



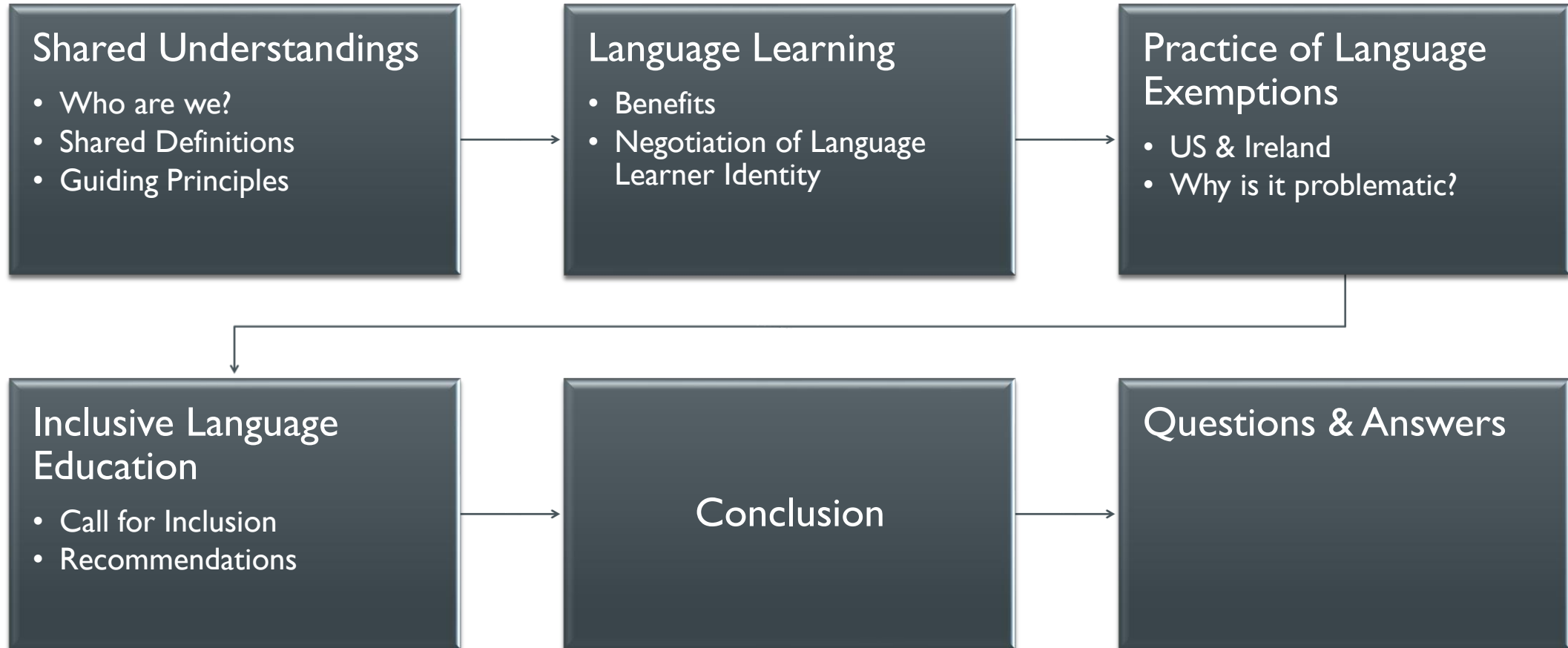
THE NEGOTIATION OF LANGUAGE LEARNER IDENTITY AND THE PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE EXEMPTIONS

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OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENTATION

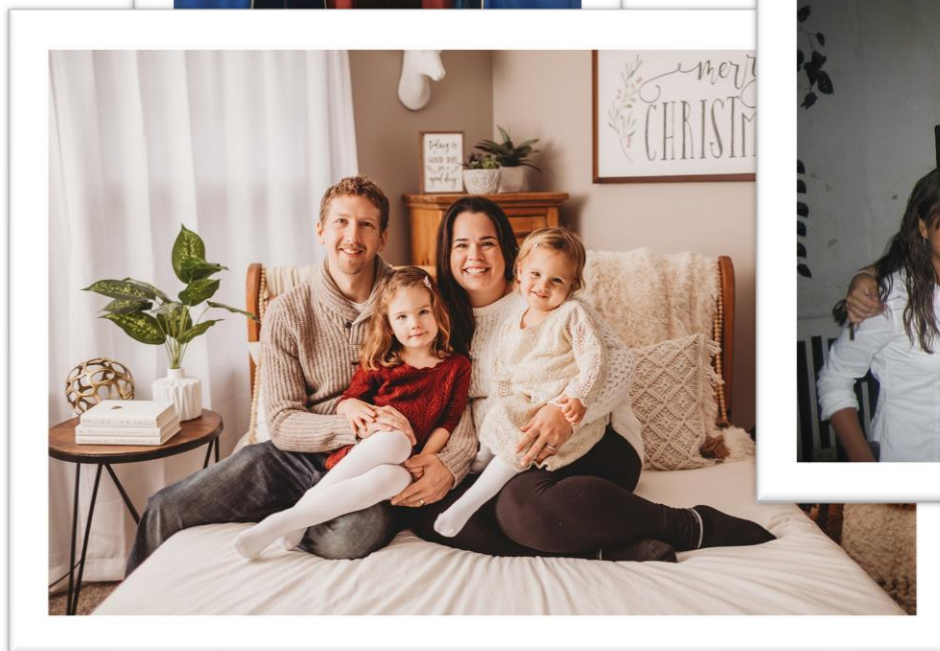


SHARED UNDERSTANDINGS



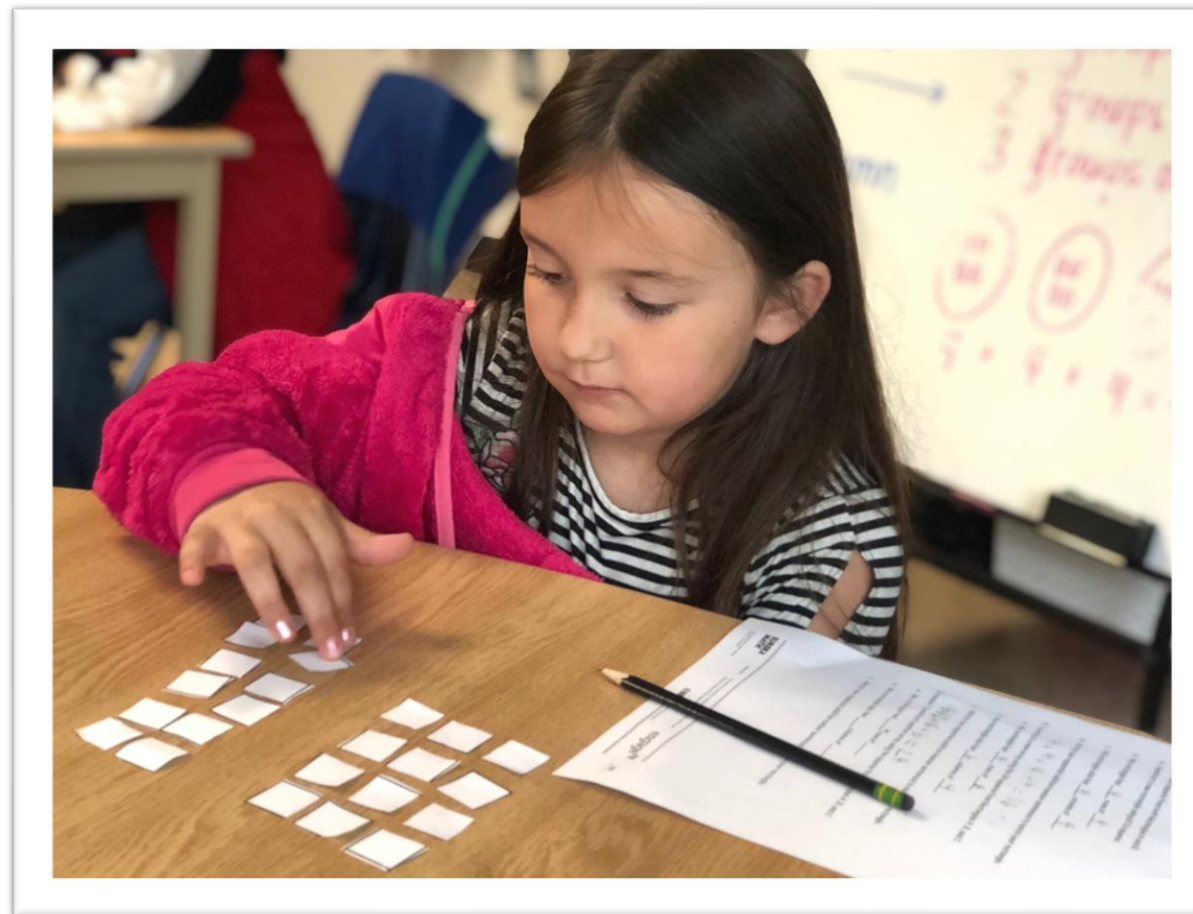
WHO ARE WE?

- My background
- Questions to consider:
 - Who are you in this conversation?
 - In what ways has the study of language positively impacted your life?

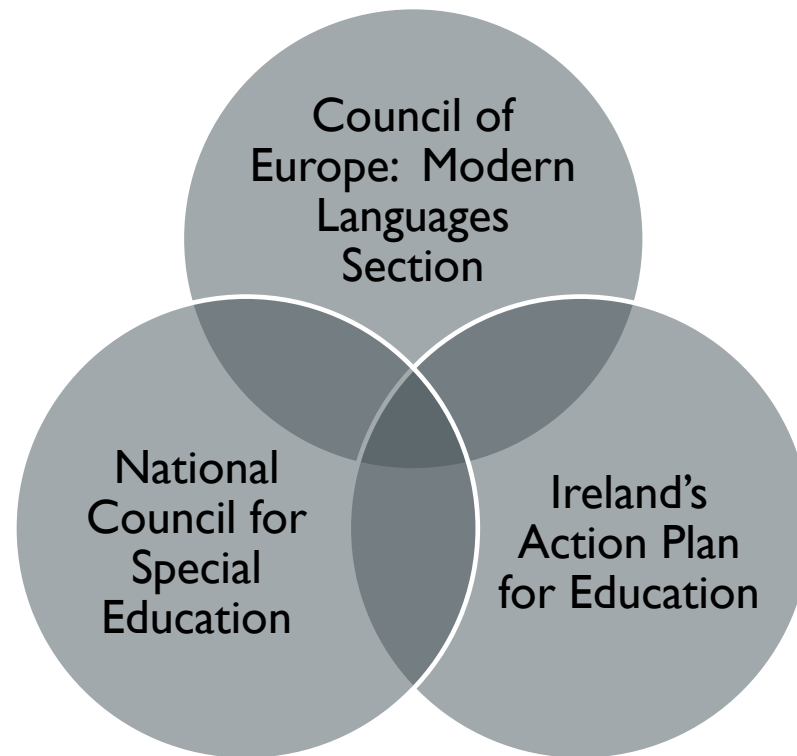


SHARED DEFINITIONS

- Students with Special Education Needs
- Identity
- Exemption



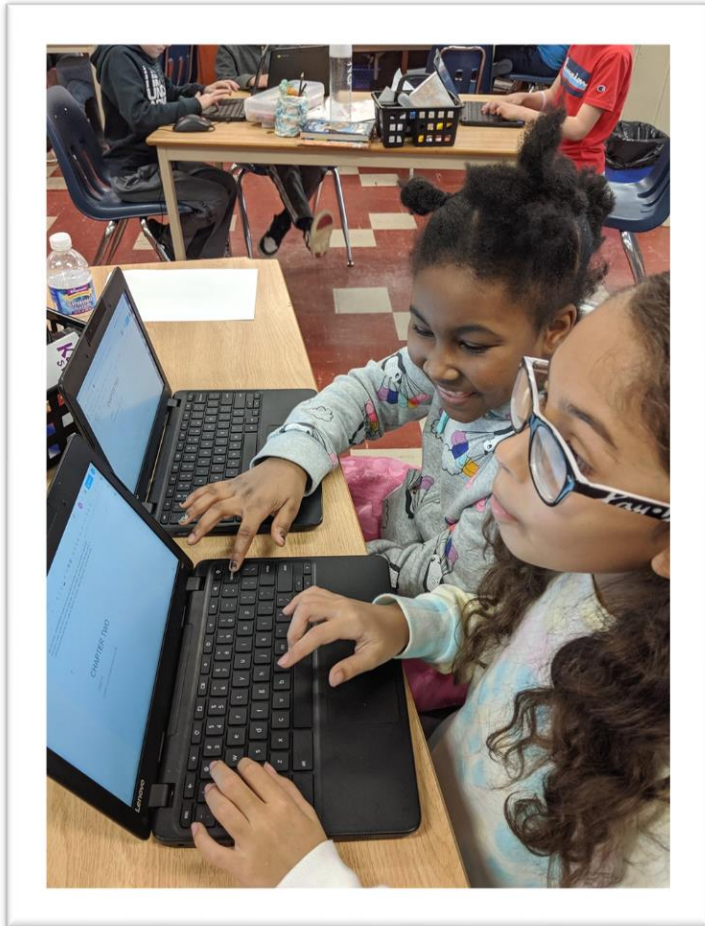
GROUNDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR WORK



LANGUAGE LEARNING



BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



BENEFITS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Cognitive/ Metacognitive Benefits

- Increased Literacy of LI
- Critical thinking
- Mental Discipline
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Memory
- Executive Functions
- Improved Cognitive Functioning
- Problem Solving Skills

Cultural Benefits

- Increased Acceptance & Appreciation
- Global Citizens

Pragmatic Benefits

- Benefits to the Economy
- Increases in National Security

PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS: BENEFITS TO THEIR LIVES

- Communication
 - “Cause like if you go somewhere and if other people speak other languages, you could talk to them” (Megan)
 - “like if you go on vacation somewhere and they speak a different language...you have to find a way to speak to them too” (Tony)
- Cultural Understanding
 - “I have liked how it teaches me how they live, and I like the culture notes” (Ricky)
 - “If it’s a unique culture that they are talking about, not writing down like el or la. I think that’s pretty boring.” (Ricky)



PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS: BENEFITS TO THEIR LIVES



- Future Employment
 - “Socializing with other people from other countries will just help me overall with what I’m going to do” (Sam)
- Metalinguistic Awareness
 - “I think it would help, even with English maybe a little” (Ricky)
 - “but ya know with time it seemed a lot more interesting because it seemed a lot more different than how we do it in English. It isn’t simply that this is the word in Spanish so you say this...there is a bit more to it” (Sam- Discussing telling time)
- Metacognitive Benefits
 - “It might be important, like it helps their brain like learn, it helps their listening skills. Stuff like that”. (Ethan)

NEGOTIATING A LANGUAGE LEARNER IDENTITY

“To have another language is to possess another soul”

- Charlemagne



THE PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE EXEMPTIONS



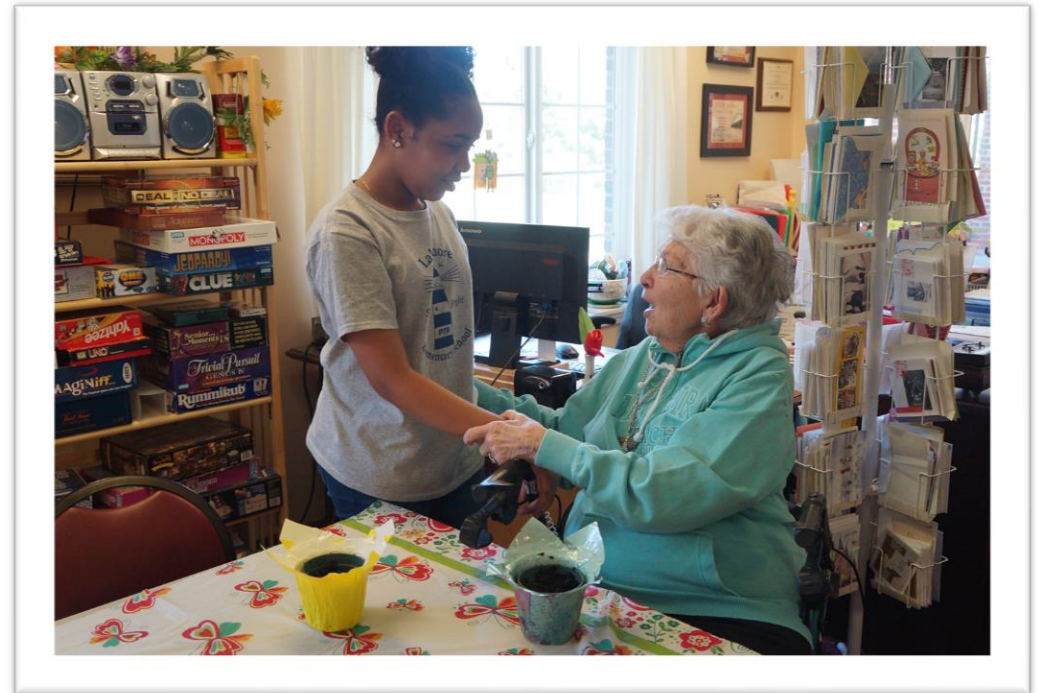
PRACTICE OF EXEMPTION IN THE UNITED STATES



- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004
- New York State Department of Education
 - All other content areas → Modified exams and pass rates
 - For language study → Exemptions
 - “...disability which adversely affects the ability to learn a language may be excused from the Language Other than English requirement” (NYSED, 2010, section b.2.ii.b)

PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE EXEMPTION IN IRELAND

- Department of Education and Skills (2019) states that “exempting a pupil from the study of Irish should be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her access to the curriculum and his./her future learning” (p.3)
- Exemptions are allowable for:
 - Those previously educated outside of Ireland
 - Those with 3 year consecutive gap in study
 - Those who have reached second class
 - The children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives
 - “Students with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in both Irish and English over time”



WHY IS THE EXEMPTION PROBLEMATIC?



- The exemption is an easy solution that ignores the problem of un-inclusive language learning and deprives students of the benefits of language learning and the ability to negotiate their language learner identity.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION



CALL TO INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION



What are five recommendations for developing an Inclusive Foreign Language Learning Environment?

1. Provide Necessary Support for Educators and Students
2. Focus on Developing Communicative and Cultural Competences
3. Follow best practices for Vocabulary and Grammar
4. Follow best practices for Classroom Procedures
5. Differing Assessments



I. PROVIDE NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

- Suggested Supports:
 - Funding
 - Sustained Professional Development
 - Support Professionals from Special Education in the Language Classroom
 - Collaboration with Special Education Professionals
 - Smaller Class Sizes
 - Altering Individualized Education Plans to include Language Learning Supports rather than Exemptions

2. FOCUS ON DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE AND CULTURAL COMPETENCES



- To do:
 - Develop cultural and communicative competences
 - Focus on communication over hypercorrectness.

3. FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES FOR VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

- To do:
 - Vocabulary:
 - 5-9 lexical items for communication
 - Grammar:
 - Focus on contextualization in communicative purpose

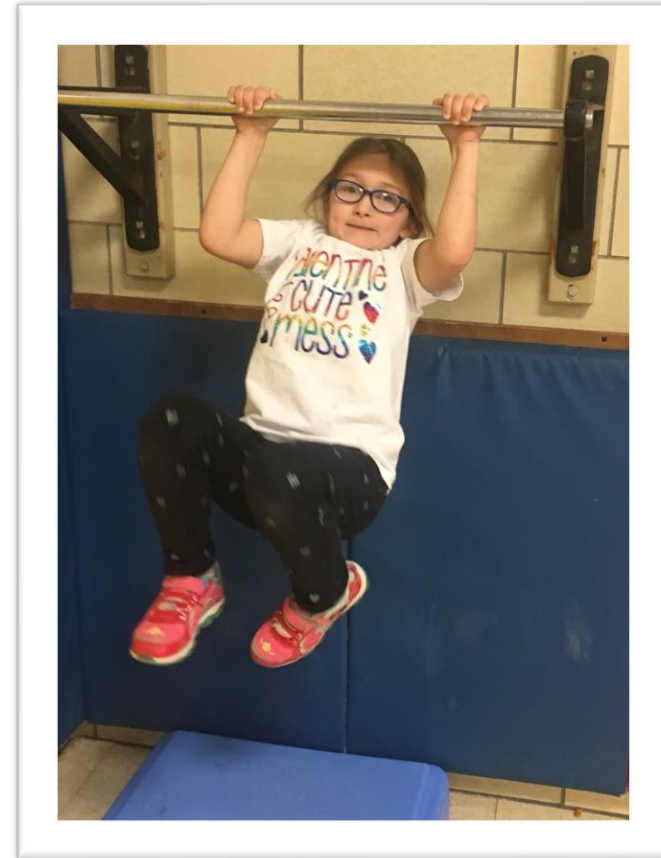
4. FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES FOR CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

To do:

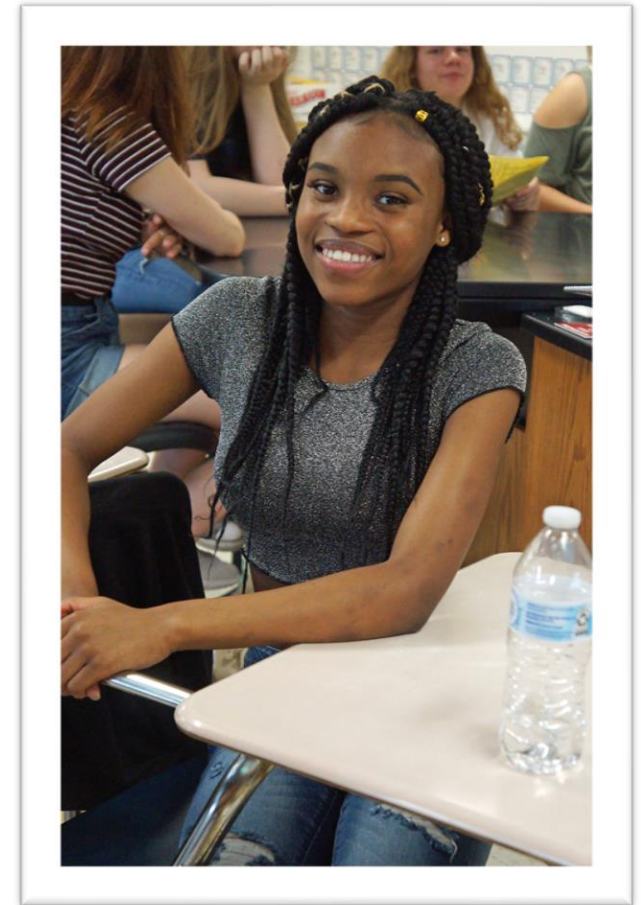
- **Directions:**
 - Provide visually and orally
- **Explicitly teach learning strategies:**
 - How to organize and use their resources
 - How to study
- **Participation:**
 - Clearly provide expectations
 - Increase wait time
 - Use method to ensure all students are participating
- **Grouping:**
 - Group heterogeneously

5. DIFFERING ASSESSMENTS

- To do:
 - Make sure assessments are opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning
 - Use meaningful, alternative assessments, such as portfolios or projects



CONCLUSION



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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