

TATS & FIN Talk

with Instructional Staff

Applying **Universal Design for Learning**
in Pre-K Inclusive Environments



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Universal Design for Learning, or **UDL**,
can *remove barriers to learning* in your Pre-K program.

In addition to eliminating barriers in the physical environment,
UDL *increases access* to the curriculum and assessment,
ensuring that **all** children have a chance to learn.

To eliminate barriers and increase access, it's important to *plan ahead*.

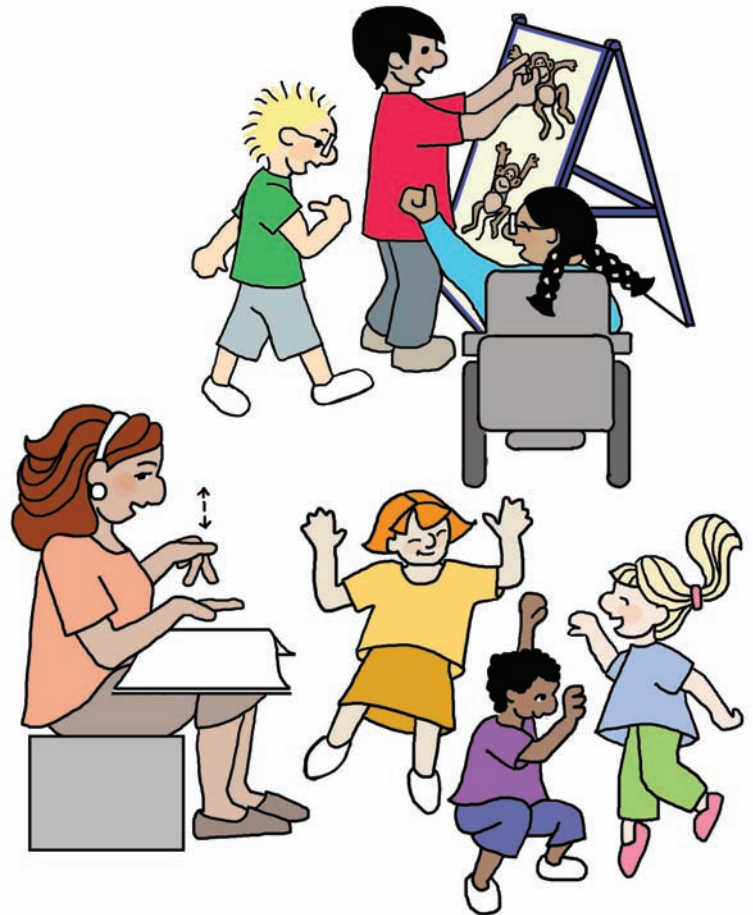
*Let's look at how one teacher put UDL into
action as a result of careful planning:*

Meet “Ms. D”

Julia D'Angelo knows the children in her Pre-K classroom come with widely different abilities and ways of learning. Ms. D—as she is known to the children—has clear learning goals for each child. She consults with her team members to plan barrier-free and developmentally appropriate activities that appeal to differing interests, considering how the children take in information and demonstrate what they have learned. Ms. D also embeds specific accommodations into her lessons, like communication or behavioral supports, for those who need them.



During circle time, Ms. D reads aloud *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. One of the learning goals she has identified for the lesson is for each child to know the name and sound of the letter *m*. She has a felt board ready with the monkey characters and other story items. As Ms. D reads, the children take turns making the felt monkeys “jump” off the board. Those who have difficulty manipulating small items are asked to choose a peer to move a monkey for them. Ms. D teaches the children the sign for “jump” and “monkey,” and uses them while she reads the story. Throughout the story, Ms. D’s assistant encourages the children to jump up and down when they hear or see the words “jump” and “monkey.”



After listening to the story, the children are directed to different centers to interact with others and engage in purposeful, hands-on exploration of materials. In the literacy center, Ms. D’s assistant helps children practice their letter identification skills. While she points to and sounds out the letter *m* some of the children match a magnetic *m* to an alphabet chart on the magnet board. She helps others use an iPad that is secured to a table with Velcro to interact with talking alphabet “flashcards” that they can press to hear the letter *m*. Other children choose to hear *Five Little Monkeys* again, using a computer with interactive story software—when the boys and girls touch the computer screen, they can make the monkeys jump up and down!



In the art and play centers, Ms. D has added many items to engage each child in creative play, such as adapted paintbrushes; battery-operated scissors with switches; crayons and pencils of various sizes, colors, and thicknesses; foam hair curlers for dipping into paint; recordable picture cards; and switch-adapted toys. Each child can choose to use any of the materials as they create their own monkey art and pretend play. Ms. D makes sure all of the materials are placed within easy view and reach of every child.

During all of the center-based learning activities, Ms. D and her assistant observe the children. They look at who gravitates to solo activities and who enjoys playing with other children. They listen, ask questions, and note each child's performance on specific tasks. They use this information as they plan and make adjustments to future instructional activities.



Ms. D'Angelo and her team know that applying UDL involves planning ahead to reach a wide variety of children.

During the planning process, they make sure to answer some important questions:

- Instead of asking:
What learning problems do our children have?
- Ms. D'Angelo and her team ask:
What can we do to remove barriers and make learning accessible for all our children?



Here are other questions your team should consider as you plan for and apply UDL in your Pre-K program:

● Engagement and Motivation:



- How are choices provided for different interests?
- How do a variety of learning activities integrate familiar themes?



● Curriculum and Instruction:

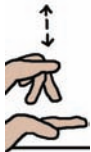


- How is the physical environment accessible to all children?
- How are learning materials placed within easy reach of each child?
- How are visual supports provided for all learning activities?
- How are social supports provided throughout the day?
- How is technology available for all children to use?
- How are learning activities and materials adapted according to ongoing assessment of each child?



● Assessment:

- How are varied learning activities used to regularly observe children?
- How are children provided with different ways of communicating with other children and adults?
- How can children select from a variety of options to show what they have learned? Such as...
 - Auditory:** Talking, listening, and singing
 - Kinesthetic:** Building, painting, and dancing
 - Visual:** Watching, signing, and using pictures



For more information on applying Universal Design for Learning in inclusive Pre-K programs, contact your local TATS or FIN representative:

Technical Assistance and Training System (TATS)—<http://www.tats.ucf.edu>
Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)—<http://www.FloridaInclusionNetwork.com>



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