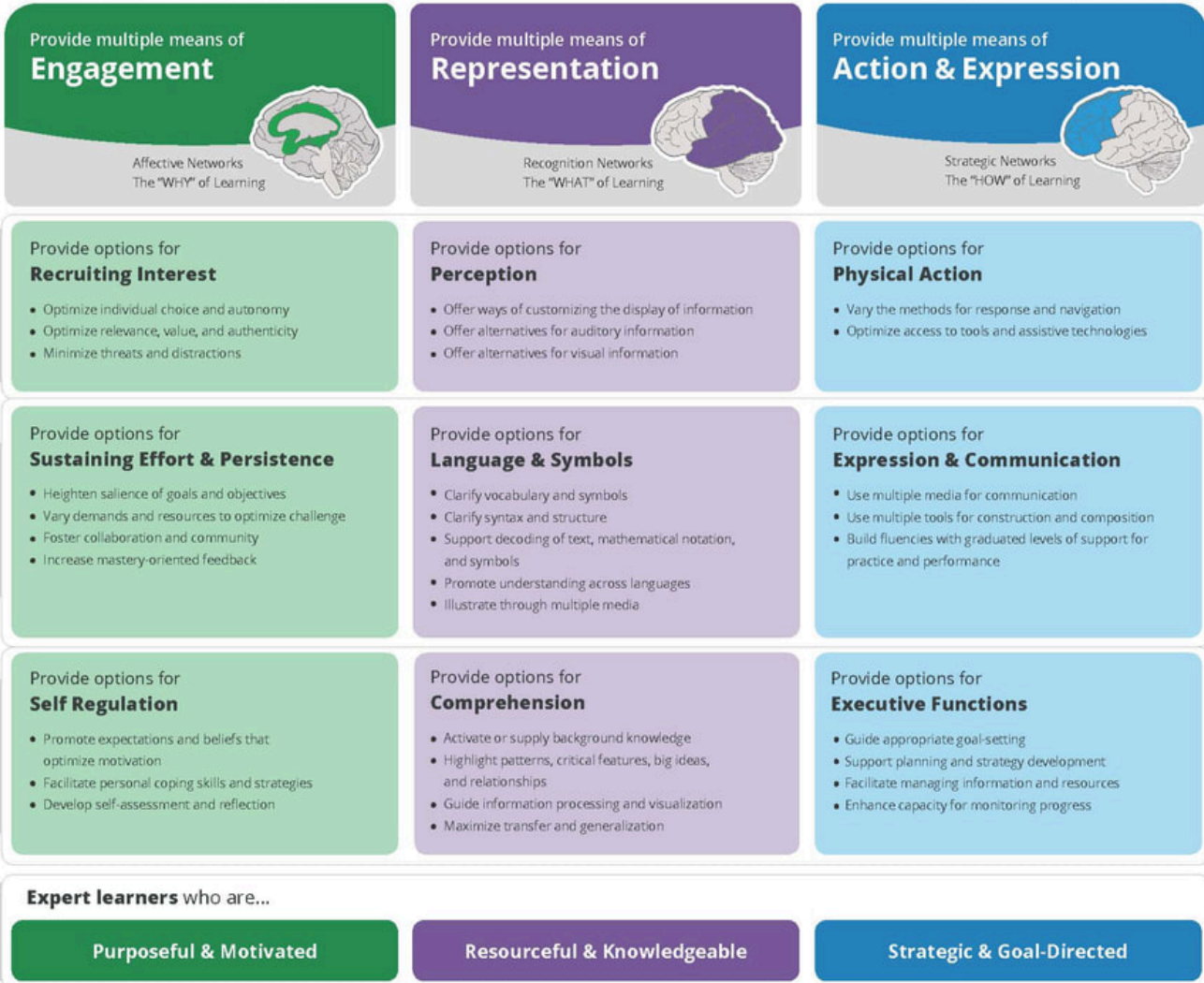
Administrators/teachers can use the UDL principles as a framework for program design.

UDL principles are helpful for evaluating as well as designing programs.

UDL's ultimate goal is teaching all students to be expert learners.

The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

CAST | Until learning has no limits™



# Key Questions

## THINK ABOUT HOW LEARNERS WILL ENGAGE WITH THE LESSON:

- 1 Does the lesson provide options that can help all learners regulate their own learning?
- 2 Does the lesson provide options that help all learners sustain effort and motivation?
- 3 Does the lesson provide options that engage and interest all learners?

## THINK ABOUT HOW INFORMATION IS PRESENTED TO LEARNERS:

- 4 Does the information provide options that help all learners reach higher levels of comprehension and understanding?
- 5 Does the information provide options that help all learners understand the symbols and expressions?
- 6 Does the information provide options that help all learners perceive what needs to be learned?

## THINK ABOUT HOW LEARNERS ARE EXPECTED TO ACT STRATEGICALLY & EXPRESS THEMSELVES:

- 7 Does the activity provide options that help all students act strategically?
- 8 Does the activity provide options that help all learners express themselves fluently?
- 9 Does the activity provide options that help all learners physically respond?

*From: Universal Design for Learning Theory and Practice. By Anne Meyer, David H. Rose, and David Gordon. 2014*  
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The secret to  
education is  
respecting the  
pupil.

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

