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What I Learned from Supporting Students with Accessibility Needs in Real Classrooms

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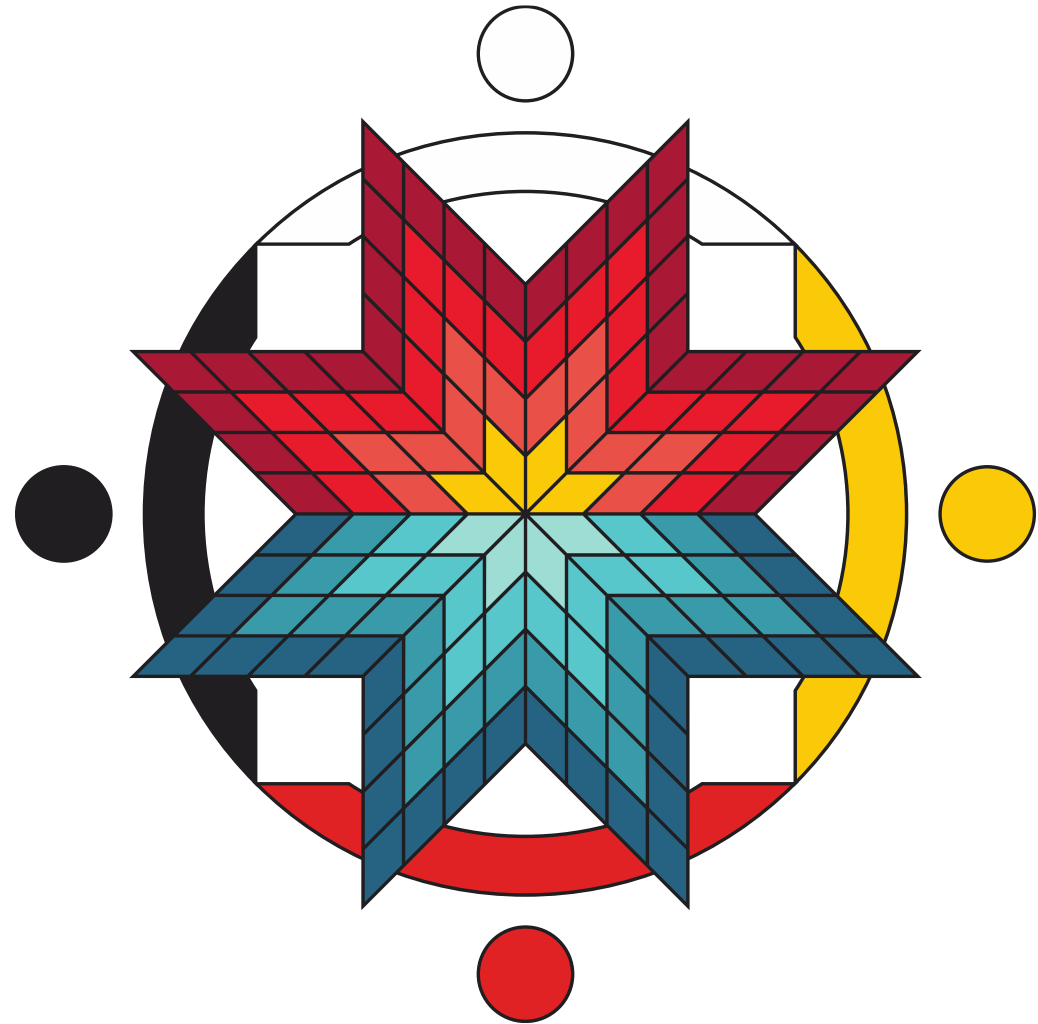
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Land Acknowledgement

George Brown Polytechnic is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time.

We are grateful to share this land as treaty people who learn, work and live in the community with each other.

[Learn more about our land acknowledgement.](#)



Agenda

- Understanding Classroom Complexity
- Different Ways Students Engage with Learning
- Small Strategies That Made a Difference
- Key Takeaways for Inclusive Teaching



Understanding Classroom Complexity


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Students may share the same classroom, but **not** the same **learning experience**.




Different Ways Students Engage with Learning


Same classroom. Same instructions. Different engagement.




Independent Learners




- Prefer working independently
- Need clear notes and occasional reminders
- Stay on track with minimal support




Learners Who Need Structure



- Benefit from step-by-step guidance
- Need help starting tasks and staying focused
- Regular check-ins keep them on track



Quiet or Alternative Communicators



- Minimal verbal participation
- Prefer typing or writing instead of speaking
- Need time to process and respond



Verbal Processors



- Think by talking
- Engage through discussion and sharing ideas
- May talk more but still understand and learn



Different engagement does not mean different ability.

It means different needs, different strengths, and different ways to learn.





Small Strategies That Made a Difference

Connecting Practice to UDL

The strategies I used in class align with the principles of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**.






Multiple Means of Engagement

-  Step-by-step support
-  Calm reminders and check-ins
-  Flexible pacing and opportunities



Multiple Means of Representation

-  Clear, organized instructions
-  Organized notes and visual cues
-  Smaller chunks to support understanding



Multiple Means of Action & Expression

-  Speaking and verbal participation
-  Writing by hand
-  Typing and digital tools
-  Discussion and group contributions



Small instructional flexibility can reduce barriers to learning and create more inclusive classrooms for all students.



Key Takeaways for Inclusive Teaching

Inclusive teaching is not about changing students, but changing how we teach to **reach every learner**.



Participation is not always visible.

Students engage in different ways, and many forms of participation matter.



Small instructional changes matter.

Simple adjustments in communication, structure, and support can reduce barriers to learning.



Flexibility supports engagement.

Providing choices and multiple ways to access and express learning helps more students succeed.



Different engagement does not mean less learning.

Students may learn and demonstrate understanding in different ways and at different times.



When we understand learners, we create classrooms where every student has the opportunity to succeed.



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Inclusive teaching begins with understanding learner differences.”



Thank You!

Thank you for listening to my reflections
on inclusive teaching.



Q & A

I welcome any questions, thoughts,
or discussions.

*Let's continue
learning together*



Anh Le

Inclusive Education & Student Success
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References & Image Credits

References

CAST. (2024). *Universal Design for Learning guidelines version 3.0*. CAST. <https://udlguidelines.cast.org>

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