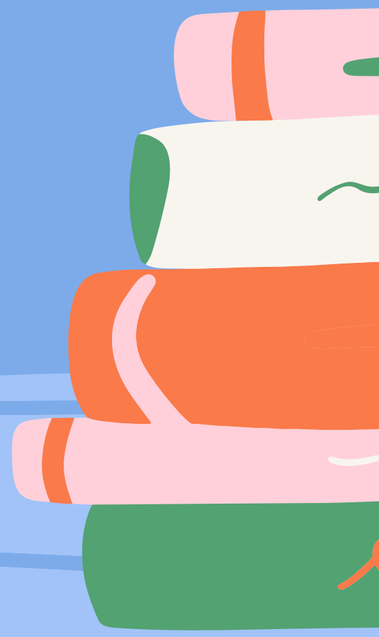
# Removing barriers to learning

with multiple means of representation

# LEARNER VARIABILITY

The learners in our classrooms each bring a unique set of skills, interests, strengths, dispositions, prior knowledge, areas for improvement, attitudes, values and capabilities. This is learner variability.

# ACKNOWLEDGING THE VARIABILITY THAT EXISTS

## CELEBRATE

We need to celebrate the differences in learners that exists in our classrooms. They make our combined learning experiences richer.

## EMPOWER

We need to empower our students to take ownership of their learning, make choices that suit them, and become life long expert learners.

# THINK ABOUT THE LEARNERS IN YOUR CLASSROOM...

Do any students have difficulty with eyesight, hearing or decoding?
Do your learners have a range of previous experience and competencies in the topics that you explore?
Do any of them have a home language other than English?
Is there a range of cultures within your classroom?

These are just some of the ways that we can start to think about the variability in our classroom when it comes to interpreting information.

# REPRESENTATION

**There are three guidelines within representation, which is the principle that addresses how information is presented to students.**

These guidelines outline different ways of presenting students with choice for the way they perceive and comprehend information.

- Provide options for perception
- Provide options for language and symbols
- Provide options for comprehension

Before we dive deeper into these  guidelines, think about the barriers to learning that you just considered, and how these guidelines can help to remove or reduce those barriers.

# OPTIONS FOR PERCEPTION

Are there barriers to learning that could removed by displaying information in different forms?

- Different coloured backgrounds (e.g. pale blue)
- Different size fonts
- Use of particular fonts (e.g. Dyslexie)
- Rate of video (YouTube has this feature)
- Use of closed captions
- Simple layouts
- Choice in audio or visual (e.g. audiobooks and reading)
- Use of physical models

# OPTIONS FOR LANGUAGE AND SYMBOLS

Are there barriers to learning that could removed by communicating through languages that create a shared understanding?

- Pre-teach and explicitly teaching vocabulary (e.g. Frayer model)
- Embed support for vocabulary and symbols (e.g. hyperlinks)
- Make relationships between elements explicit
- Use text-to-speech
- Use translation programs (e.g. Google Translate or translate.com)
- Use non-linguistic supports for vocabulary (e.g. videos, images)
- Use alternative forms for information (e.g. symbolic and video)

# OPTIONS FOR COMPREHENSION

Are there barriers to learning that could be removed by supporting the construction of meaning?

- Link to previous learning (through images, texts, anchor charts)
- Use graphic organisers (e..g KWL, concept maps, PMI)
- Emphasise key elements in texts
- Highlight previously learned skills that can be transferred to unfamiliar situations
- Chunk information into smaller elements or progressively release information
- Provide checklists, reminders, organisers, etc.
- Embed new ideas in familiar contexts
- Use spaced practice to revisit and revise key ideas

# YOUR JOURNEY AHEAD

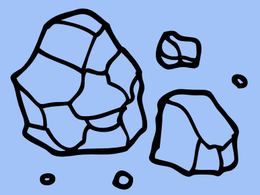
It's time to set a goal - how will you use multiple means of representation to support the learners in your classroom?

## SMART GOAL

Create a goal that is
Specific
Measureable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound

## ROCK GOALS

Create three goals:
Pebble - short term goal
Rock - mid term goal
Boulder - long term goal



## LADDER GOAL

Create one large goal and then list the smaller goals/steps you need to complete to achieve it.