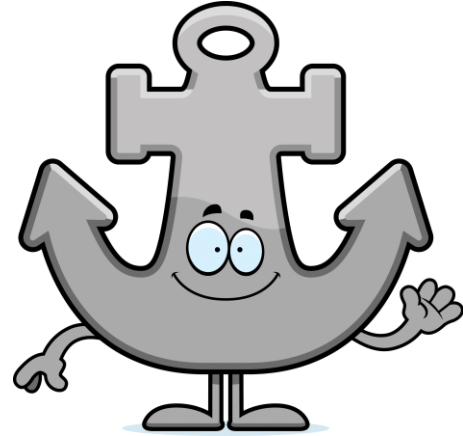




## Anchor Teaching

Nicholas Emmanuele, Daniel Wirley & Paula Kluth

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**Paula Kluth, Ph.D.**

- inclusionrules.com
- @PaulaKluth
- researcher/consultant/author
- author of 14 books on inclusive ed (e.g., UDL, autism)
- former professor of education & K-12 inclusion facilitator

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### What is an anchor activity?



- Anchor activities are tasks that students can work on independently or without direct teacher support. Some activities are designed to be completed on an ongoing basis (e.g., passion projects, blogs).
- Activities should be meaningfully connected to lessons, engaging, and worthwhile for the students.
- These activities give teachers time to observe students, engage in individual assessments, or meet with small groups.
- In essence, anchor activities free teachers from delivering formal lessons and allow them to designate class time for more personalized interactions with learners.

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### Why use anchor activities?

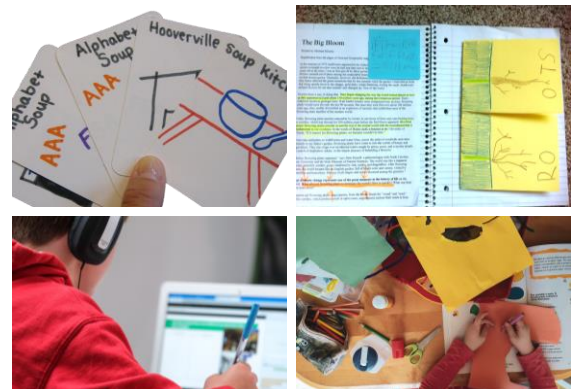
student-centered; may offer an opportunity to provide choices and allow decision-making & problem-solving



promote independence & interdependence

provide opportunities to create, complete work, explore interests, etc.

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- independent reading
- WebQuest
- journaling
- creating art, making movies, or recording podcasts
- choosing from a standards-based menu of learning activities (e.g., choice board/tic-tac-toe)
- exploring a topic of choice/genius hour
- solving brain-teasers, puzzles, or logic problems
- blogging
- playing or creating educational games that encourage exploration and reinforcement of material in service of a learning goal

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This is NOT busy work. Anchor activities should actively engage students and give them a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the material.

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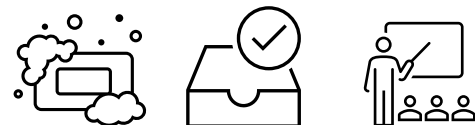
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**What to do when you pull students to confer:**

- individual interviews (e.g., “Tell me about your experience in science this year”; “What have you learned about energy so far?”)
- portfolio reviews (e.g., poetry, science notebooks)
- focus groups (e.g., “How accessible & interesting are our lessons?”)
- performance assessments (e.g., “Show me how you would solve this problem”; “Read this for me”)

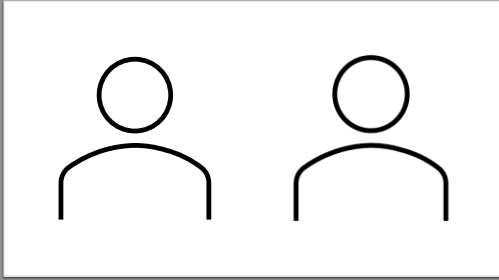
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**When should anchor activities be added?**



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### Why use anchor activities in a co-taught classroom?

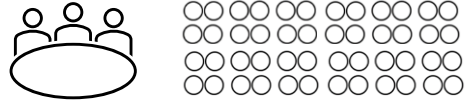


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### Ms. Watts & Mr. Philbin

Kluth, P. & Causton, J. (2016). *30 Days to the Co-Taught Classroom*.

- first 30 minutes of each Friday class
- Ms. Watts: confers on student projects (hunger in America, inclusive education)
- Mr. Philbin: checks in on students/supervises work & joins conferences (when possible) to assess IEP goals



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#### Sustaining Effort & Persistence

#### ENGAGEMENT

- Vary Demands & Resources to Optimize Challenge



### Day 146 Drop Anchor

In most UDL classrooms, teachers are constantly looking for ways to buy some time with small groups or individual students. One of the easiest ways to do this is to implement an anchor activity.

Anchor activities are tasks that students can work on independently or at least without teacher support. These activities may be assigned when students walk into the classroom, or they can be implemented for some period during a class to give teachers time to engage in individual assessments, or meet with small groups. In essence, anchor activities free teachers from their work at the helm of the classroom, allowing them to designate class time for more personalized interactions with learners.

True anchor activities should always be meaningful and allow students to deepen their understanding of learning standards. They should also allow each learner to work at a different pace and on different content (if necessary or desired), which is why they are so helpful in the UDL classroom. The only requirements of anchor activities are that they must be (a) worthy of a student's time, (b) appropriate to his or her abilities, and (c) easy to enter and exit so that transitions are short.

Examples of anchor activities include

- silent or partner reading;
- independent or partner writing;
- skill practice with peers or with the use of apps/websites;
- project-based instruction with students working alone, with partners, or in small groups; and
- whole-class peer tutoring (e.g., review material).

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Kluth, P. (2020). *Universal Design Daily*.

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