EVALUATING A LESSON USING PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)

Last week's Teacher's Corner outlined the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL approaches lessons with learner accessibility in mind and complements other best practices for learning. To summarize, UDL emphasizes presenting information in multiple formats, giving learners a variety of ways to practice the target skills, and developing alternative assessments that fit the diverse learning needs of all learners (CAST 2018). UDL helps all learners by taking into consideration how, why, and what students learn.

This week, Teacher's Corner annotates a lesson plan, offering possible adaptations to make the lesson align more closely with UDL principles. The lesson used comes from *English Teaching Forum* and is called "Go Fish!" (Ryan 2011). The lesson is reprinted here in its entirety and annotated with UDL suggestions in each section.

LEVEL

Beginner

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking

GOALS

To review the vocabulary of numbers

MATERIALS

- Paper (thick stock works best)
- Scissors
- Markers

- Chalk and chalkboard or markers and large paper

Outline of "Go Fish!"

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Each group should work together to make its own deck (set) of 40 cards.
   - Half the deck—20 cards—will be "number" cards. Students should create two sets of
     these cards (20 total) by writing the numbers 1 through 10 in the center of the cards. They should write only one number on each card.
   - The other 20 cards will be "fish" cards.

2. Students should create two sets of these cards (20 cards total) by writing the words for the numbers one through ten (one word on each card) in the top left corner of the cards. In the center of the cards, they should draw the same number of fish to represent the number.
   - For example, for the card showing three fish, students should write the word three in the top left corner and draw three fish in the center of the card.

   - Encourage students to count aloud in English as they draw the fish on the cards.

3. Explain the game rules by using gestures and demonstration to supplement your instruction in English. Tell students their goal is to get pairs of matching cards. Show them a pair (such as a card with two fish on it and a card with the number 2 on it) and explain that they will take turns asking other players in their group for a card that matches one in their hand. Explain that two cards showing the number 2 would not be a match; a match consists of a number card and its corresponding fish card.

Annotations on UDL Adaptations

There are a couple of aspects to consider related to the format of the activity.
- Students could be given the choice to make their own sets of cards or to work in a group to make a set of cards. This allows students to have a choice in how they work given their preferences and styles, i.e., in groups or individually.
- Students that excel at writing or literacy could be tasked with writing the numbers and words for the numbers while other students could be given the task of drawing the fish.
- The activity could also be designed to use manipulatives instead of paper. For those students who need an alternative format for this activity, a teacher could have students make or mold the numbers and fish out of paper or clay. Instead of relying exclusively on print for the activity, invite students to use 3-D figures. For example, instead of 20 cards with a number written on each, have learners make a set of numbers using glue, scissors, and markers.

- Suggest that students count aloud, count silently on their fingers, or count in their heads.

- Explain the game rules with spoken language but also have a written version of the rules as well. If a written version is too advanced for the learners' level, consider a graphic depiction of how the game is played: imagine a comic strip version of the sequence of tasks. Model the activity with a few students in front of the rest of the class. Then ask for students to review the steps of the game. For example, ask, "What is the first step in this

4. Choose one person in each group to be the dealer. This person should shuffle (mix up) the cards and give five cards to each player; the players look at their cards but should not show the cards to one another. The remaining cards should be placed face down in a pile, called the "fish pool," in the middle of the group.

5. Write the following questions and answers on the board or on a large piece of paper:
Do you have ___ fish?   *Yes, I do.*
Do you have the number ___? No, I don't. Go fish!

6. Share the following rules with the class by using explanation, demonstration, and repetition. You might have students play one practice round first.

- Students should locate any pairs they already have. They should take these cards out of their hands and place them where everyone can see them.

- The player on the dealer's left (Player 1) goes first by asking one other player in the group (Player 2) for a card that would form a pair with one of the cards in Player 1's hand. For example, if Player 1 has a card showing the number 4, Player 1 would ask Player 2, "Do you have four fish?" Or, if Player 1 has a card showing four fish, Player 1 would ask Player 2, "Do you have the number 4?" (Note: Player 1

game?" Have one learner share the step. Then follow with another student sharing the next step.

- Allow learners to choose who the dealer should be. Each group could also consider having a dealer who doesn't play the first game but monitors that the rules of the game are being followed.

- If some students are playing with figures or cut-outs, they could pull theirs from a hat or a box rather than having a dealer hand them items that are easy to see. Each student could then "hide" their figures behind a book or folder.

- Have these questions written on small pieces of paper and give each group a set. This allows some students to read and point to the question or answer they want rather than saying the questions or answers.

- Have the rules written on the board, printed on paper (whether written or graphically depicted), or given in a short presentation that models each step. Then have students model the steps or restate the order of steps. An additional way to introduce the rules might be to go over all of them as suggested here but then have students work in pairs to discuss what they should do in order to play the game.

- For students that might struggle to find matches, have students play the game in pairs. Two students share a hand of cards and work together to play the game with their group. In this situation, each group would be about 8-10 students.

- Instead of speaking out loud, some students could choose the written version of the question from the set of questions given to each group. Then, the student could show the other players the question. Other players could answer the question by choosing the appropriate answer listed on the paper. Some students could speak their questions and others could ask using the written versions. Also, some groups might choose

can only ask for a card that forms a pair with a card that he or she already has.)

- If Player 2 has the requested card, he or she must give it to Player 1. Player 1 then puts the pair face up on the table where everyone can see it. Then, Player 1 gets to take another turn, asking any other player for a card to try to make another match.
- If Player 2 does not have the requested card, he or she says, "Go fish!" and Player 1 must take a card from the fish pool. Then the person to the left of Player 1 takes a turn. (If the card Player 1 takes from the fish pool matches a card in his or her hand, Player 1 places the pair face up so everyone can see it).
- The game continues this way until a player runs out of cards or until the fish pool is empty. The player with the most pairs of cards at the end of the game wins.

7. You may wish to give the winning student from each group a small prize. Or you could find the student in the class who accumulated the most pairs and award just that student a prize.

to alternate speaking and finding the correct written question.

- Student groups using figures or other forms of manipulatives instead of cards could display their set for the other players to see.

- Again, if a group are using figures, their fish pool might be a bag or hat from which they draw a new figure. Also, encourage students to come up with gestures that might indicate to another player they should "go fish!"

- Consider prizes for different achievements as well as a way to recognize different approaches to the game. For example, a student who had the most creative card design could be acknowledged in some way.

Note that the annotations throughout the lesson are not an exhaustive list. Instead, the suggested adaptations are just the beginning of possible changes and revisions that any educator could make to this lesson.

After reading through the lesson and the suggestions, it should be clear that incorporating Universal Design for Learning principles into a lesson does not take away from the spirit or intended goals of a language lesson. Instead, the UDL adaptations and considerations enhance a lesson and make it more accessible for all types of language learners.

References

CAST. *The UDL Guidelines.* Accessed August 31, 2018, http://udlguidelines.cast.org/ .

Ryan, K. "Classroom activities," *English Teaching Forum*, 49, no. 2 (2011), 44-52.
https://americanenglish.state.gov/forum