

The UDL Gears

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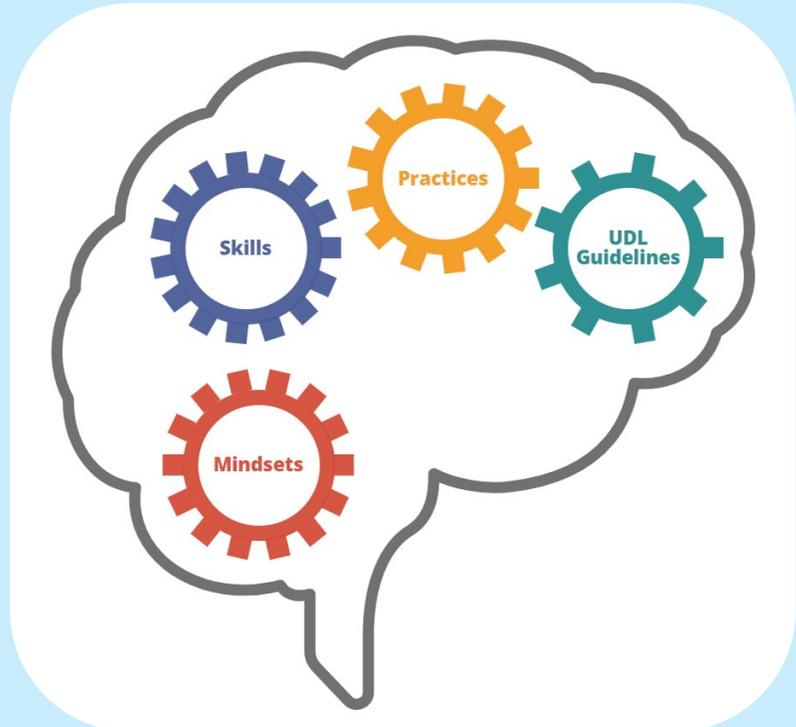


The sunset looks different every day and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) looks different every time you use it, but both have consistencies we can anticipate. To understand the consistencies of UDL, review each item under the mindsets, practices, and skills and investigate the key terms.

Mindset

Instructional leaders with a UDL-aligned mindset:

- *Believe that every learner can learn.*
- *Value every single learner.*
- *Have high expectations for every learner.*
- *Believe that every learner should learn alongside their peers.*
- *View themselves as a learner.*
- *Are empathetic to the needs of all learners.*
- *Know that they need to try new things, make mistakes, reflect, revise, and try again.*
- *Seek mentors.*
- *Consistently seek new ways to advance their own learning.*
- *Consistently seek ways to improve their relationship with their learners.*
- *Seek to build positive relationships with the caretakers of their learners.*
- *Cultivate a sense of belonging for all learners.*
- *Know that barriers to learning are in the lesson and the learning environment.*
- *Know that the barrier to learning is not within the learner.*



Skills

Instructional leaders with UDL-aligned skills:

- *Collaborate with others so they can learn about and apply new skills.*
- *Connect with and instruct diverse learners.*
- *Deliver instruction that is inclusive of all learners.*
- *Proactively identify emotional or academic barriers any learner might face.*
- *Create an instructional goal/objective focused on the desired outcome.*
- *Establish clear goals/objectives that learners can understand and achieve.*
- *Identify a variety of materials and methods in order to support every learner while they achieve the instructional goal/objective.*
- *Lead instructional sessions that include a variety of techniques, strategies, and methods, all of which might occur at the same time.*
- *Lead instruction where students make choices that help them achieve their learning goals/objectives.*
- *Create formative assessments that align with the goal/objective and measure learners' knowledge and skills in a variety of ways.*
- *Apply results from formative assessments when revising the methods and materials in order to make sure all learners' outcomes are moving toward the goal/objective.*
- *Utilize results from formative assessments to spark students' interest, persistence, and motivation.*
- *Revise the selected methods and materials during instruction to lower in-the-moment barriers.*
- *Break down large and challenging concepts, skills, tasks, and content into smaller steps or components. Provide different representations if needed.*
- *Create summative assessments that align with the goal/objective and measure learners' knowledge and skills in a variety of ways.*

Practices

UDL-aligned practices guide instructional leaders to:

- *Apply inclusive practices.*

- *Plan for the needs of all learners and deliver instruction that intends to meet the needs of all learners.*
- *Invite and welcome all learners into general education.*
- *Proactively identify and plan to lower academic barriers.*
- *Apply methods and materials that lower academic barriers.*
- *Consistently provide equitable academic learning in general education.*
- *Identify barriers learners experience outside of academic settings and apply methods and materials to address related barriers within academic settings.*
- *Proactively identify social/emotional barriers and apply methods and materials that lower social/emotional/cultural barriers.*
- *Consistently provide equitable social engagement in general education.*
- *Emphasize the application of formative assessment as a tool to improve instruction.*
- *Emphasize the creation of summative assessments that measure knowledge and skills in a variety of ways.*
- *Emphasize UDL's expert learning terms when defining learner achievement.*
- *Listen to and act on learner input.*

The UDL Guidelines

The information within CAST's [UDL Guidelines](#) drives the instructional leader's decision-making when selecting instructional methods and materials and when creating assessments.

Key Terms:

A learner is anyone who is engaged in the learning process, regardless of age.

A barrier can be any action, physical object, resource, lack of object, lack of resource or imposed belief that prevents someone from learning.

The term "expert learners" is used to describe a set of broad skills and traits learners are born with and build on when experiencing UDL-aligned lessons and environments. Learners become more purposeful, motivated, resourceful, knowledgeable, strategic and goal-directed.

Instructional leaders include teachers, education administrators, facilitators, product designers and developers, professors, instructors within any field, and any person who plans and provides instruction.

Please cite as: Nelson, L. L. (2023, May 24). The UDL Gears.
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