

Breaking the Code– Using the (In)CLUDE Framework to Support the Implementation of Universal Design for Learning 3.0 in the Classroom through the Use of Drama in Education

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ABSTRACT

Major global developments have contributed to increasing diversity in our classrooms. Education systems are being challenged to respond to diverse student populations. With teachers at the front line of enacting inclusive education, many education systems have begun to explore ways in which innovative pedagogies can promote more inclusive educational practice. Research highlights increasing evidence about the effectiveness of UDL in creating more inclusive classrooms across education sectors. However, UDL's implementation has been challenging as educators struggle to translate UDL theory into classroom practice. This paper presents Drama in Education (DiE), a student-centred teaching methodology, as a medium which can be used to support the implementation of UDL 3.0 in the classroom. The paper maps the UDL 3.0 guidelines and its associated thirty-six considerations on to key DiE principles and specific DiE strategies in order to support the practical implementation of UDL in the classroom. The paper introduces the (In)CLUDE framework to support the implementation of UDL in any classroom through the use of DiE. As a non-subject, non-sector specific pedagogy, DiE is a teaching methodology available to all educators. As such, this paper has implications for teachers working at all levels of the education system, teacher educators and policy makers.

Keywords

Universal Design for Learning, Drama in Education, inclusion, inclusive pedagogies

Introduction

Major global developments such as demographic shifts, migration and refugee crises, rising inequalities, and climate change have contributed to increasing diversity in our countries, communities and classrooms (OECD, 2023). Consequently, international education policy increasingly emphasises the need for national education systems to provide inclusive and equitable education for every student (Heinz et al., 2025). Education systems the world over are being challenged to respond to diverse student populations, with governments and education policy makers increasingly focusing on the impact that diversity has on education systems and the potential role education systems can play in building more sustainable, cohesive and inclusive societies (OECD, 2023). Responding to student diversity therefore, has become a key policy priority in education systems around the world (Flood & Banks, 2021).

With teachers at the front line of enacting inclusive education, many education systems have begun to explore ways in which innovative pedagogies can promote more inclusive educational practice (Takacs & Zhang, 2020). A growing interest in UDL across education systems worldwide highlights increasing evidence about its effectiveness in creating more inclusive classrooms across education sectors (Capp, 2020). However, research on UDL also reveals challenges in terms of its implementation, with literature highlighting that educators struggle to translate UDL theory into practice; with educators feeling that once they understand what the principles look like, they are left to figure out how to apply UDL for themselves (Edyburn, 2020).

This paper places UDL 3.0 (CAST, 2024) in conversation with Drama in Education (DiE), an asset-based pedagogy which centres, values, and sustains students' cultural practices. Synergies between UDL 3.0 and DiE have been established in the literature (Heeran Flynn, 2026). This paper advances on the synergies between UDL and DiE by mapping the UDL 3.0 guidelines and its associated thirty-six considerations on to key DiE principles and specific DiE strategies in order to support the practical implementation of UDL in the classroom. The paper also introduces the (In)CLUDE framework for using DiE to support the implementation of UDL in any classroom. As a non-subject, non-sector specific pedagogy, DiE is a teaching methodology available to all educators. As such, this paper has implications for teachers working at all levels of the education system, teacher educators and policy makers.

Drama in Education (DiE)

If we think of any material stored in books as an unpalatable beef bouillon cube, to use Heathcote's metaphor, then some means must be found for releasing this dense mass into a savoury broth of human experience.

In educational circles this process has been called code cracking – breaking the code so the message can be read (Wagner, 1976, p.187).

According to Dorothy Heathcote, one of the pioneers of DiE, DiE is the means which facilitates this process, positioning DiE as a learning medium which helps students to access the curriculum and “crack the code to curriculum areas” (Wagner, 1976, p. 222).

Positioned in this manner, DiE is considered a teaching and learning methodology that uses performative elements in a classroom setting, where the focus is not on the final product but rather on the learning process (Göksel, 2021). In DiE, the aim is not to prepare students to perform a play (product); instead, it takes students through a series of dramatic episodes, linked together by a narrative thread (process), to afford learning opportunities (Piazzoli, 2018). The emphasis is on drama as an intentional teaching strategy to enhance learning in a particular curricular area (Wagner, 1976). Therefore, as opposed to learning about drama, in DiE, students learn through drama. As a student-centred pedagogy, teachers and students work collaboratively to create a fictional world in which they assume roles to explore issues that are of concern to them. Working through drama, students get to know themselves and others, with DiE affording students the unique opportunity to walk in other people’s shoes (Aitken, 2021). DiE is not taught by drama experts, rather, drama is used as a teaching and learning medium to learn about any subject. DiE therefore, is a non-subject, non-sector specific teaching methodology which is available to every teacher within their classroom.

DiE is considered a highly effective and well-recognised pedagogy in many educational systems (Göksel, 2021), with a vast body of literature attesting to both its versatility for teaching across the curriculum (see Edmiston & Towler-Evans, 2022) and highlighting how DiE significantly enhances students’ skills and abilities (see Göksel, 2021) across a variety of domains including critical thinking, communication, collaboration, cultural competence and creativity (see Neelands, 2009).

DiE is also considered a powerful tool for furthering inclusive practices (Karaolis, 2023). With learner variability as its premise (Kilinc et al., 2025), DiE’s inherent multimodality increases access to the curriculum for diverse learners (Beaumont, 2020). Considered as an embodied practice which uses the physical body, its movements, and expressions (Piazzoli, 2018), in DiE students can access learning through kinaesthetic (body), cognitive (mind), and affective (heart) channels (Göksel, 2021). Drama thus functions as a multimodal pedagogy, allowing students to demonstrate their learning in ways that integrate multiple semiotic modes, broadening the ways curriculum can be both represented and assessed and providing students who do not always succeed in traditional measures of competence with alternative means to participate (Bernstein et al., 2024).

As a language-rich pedagogy therefore, drama is well-established as an effective tool in supporting communication (see Bryer, 2024) and language and literacy development (Cleeve Gerken, 2024), with drama considered a space where language is applied and practised (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003) in multi-modal forms (Wells & Sandretto, 2017).

Language is, however, profoundly more than a medium of expression. It is a tool for thinking, playing a central role in cognitive development and learning (see Vygotsky, 1962), shaping how we understand reality (see Wittgenstein, 1921) and helping to define our identity (see Gee, 2015; Tannen, 1994; Anderson, 2006). As humans, we vary in almost every dimension imaginable, and language is no exception (Kidd & Donnelly, 2020). Not all students come to school with the same experiences of using language. For some, the socialisation contexts in which they have participated have prepared them well for the use of language they encounter in school.

For many others, this is not necessarily the case. Research is unequivocal that the language of schooling (see Schleppegrell, 2004) and academic language (see Cummins, 2000) differs significantly from the interactional language that students use for social purposes outside of school and provides specific linguistic challenges.

This has considerable implications for students where language growth is closely connected to literacy and academic success in school (Nippold, 1998) and a student's level of success or otherwise in the education system is largely dependent upon their ability to tap into the formal linguistic mode of instruction in operation in schools (Heeran Flynn, 2013).

Language, therefore, emerges as an individual developmental variable (Kidd & Donnelly, 2020) which can present as a barrier hidden in plain sight (CAST, 2024). While on the surface, it may be considered that students speak the language of schooling, they may have different language experiences, which can affect how they interact with the curriculum. Rooted in children's play with its cognitive, social and emotional development benefits, DiE facilitates knowledge construction and reorganises cognitive patterns, enhancing students' skills and abilities across a range of developmental domains (Arda Tuncdemir, 2025).

Language growth is prolonged, continuing to develop long after childhood, through the school-age years, adolescence and well into adulthood (Nippold, 1998). Placed within this context, DiE provides a pedagogy for use across education sectors, where language and learning are co-constructed through social interaction in dramatic experiences expanding students' repertoire of language experiences, thereby helping to level the linguistic playing pitch and providing access to its concomitant affordances (Heeran Flynn, 2013).

The benefits of DiE as a teaching method can therefore, be seen as multiple. DiE can reach students who are not reached through traditional methods, it engages students who are not engaged through traditional methods, it connects students to themselves and others, it transforms the traditional learning environment, and challenges students who are already considered successful under traditional paradigms (de Water, 2021). Drama develops unique, powerful, and multiple ways of perceiving, interpreting, knowing, representing, and communicating understandings about self and the world. It

is for these reasons that DiE has become increasingly valued in the context of inclusion (Beaumont, 2020) and it is in this respect that synergies between DiE and UDL become apparent (see Heeran Flynn, 2026).

UDL 3.0 and DiE - Synergies & Strategies

To support the practical implementation of UDL 3.0 in the classroom, Table 1 maps UDL 3.0's principles and considerations onto key DiE principles and specific strategies. The strategies are not prescriptive and can be used interchangeably across UDL considerations. As a non-subject, non-sector specific pedagogy, DiE strategies mentioned below can be modified accordingly based on requirements at local and sectoral level.

Teachers are advised to use a variety of DiE strategies to ensure that students attain comparable development and are assessed across a range of required domains. As with planning for any teaching and learning experience, considered choice and combination of DiE strategies will provide teachers with real-time feedback on students' learning across a range of domains, help teachers to identify any discrepancies which may occur across domains and ensure that strengths in any one domain do not potentially mask difficulties in another. (For example, incorporating 'why' and other 'wh-questions' into DiE strategies challenges students to justify their responses and provides the teacher with feedback on the development of students' conceptual understanding as well as their linguistic comprehension).

Table 1

UDL 3.0 and DiE - Synergies & Strategies for Implementation

Multiple Means of Engagement		
Welcoming Interests & Identities (Guideline 7)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Optimise choice and autonomy (7.1)	Drama creates learning experiences where agency is a designed outcome. Drama's choice-rich structures positions students as co-creators, affording students meaningful choice and autonomy in the learning process, supporting the expansion of students' active agency (see Lehtonen, 2015).	Mantle of the Expert (MoE) - students are repositioned as <i>experts</i> in an imaginary <i>enterprise</i> (a company or a team). Within this fictional context, the students work together to carry out an important job, a <i>commission</i> , for a high-status fictional <i>client</i> . Along the way, they encounter problems or <i>tensions</i> , (either naturally occurring or planned and introduced by the teacher) and explore other perspectives (see Farmer, 2012).
Optimise relevance, value and authenticity (7.2)	In drama, students work on problems and roles that matter to them and their communities. Drama embeds curricular tasks in realistic, co-constructed scenarios, providing authentic, interest-driven	Forum Theatre - students are given the opportunity to step into a scene, intervene and change the action/outcome. A scenario is presented by several students to the class at least twice. During the second run-through, any member of

	learning opportunities in which students act in roles that connect to their personal interests, goals and community concerns (see Neelands, 2009).	the class is allowed to shout 'Stop!' when they think a different course of action would produce a more successful outcome (see Neelands & Goode, 2015).
Nurture and Play (7.3)	Drama nurtures play for students. Routed in children's play, drama contributes to a general pedagogy of play in the classroom where the form of drama used to teach in the classroom is considered as dramatic playing. Drama approaches can be designed to nurture and extend play for learning across education settings from early childhood up to and including third level and workplace settings (see Arda Tuncdemir, 2025).	Role play - Role play simulates real-life situations by having students take on specific roles, stepping into another character's shoes (see Farmer, 2012).
Address biases, threats and distractions (7.4)	Drama intentionally creates and sustains learning spaces where students are encouraged to take risks. Drama can be used to surface and address controversial issues, bias and social threats. Protected by dramatic distance, the fictional world creates learning spaces where students are encouraged to take intellectual and social risks, producing accepting contexts that support dialogic risk-taking (Wells & Sandretto, 2017).	Classroom Agreement - co-create a Classroom Agreement with students outlining the type of behaviour that is expected during drama. Hot Seating - involves questioning a character about their background, behaviour and motivations. Iceberg game - the teacher draws an iceberg on the board and students add words to describe the feelings and emotions of the character - both those above and below the surface (see Farmer, 2012).
Sustaining Effort and Persistence (Guideline 8)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Clarify the meaning and purpose of the goals (8.1)	Drama makes learning goals transparent and meaningful. In drama, curriculum tasks are presented as professional tasks in real-world contexts. By embedding objectives within authentic tasks, students can see <i>why</i> a task matters (purpose), what successful performance looks like (success criteria), and which choices will help them meet those aims, outcomes that increase purposeful engagement and student ownership in classrooms (see Danckwardt-Lillieström et al., 2024).	Writing in Role - writing from a character's perspective (see Farmer, 2012).
Optimise challenge and support (8.2)	Drama can optimise both challenge and support, raising expectations and supplying the scaffolds students need to succeed. Drama affords teachers the opportunity to design tasks that present cognitive	Teacher in Role (TiR) - the teacher takes on a role related to a story or theme and sets up a dramatic situation for students to participate. The teacher scaffolds and challenges from within TiR (see Farmer, 2012).



	and social challenge while at the same time, using discreet scaffolds such as in-role scaffolding, briefings, role constraints and modelling from within Teacher in Role (TiR). This creates a low-threat challenge, yet highly supportive learning space in which students can take risks, extend skills and meet explicit learning goals (see Heathcote, 1999).	
Foster collaboration, interdependence and collective learning (8.3)	In drama, students work through interaction, negotiation, and collaboration to broaden their understanding of their own experiences as well as those of others. Engaging in drama activities offers students a way to interact with each other, expanding their knowledge of themselves and others (Arda Tuncdemir, 2025).	Hot Air Balloon Game - students representing various characters (or abstract concepts) are in a sinking hot air balloon. In character, the students must argue their case to stay on board. Reportage - a drama technique that presents events through the medium of podcast or news report. Students act as hosts and audience members. Use hotseating to interview specific characters on the panel. Acting as the collective audience, students ask the panel questions.
Foster belonging and community (8.4)	Drama can be used as a pedagogical tool to build community. Drama creates shared imaginative experiences that put students in collaborative roles, require perspective-taking, and give everyone an authentic contribution to group tasks. This supports social skills, increases empathy, strengthens peer relationships through co-constructed meaning, and produces visible classroom norms of trust and responsibility, all of which raise students' sense of belonging (see Lobman, 2005).	Rolling Role - involves a team of teachers working together to develop a common context for a programme of work. The teaching team creates a common context, and agrees to the key features of the community. The students are then involved in building the community, often creating artefacts and texts which are published and shared with other classes. Working across a number of classes within a school, the programme of work 'rolls' from teacher to teacher; work produced by one class can be used as a resource by another class (see Heathcote, 1999).
Offer action-oriented feedback (8.5)	Drama functions as a pedagogical space for iterative, action-oriented feedback. Drama allows teachers to assess understanding in real-time and provide formative feedback during activities. Feedback is embedded in drama tasks and used immediately to shape students' next actions. Drama provides feedback to students on both the process <i>and</i> the product (see Winston, 2013).	Teacher in Role (TiR) - the teacher provides feedback in real-time about the process and the product.
Emotional Capacity (Guideline 9)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Recognise	Drama fosters confidence,	Mantle of the Expert



expectations, beliefs and motivations (9.1)	enthusiasm, and deeper learning. Drama provides discreet opportunities for teacher scaffolding from within the drama, ensuring all students experience success. Drama is also seen to enhance self-confidence across various domains and enhance self-esteem and mental well-being (Karatay et al., 2023).	
Develop awareness of self and others (9.2)	Drama creates learning experiences where students learn about themselves and others. How? Drama is a means of personal and social development. Literature highlights how drama improves social relationships, reduces bullying behaviours and enhances students' self-awareness and empathy (Cleeve Gerkens, 2024).	Freeze Frame combined with Thought Tracking - students create a silent Freeze Frame (students 'freeze' their bodies to create a scene, like pausing a film) of a particular scene/scenario. Develop this further by using Thought Tracking i.e. asking each student to verbalise the thoughts and feelings of the characters in the Freeze Frame (see Farmer, 2012).
Promote individual and collective reflection (9.3)	Through drama, students engage in self-reflection and collaborative discussions. Drama pedagogy is characterised by cycles of individual reflection (the student's own internal responses to role/scene) and collective reflection (whole-class discussion/debrief and negotiated understanding), leading to enhanced understanding of civic issues, improved social relationships, and increased self-awareness (see Cleeve Gerkens, 2024).	Individual and collective reflective debrief - provide opportunities for structured individual reflection activities for example, using drama journals as well as guided collective debrief discussions during and post drama work.
Cultivate empathy and restorative practices (9.4)	Drama helps students to develop empathy, show concern for others, and be more able to change their perspective. Dramatic role-taking provides students with the unique opportunity to walk in the shoes of others, thereby, fostering empathy, perspective-taking (and perspective-changing), listening skills and conflict-management capacities that are essential for repairing relationships (see Aitken, 2021).	Cross Cutting (or Split Screen) - two or more scenes are performed at the same time. The technique is used to contrast a particular theme or aspect of the story and how different people can have different experiences of the same event (see Farmer, 2012).
Multiple Means of Representation		
Perception (Guideline 1)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Support opportunities to customise the display of information (1.1)	Drama functions not only as a way to learn curriculum content but also as a powerful mode for displaying and communicating the curriculum in multimodal forms. Drama gives teachers multimodal means to display curriculum content,	Still Image - is a silent, human sculpture that is created by a group of students using their bodies, to represent an interpretation of an event, action, location or scene. Scaffold students' 'reading' of the still image by analysing facial expressions, use of hands, body



	thereby affording students a variety of ways to access the curriculum (Edmiston & Towler-Evans, 2022).	posture, and proxemics (space and distance between the participants within the still life). Soundscape – students create a sound picture or soundscape using voices and body sounds. Proxemics - students physically position themselves in relation to a character or central point in the scene or topic, then justify their placement to explain their perspective or understanding of the situation (see Farmer, 2012).
Support multiple ways to perceive information (1.2)	Drama functions as a multimodal perceptual pedagogy for students. Drama’s embodied and multimodal work changes how students attend to and interpret curriculum content, making abstract concepts concrete, enabling alternate semiotic modes (visual, bodily, verbal, digital) to carry meaning, and supporting students to <i>perceive</i> curricular knowledge in richer, more accessible ways. The literature therefore positions drama not only as a method for displaying curriculum but as a way of <i>perceiving and coming to know</i> the curriculum through coordinated multimodal resources (Edmiston & Towler-Evans, 2022).	Whoosh storytelling - the story is brought to life and students play characters, objects, places or events (see Farmer, 2012). Talking Objects - enables objects to speak in role. The objects can talk to themselves and to each other, and students can talk with the objects and question them (see Neelands & Goode, 2015).
Represent a diversity of perspectives and identities in authentic ways (1.3)	Drama provides structured, embodied ways for students to take, compare and reflect on multiple perspectives. Drama offers both the <i>experiential</i> (role enactment, embodied point-of-view) and the <i>dialogic</i> (facilitated debriefs, audience-in-role interventions) mechanisms that help students learn through multiple and varying perspectives. Studies report cognitive gains (theory-of-mind, perspective-taking) and measurable increases in empathy when drama experiences are paired with facilitation, and classroom formats that afford students opportunities to try alternatives and hear peer responses, all of which scaffold learning from varied viewpoints (see Briones et al., 2022).	3D Living Pictures - images can be brought to life to create a 3D Living Picture, using freeze frames and thought tracking. Identity Texts - students construct artefacts by using resources of their choice to express a meaningful message related to their identity and culture.
Language and Symbols (Guideline 2)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Clarify vocabulary, symbols and language structures (2.1)	Drama acts as a multimodal meaning-making engine.	Ten Second Objects - students make the shape of an object using their bodies, in only ten seconds

	Drama helps students to externalise abstract words, symbols and numeric relations as visible, physical and narrative forms they can inspect, test and re-symbolise (see Danckwardt-Lillieström et al., 2024).	(see Farmer, 2012). Sculpting - involves the physical manipulation of bodies in pairs or groups, to embody the characteristics and form of a character or object, (see Farmer, 2012). Spectrum of Difference - students express their views by choosing where to stand on a line representing a continuum of opinion (see Neelands & Goode, 2015).
Support decoding of text, mathematical notation and symbols (2.2)	Drama gives students actionable, multimodal affordances for decoding the curriculum. How? Drama converts curricular representations (abstract symbols, technical language, dense text), into embodied visual and dialogic forms that students can inspect, manipulate and discuss, helping to reveal meaning (see Dorion, 2009).	Role on the Wall - is a collaborative activity for developing thoughts and ideas about a character or concept. The outline of a gingerbread man is created. Words or phrases describing the character are written directly onto the drawing (see Farmer, 2012). Powerline - is a physical representation of a spectrum of power or influence. In class, the teacher can place a line (either real or imaginary) across the floor, with one end labelled as 'most powerful' and the other 'least powerful'. Students position themselves and justify their positions, along the line to represent a character or group in relation to the issue being discussed (see Neelands & Goode, 2015). Walking Debate - the teacher divides the space into three i.e. Agree, Disagree, Unsure. The teacher makes various statements in relation to the curriculum content, and students position themselves in one of the three areas, justifying their positions. This also allows for opportunity to discuss situations where students are unsure of their position.
Cultivate understanding and respect across languages and dialects (2.3)	Drama can be used to both develop language learning and model respect for linguistic diversity. Drama not only advances linguistic skills but also cultivates mutual understanding and respect across languages and dialects. In translanguage drama, students embody multiple languages and	Living Newspaper - students explore an issue by bringing it to life using various drama techniques such as for example, narration (a newsreader or chorus narrates the scene, still images or role play) (Neelands & Goode, 2015). Include translanguage in 3D Living Pictures and multimodal



	expressive modes in role, affirming all as valid communicative forms, enabling diverse communicative resources to be legitimised (Campbell & Tigan, 2022).	Identity Texts.
Address biases in the use of language and symbols (2.4)	Drama produces classroom cultures in which multiple language forms are visible, usable and respected. Research on drama highlights an increased willingness to use diverse repertoires, improved attitudes toward peers' speech, and pedagogical routines that explicitly position varied language forms as legitimate resources for learning (Campbell & Tigan, 2022).	Incorporating translinguaging into narration - characters may narrate, or a student who is not involved in the action can carry out the role of 'narrator' (Farmer, 2012).
Illustrate through multiple media (2.5)	Drama enables students to illustrate curriculum content through multiple media. As a multimodal pedagogy, drama allows students to demonstrate their learning in ways that integrate multiple semiotic modes, broadening the ways curriculum can be both represented and assessed (see Bryer, 2024).	Still Images Proxemics Digital Tools Talking Objects Props
Building Knowledge (Guideline 3)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Connect prior knowledge to new learning (3.1)	Drama supports students in linking prior knowledge to new learning across multiple domains. Drama functions as a meaning-making and knowledge-integration tool, enabling students to scaffold new learning on familiar concepts while engaging in embodied, collaborative, and reflective learning processes (Danckwardt-Lillieström et al., 2024). By situating new knowledge within familiar contexts and experiences, drama strengthens both comprehension and retention (Beaumont, 2020).	Flashback and Flashforward - these techniques can be used to expand on a Freeze Frame to envision the before and after. Using flashback and flashforward creates a context, helping students to access prerequisite and prior knowledge. It shows what led up to a particular moment, how it might be resolved or how it may lead onto additional challenges (see Farmer, 2012).
Highlight and explore patterns, critical features, big ideas and relationships (3.2)	Drama supports students in exploring and highlighting patterns and relationships in academic content. Drama provides a multimodal collaborative way to observe and analyse patterns, fostering deeper comprehension, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. By making abstract relationships visible, students can recognise and articulate connections that might otherwise remain implicit in traditional teaching (Winston, 2013).	Decision Alley - a student in character (or abstract concept) walks down an alley (two lines formed by their fellow students in character). As the character walks down the alley, each character along the alley, gives the individual character advice to help make a decision. When the character reaches the end of the alley, they make their decision, based on the advice given (see Farmer, 2012).
Cultivate multiple ways	Drama is a pedagogy that cultivates	Marking the Moment - is a

of knowing and making meaning (3.3)	new ways of knowing and meaning-making. Drama encourages active exploration, collaborative inquiry, and embodied learning. These experiences allow students to negotiate perspectives, experiment with ideas, and generate understanding that extends beyond traditional classroom approaches (Winston, 2013).	dramatic technique used to highlight a key moment in a scene or stage in a process. This can be done in a number of multi-modal ways, for example through slow-motion, a freeze frame, still image, narration, thought tracking or music (Neelands & Goode, 2015).
Maximise transfer and generalisation (3.4)	Drama facilitates the generalisation and maximisation of learning by allowing students to abstract, transfer, and apply knowledge across contexts. Drama functions as a pedagogical tool for deep, transferable learning. Using drama can lead to the development of broader understanding through generalising and making connections via the personal involvement that initially engages and motivates students in their learning (Winston, 2013).	Narrative progression via Still Images - in groups students create three still images to encapsulate the beginning, middle and end of the narrative/process under discussion.
Multiple Means of Action and Expression		
Interaction (Guideline 4)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Vary and honour methods for response, navigation and movement (4.1)	Drama is a multimodal pedagogy, supporting students in interacting with tools and environments that make learning accessible. As a multimodal pedagogy, in drama students can access and express meaning through multiple semiotic channels supporting interpretation and enabling wider participation from students with diverse learning profiles. Distributing meaning across modes leads to increased student engagement and comprehension (Bryer, 2024).	Still Images Writing in Role Role Play Art work Digital Technologies
Optimise access to accessible materials and assistive technologies (4.2)	Drama is a tool-rich multimodal pedagogy, which allows students to access tools and materials in ways that enhance their learning. Drama's multimodal affordances pair naturally with assistive digital tools to scaffold access, participation and learning to provide equitable access to content, supporting varied learning preferences and abilities (Zakopoulos, 2023).	Communication boards, mobile speech-output apps, captioning, tactile/visual props Tablet devices (and apps) - can be integrated into group activities to scaffold communication, prompt turn-taking, and increase social participation Dramatic storytelling activities - use image-text graphics, e-read communication pens, speech-output apps.
Expression and Communication (Guideline 5)		

UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Use multimedia for communication (5.1)	Drama enables students to demonstrate their learning using multimedia as part of communication. Drama offers multiple semiotic pathways that broaden who can participate and how they can demonstrate knowledge. These varied semiotic resources allow students to demonstrate understanding in ways that are more inclusive than solely traditional written formats (Bryer, 2024).	Video and/or audio recordings Digital storyboards Digital media Visual artefacts Physical enactments with speech (Action Clip) or without (Still Image or Freeze Frame) Writing in Role
Use multiple tools for construction, composition and creativity (5.2)	Drama gives students multiple tools for construction, composition, and creative production. Drama's inherent multimodality not only validates diverse ways of expressing knowledge but also encourages students to compose and demonstrate learning creatively beyond print-based tasks. These opportunities expand the creative agency of students, allowing them not only to absorb content but to invent, shape and present it in original ways. This multimodality fosters inclusion, creativity, and deeper engagement by giving students multiple channels to construct and communicate ideas (Wells & Sandretto, 2017).	Learning stations - create stations with various multimodal tools e.g. digital technology (such as spell checkers, grammar checkers, word-prediction software or speech-to-text software), props, images, or text prompts. Students rotate through stations working on the subject related scenarios using their preferred tool(s).
Build fluencies with graduated support for practice and performance (5.3)	Drama provides structured opportunities for students to build fluencies with graduated supports and gradual release. Drama functions as a scaffolded pedagogy that nurtures fluency across multiple dimensions of learning while accommodating individual needs and diverse abilities. Drama functions as an adaptive scaffold with staged release that can be tightened or relaxed so students progressively take on agency in dramatic inquiry (Edmiston & Towler-Evans, 2022).	Beginning with Freeze Frame, progressing to Thought Tracking and ultimately developing the scene into an Action Clip (the teacher says 'Action!' and students bring the scene alive for a few moments with speech and movement).
Address biases related to modes of expression and communication (5.4)	Drama can affirm all forms of communication as valid. Drama creates inclusive learning environments where multiple voices, languages, and communicative practices are recognised as legitimate, fostering equity, confidence, and critical reflection on social and linguistic biases. Through drama,	Multimodal storytelling - students retell a story using spoken English, snippets of their heritage languages, gestures and images. Use drama conventions and allow students to combine modalities. Still Image translanguaging adaptation - alongside the still image, students label the still image



	students are able to communicate in ways that validate diverse expressive forms, challenging hierarchies that privilege standard speech or written text (Campbell & Tigan, 2022).	with words in different languages, or add short oral narrations in their chosen language(s), validating multiple forms of expression. Hotseating translanguaging adaptation - allow students to answer questions in their home language, English, or a mix, with peers encouraged to respond using gesture, translation, or bilingual prompts.
Strategic Development (Guideline 6)		
UDL 3.0 Consideration	DiE mapping	DiE Strategy
Set meaningful goals (6.1)	Drama empowers students to co-create meaningful and authentic learning goals. Drama functions as a goal-oriented pedagogy. Drama worlds provide scaffolds for students to define and pursue authentic learning goals, using imaginative and collaborative processes to shape outcomes (O'Neill, 1995).	Mantle of the Expert
Anticipate and plan for challenges (6.2)	Drama supports students in anticipating and planning for challenges. Drama fosters anticipatory thinking and planning skills. Drama allows students to simulate scenarios in a safe space and foresee possible difficulties, supporting reflective planning and strategic decision-making (Winston, 2013).	Rewind, Fast Forward Forum Theatre
Organise information and resources (6.3)	Drama supports students in organising their learning information and resources. Drama encourages students to systematically arrange information, tools and ideas for collaborative projects to support narrative coherence and learning outcomes (O'Neill, 1995).	Role Play Mantle of the Expert
Enhance capacity for monitoring progress (6.4)	Drama enhances students' capacity to monitor their own learning progress. Drama worlds provide spaces for iterative enactment and feedback in real-time, allowing students to monitor their comprehension, strategies and learning outcomes (O'Neill, 1995). Drama also facilitates reflective practices that enable students to track learning goals and self-assess progress (Winston, 2013).	Teacher in Role



Challenge exclusionary practices (6.5)	Drama serves as a powerful tool for challenging exclusionary practices in education. Drama functions as both a critical and liberatory pedagogy that empowers students to actively engage with and challenge exclusionary practices, promoting social justice and equity in educational settings (Streeter, 2020).	Forum Theatre
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The (In)CLUDE Framework

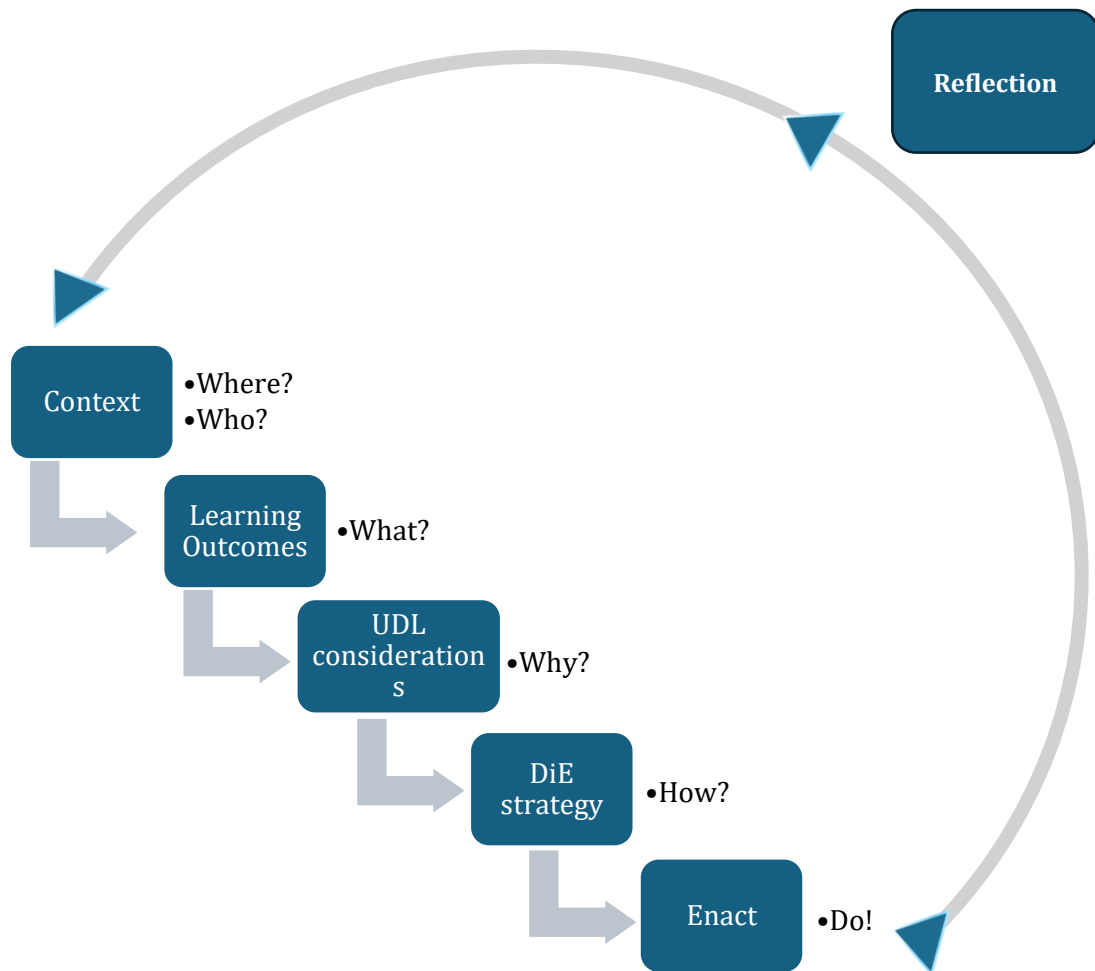
The (In)CLUDE planning framework has been developed to support the implementation of UDL 3.0 in the classroom using DiE. The framework puts UDL 3.0 front and centre of the teaching and learning planning and design processes, where effective use of DiE within a UDL framework presupposes an informed understanding of students' learning profiles, including their linguistic profiles.

Therefore, to get started implementing UDL 3.0 in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to consider the specific context (Where?) (i.e. education stage, school, level, subject and space); (Who?) (i.e. the class's learning profile including the class's linguistic profile and language experiences), in relation to potential opportunities and potential barriers.

Once teachers have identified the specific opportunities and potential barriers of their specific context, teachers can identify learning outcomes (What?) that they wish to work towards with students. Paying due attention to the potential opportunities and barriers identified within the context, teachers should identify the specific UDL 3.0 consideration(s) (Why?) that they wish to focus on. Finally, teachers map the specific UDL 3.0 considerations to suitable DiE strategies (How?) which will allow students to attain the required learning outcomes before enacting (Do!) the learning experience. The cycle should be followed by reflection to inform the next cycle of planning.

Figure 1

(In)CLUDE Framework – Implementing UDL 3.0 using DiE (Heeran Flynn, 2025)



While the framework has been developed to support the implementation of UDL 3.0 using DiE, the framework can be used to implement UDL 3.0 using other teaching methodologies, or indeed, in planning for any inclusive teaching and learning experience. Teachers can swap out the DiE strategy and replace it with other inclusive teaching and learning methods.

Concluding Remarks

Though educators believe that the UDL framework is essential to promote the development of inclusive education (Han & Lei, 2024), the implementation of UDL has been stymied by difficulties translating theory into practice. Literature highlights that teachers struggle to tie UDL to day-to-day teaching practices with teachers indicating that the lack of action plans to implement the UDL framework in schools is a considerable challenge (Capp, 2020). This paper presents DiE as a practical and meaningful way to implement UDL 3.0 in the classroom. Both student-centred in their approaches, UDL 3.0 and DiE combine to provide a formidable pedagogy for teachers

seeking to implement UDL 3.0 in the classroom and an empowering learning pedagogy for students.

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