

# Information Literacy for Special Needs Students

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# First, a story





# A few things about this presentation

- I am not an expert but I did have the opportunity to talk to folks who have a lot of experience in this field.
- I will be focusing on students with learning disabilities and emotional issues but hopefully much of the presentation will be applicable to working with other diverse learners.



# Diverse Learners

- Everyone is a diverse learner!
- Different strengths
- Different weaknesses





# Wide Range of Challenges

- ADHD
- Autism Spectrum
- Dyslexia
- Anxiety
- Depression
- PTSD

“Students were diagnosed or treated for the following:”



Font size is equivalent to percentage of student response from the 2012 ACHA-NCHA II report.

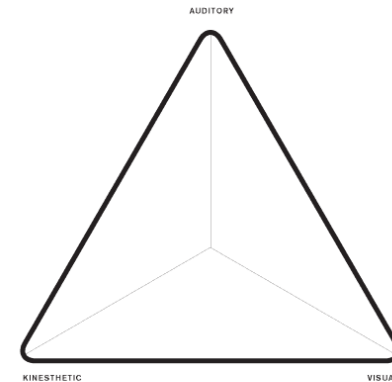


# Learning Styles

- All students have different learning styles
- Visual learners
- Auditory processing
- Listening problems
- Challenges with verbal expression

## Evaluating Learning Styles

Analyze your learning style using the definitions below and plot yourself on the chart.



- **Auditory learning** occurs through hearing the spoken word and represents approximately 23 percent of the population.
- **Kinesthetic learning** occurs through doing, touching and interacting and represents approximately 40 percent of the population.
- **Visual learning** occurs through images, demonstrations and body language and represents approximately 30 percent of the population.

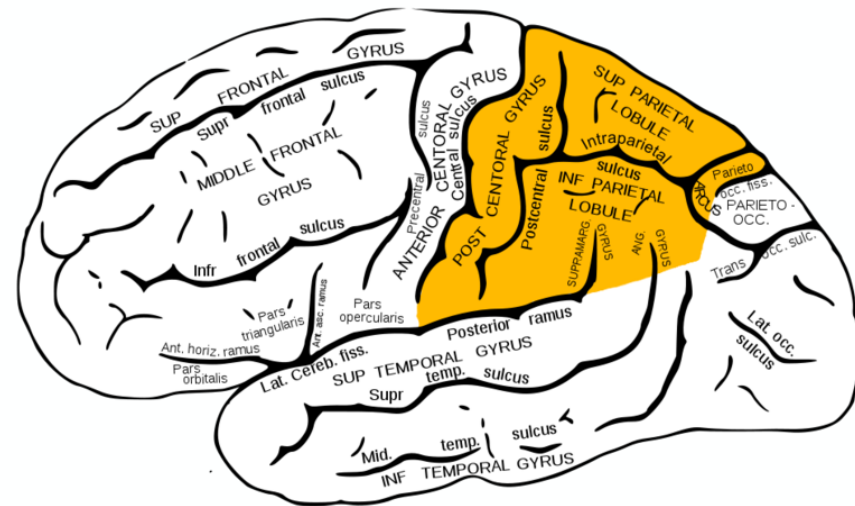
Through the use of varied (or redundant) communication styles, collaborative groups can communicate better both internally and externally.




# Multi-Sensory Teaching

- Use simple, well-labeled handouts.
- Do not use library-ese or other language idioms.
- Always use visual, aural and hands-on experience to explain a lesson.
- Follow a logical, sequential, lesson plan.
- Give as as many opportunities as possible for practice.

(Adapted from Applin, 1999, at 141)





# Universal Design for Different Learners

- Equitable use
  - Spell vocally and write out search words
  - Print words (avoid cursive)
  - Use a sans-serif font
- Flexibility in use
  - Use active learning methods that engage multiple senses
  - Preview and review lesson plans with a vocalized and written agenda
  - Repeat back questions
  - Focus attention internally by asking many questions of the students

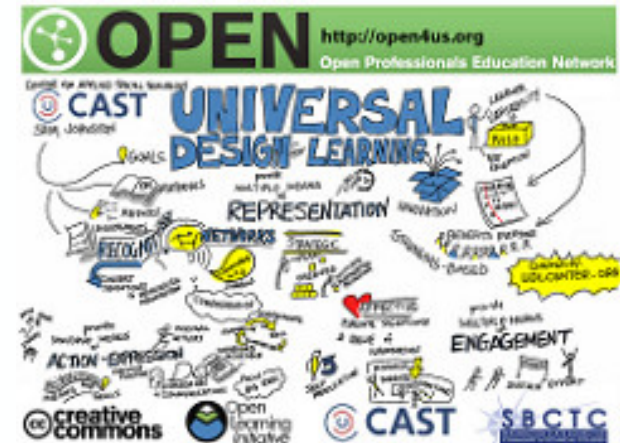




# Universal Design for Different Learners – continued

- Simple and intuitive instruction
  - Teach only skills directly related to completing assignment
  - Use student-chosen topics
- Perceptible information
  - Stress usability features in databases and websites
  - Shorten task instructions by using few words
- Tolerance for error
  - Allocate 1/3 to 1/2 of each class for assisted individual work time

(Adapted from Chodock and Dolinger, 2009, at 27)





# One on One

- The one on one consultation is critical
- In many cases absolutely necessary
- Strongly encourage students to make appointments





# Provide Multiple Options for Accessing Instructional Materials

- Students may have difficulty listening
- Note taking accommodation may not come to the library
- Make slides, notes, and audio available online
- Let students record instructional sessions and consultations





# Executive Functioning

- This can be a problem for many Millennials but particularly those facing challenges
- Students may be used to parents doing the planning
- Brains are wired differently – need to compensate
- Easy for students to be overwhelmed
- Break down assignment into discrete parts
- Think about tasks to complete each step
- Time management
- Problem solving skills





“Anxiety and Depression can close your mind and cloud your ability to plan and function.”

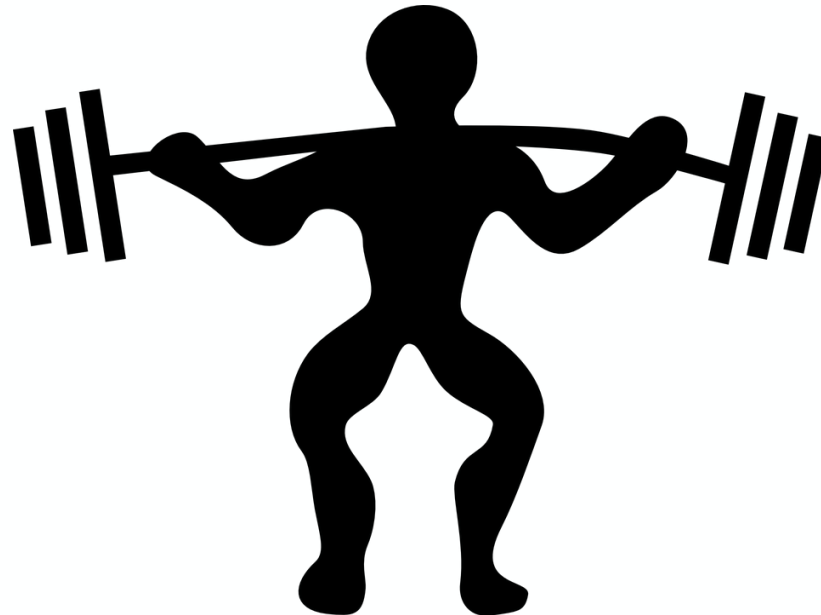
Andrea Todd, 2017.





# What are the student's strengths?

- Never, ever lose sight of this
- Observe closely
- Help the student to use their strengths and minimize their weaknesses





# Stigma

- Stigma may be the biggest obstacle in working with different learners
- You may not know you are working with a special needs student
- If you see a student struggling use any available strategy
- Gain trust





Very Special Thanks to these Two!







# Andrea Todd

Learning Specialist

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# Diana Williams

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# Questions and Discussion

Thanks!

