

Exploring Multiple Means of Action & Expression Video Transcript

Let's Explore one principle of Universal Design for Learning! Universal Design for Learning is an approach that embraces all learners! The goal of Universal Design for Learning, or UDL, is to reduce or remove barriers to learning, and increase access for all learners. UDL provides three principles: Multiple Means of Engagement, Multiple Means of Representation, and Multiple Means of Action and Expression.

This short video will explore the principle of Multiple Means of Action and Expression. Multiple Means of Action and Expression is about the 'how' of learning. It relates to the brain's strategic network. This network helps us plan and then perform tasks. It is associated with assessment and how students can show competency in your course.

Let's explore some strategies for Multiple Means of Action and Expression. Some of the strategies may not be relevant to your particular learning outcomes. That's ok! See if they inspire some alternative assessment ideas authentic to your subject.

Notetaking

Some students are inexperienced with taking notes during lectures or from readings, often considered a critical skill. Alleviate anxiety over notetaking by providing lecture slides or outlines. Intentionally pointing out other course resources can help students see that a bad day of notetaking does not signal the demise of their sought-after grade! What about note-taking from assigned readings, videos or other learning activities? Refer to specific learning outcomes to connect the purpose and focus their notetaking efforts. Indicating which outcomes are being addressed through a reading, an activity or assignment helps students understand what they will be achieving by engaging in the tasks.

Scaffolding

Think of how you can scaffold your assessments and student's eventual achievement of learning outcomes. Taking time each week for some formative assessment allows students to practice skills. It also allows you to evaluate or check comprehension, and provide students with feedback on how they are doing, rather than only finding out on major midterms or finals. Providing opportunities to practice what they will be doing for major assessment tasks can reduce their anxiety. Could students choose how they show their progress on a project? Perhaps some will want to meet virtually while others could submit a template or check list with sample ideas that show progression to the end of a task.

Planning a Task

Remember that Multiple Means of Action and Expression is associated with planning. Checklists or rubrics can offer students criteria to aim for. Templates for projects or case studies can support students as they are getting started. Is staggering due dates a possibility? If so, consider it so that YOU do not get overloaded with students seeking help for assessment tasks, or you, for grading!

Writing

If course outcomes include writing, then, of course, assessment should evaluate that skill. Is assessing writing through handwritten tests critical to evaluating outcomes? When you wrote something recently, what tools did you use? These days we don't know if writing has been produced with ten fingers on a keyboard or through dictation. Editing tools are embedded in most apps.

Module 2: Accessibility, Inclusions and Universal Design for Learning

Must it be written?

Consider the purpose of using a writing task as an evaluation. Could students create an online board display using a tool such as Thinglink or Jamboard that still demonstrates understanding of competencies? Could roleplays, either live or recorded, effectively assess skills? Can the use of case studies assess application of their knowledge? Challenge them to solve real-world issues or problems!

Presentations

If live presentations are not relevant to course outcomes, let students prerecord their presentations. They still may need to answer questions or engage in follow-up conversation, but the stress associated with presenting may be reduced. What about the size of the audience they are presenting to? Consider the number of people in the “audience” when students are presenting.

Let’s Wrap Up!

We have briefly explored the principle of Multiple Means of Action and Expression. Using some of these strategies will help all learners in your classroom whether they are online or face-to-face. Using Multiple Means of Action and Expression is simply great teaching pedagogy! For more information check out the Multiple Means of Action and Expression strategies on the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) website.