

# Diverse Learners with Diverse Needs



ACTIVE LEARNING  
FOCUS

**SINGLE SESSION** - Facilitation Guide

## RESOURCES

- [Diverse Learners with Diverse Needs](#) (Google Slides)
- [Diverse Learners with Diverse Needs Thought Catcher](#) (Google Doc)

## SESSION PREP

### SESSION GOALS

After you lead this session, participants will be able to:

- understand foundational concepts and terminology related to diverse learners and
- implement plans, feedback processes, and active learning strategies to engage diverse learners.

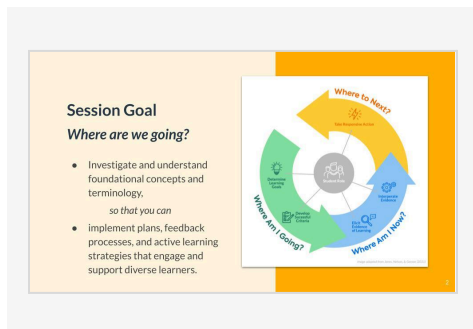
### HOW TO PREPARE

Facilitator preparation:

1. Preview the session activities that follow. Preview the resources listed above. Take note of any additions or changes you would like to make.
2. Make a copy of the [Diverse Learners with Diverse Needs](#) Google Slides. Edit for your needs.
3. Make a copy of the [Diverse Learners with Diverse Needs Thought Catcher](#) Google document. Edit for your needs.
4. Ask participants to bring their devices with them for individual and cooperative work during the session.
5. Invite your school staffing specialist, varying exceptionalities teacher, MTSS lead, ESOL compliance lead or other pertinent staff to attend the session and be available to answer participant questions.

## SESSION FRAMEWORK

### Slide 2



**Session Goal**  
*Where are we going?*

- Investigate and understand foundational concepts and terminology, so that you can
- implement plans, feedback processes, and active learning strategies that engage and support diverse learners.

The diagram is a circular flow with four quadrants: 'Where to Next?' (top, orange), 'Where Am I Now?' (right, blue), 'Where Am I Going?' (bottom, green), and 'Where Am I Learning?' (left, light blue). The center contains icons for 'Diverse Learners', 'Feedback', and 'Active Learning'.



### FEEDBACK FOCUS

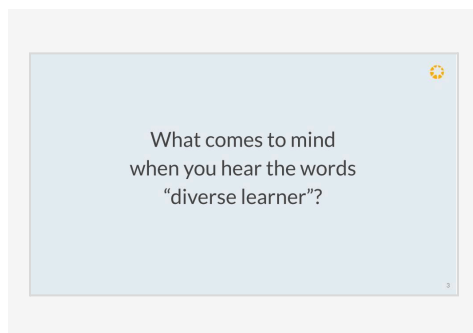
*Where are we going?*

Share session goal.

Ask participants to form small working groups for the beginning of the session. Ideally, you might group participants in one of the following ways:

- Course they are teaching
- Department
- Humanities, STEM, Electives, etc.

### Slide 3

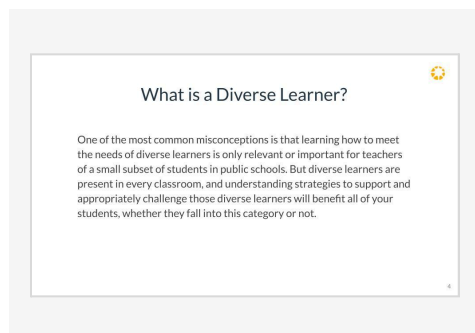


What comes to mind when you hear the words "diverse learner"?

Lead a group discussion after posing the question *What comes to mind when you hear "diverse learners"?*

Allow time for small groups to confer with one another first, then open the discussion to the whole group to share their ideas.

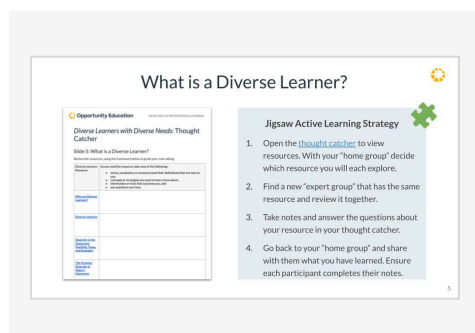
## Slide 4



This portion of the session is designed to help participants understand that the term diverse learners includes more students than those they may initially think of.

**SAY:** *One of the most common misconceptions is that learning how to meet the needs of diverse learners is only relevant or important for teachers of a small subset of students in public schools. But diverse learners are present in every classroom, and understanding strategies to support and appropriately challenge those diverse learners will benefit all of your students, whether they fall into this category or not.*

## Slide 5



### ACTIVE LEARNING

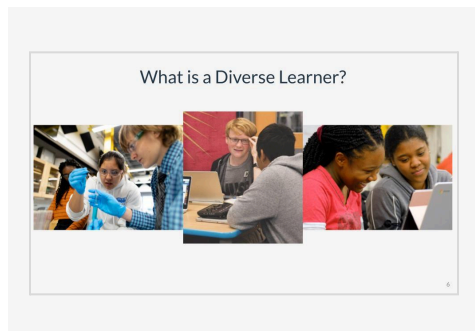
Explain to participants that their current small group will become their "home group" for the [jigsaw activity](#). Participants will break up into different "expert groups" to complete their investigation of an article, before returning to share their findings with their "home group."

Ensure each participant has a copy of the thought catcher. Thought catchers should be completed once the jigsaw activity is completed, before moving on from this slide to the next activity.

**SAY:** *You will explore 4 resources about diverse learners using the jigsaw active learning strategy. Take notes and answer the questions on your thought catcher.*

1. *With your "home group" decide which resource you will each explore.*
2. *Find a new "expert group" that has the same resource and review it together.*
3. *Take notes and answer the questions about your resource in your thought catcher.*
4. *Go back to your "home group" and share with them what you have learned.*

## Slide 6



Ask participants to return to their seats if they have moved around the room.

Revisit the question "What is a diverse learner?" Allow time for participants to share how their definitions may have changed or expanded after their investigation. Find trends or common themes in their work to develop a common definition. You can visually show this work via Google doc and projector or chart paper and markers.

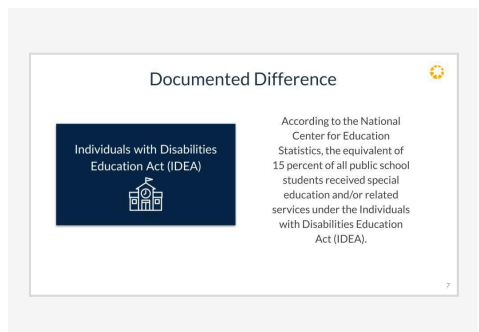
**SAY:** *Now that you have had time to research, what is a diverse learner? How has your definition changed or expanded?*



### TIME CRUNCH

If time for this session is limited, you may choose to allow participants to share their definitions in small groups without creating a common definition.

## Slide 7



Share the information on Slide 7 and, if you have time, allow for discussion. (Is this number higher or lower than you expected? etc.)

**SAY:** *According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the equivalent of 15 percent of all public school students received special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).*

## Slide 8

Documented Difference

Opportunity Education

Slide 8: Documented Difference

Explore the resources below to answer the following questions with the information you collect:

|                   |              |                        |             |                |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Special Education | What is IEP? | The Best Practices for | The Special | How to Find an |
| Autism            | IEP          | IEP Process            | Education   | IEP Specialist |
| Public Schools    |              |                        |             | Teacher        |


On your own, explore the resources on your thought catcher to better understand some of the acronyms and terms you might encounter when working with students with disabilities.

After reading the directions, invite your staffing specialist, varying exceptionalities teacher, MTSS lead or other pertinent staff to circulate the room and answer participant questions as they are working.

**SAY:** *On your own, explore the resources on your thought catcher to better understand some of the acronyms and terms you might encounter when working with students with disabilities. We will come back as a group if you have any questions.*

## Slides 9-10

Documented Difference



What questions do you have?

Allow time for participants to ask any questions about their work or share anything they learned. When there are no more questions or you are ready to move on, introduce the video on the next slide.

**SAY:** *Now that you have had time to research, what questions do you have?*

*Now we are going to watch a short excerpt from an interview of Sean Pang, a Washington Post Teacher of the Year. Just watch and listen to his perspective.*

## Slide 11

Language Learners

As of 2020, roughly 10% of all students in the United States were English language learners, or ELL students. Across the country, states vary in the ways that they structure their educational programs for English learners.

Take a moment to reflect on the video you just watched. Consider Sean Pang's perspective as a student, and what helped him feel comfortable at school.

Read the text on the slide and then ask participants to reflect on their experiences (using the reflection prompt that follows). Invite participants to share with a partner or with a whole group, as they are comfortable.

**SAY:** *As of 2020, roughly 10% of all students in the United States were English language learners, or ELL students. Across the country, states vary in the ways that they structure their educational programs for English learners.*



## REFLECTION

**SAY:** Take a moment to reflect on the video you just watched. Consider Sean Pang's perspective as a student, and what helped him feel comfortable at school.

*Has anyone else had a similar experience they would like to share?*

## Slides 12-13

After reading the directions invite your ESOL lead or other pertinent staff to circulate the room and answer participant questions as participants are working independently in their thought catchers.

**SAY:** On your own, explore the resources on your thought catcher to better understand how to support ELL students. Keep Sean Pang's experience in mind as you work. We will come back as a group if you have any questions.

Bring the whole group back together and answer any outstanding questions for the group.

**SAY:** Now that you have had time to research, what questions do you have?

## Slide 14



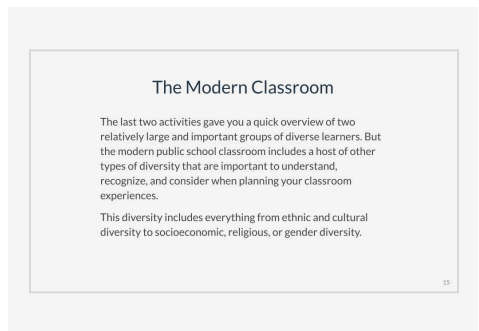
## FEEDBACK FOCUS

Lead participants through a discussion of their progress toward the session goals, using the guiding questions below. Allow time for participants to ask questions and share their own ideas.

*Where am I now?*

- Do you have a basic understanding of the foundational concepts we've discussed? Do you understand the terminology you need to know to support students with disabilities and ESOL students in your classroom?
- Who can you reach out to for help?

## Slide 15

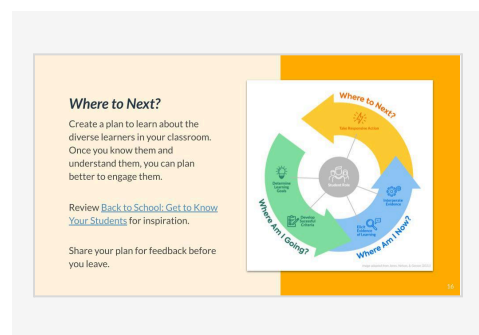


This portion of the session is designed to help participants understand that the term diverse learners includes more varied groups of students than those already discussed.

**SAY:** *The last two activities gave you a quick overview of two relatively large and important groups of diverse learners. But the modern public school classroom includes a host of other types of diversity that are important to understand, recognize, and consider when planning your classroom experiences.*

*This diversity includes everything from ethnic and cultural diversity to socioeconomic, religious, or gender diversity.*

## Slide 16



### TANGIBLE TAKEAWAY

Explain next steps to participants, including requirements for completion and how they should share their work for feedback.



### FEEDBACK FOCUS

*Where to next?*

**SAY:** *Create a plan to learn about the diverse learners in your classroom. Review [Back to School: Get to Know Your Students](#) for inspiration. You have a lot of options with this takeaway, so choose the plan that works best for you and your classroom.*

*Share your plan with \_\_\_\_\_ (another teacher, department lead, facilitator, etc.) for feedback before you leave.*

Get more resources like this at [www.opportunityeducation.org/resources](http://www.opportunityeducation.org/resources)