

# What is learning like for ME?



A Community Approach to Learning Disabilities

Resources and Tool Kit for

Community Service Providers on Haida Gwaii

Published by

**Literacy Haida Gwaii**

# Acknowledgements & Gratitude

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We would like to thank with gratitude, the following funders  
for our project:

## Government of Canada Office of Literacy and Essential Skills

Canada

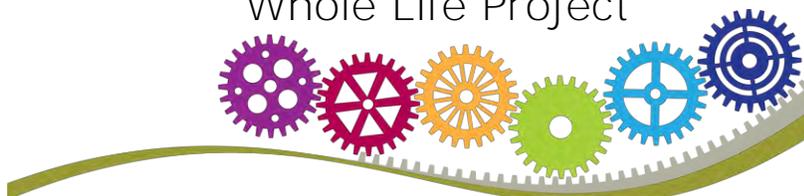
This project was made possible with funding support from the Government of Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.  
Ce projet a été rendu possible grâce à l'appui financier du Bureau de l'alphabétisation et des compétences essentielles du gouvernement du Canada.



**BC Coalition of  
People with Disabilities**



Whole Life Project



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# Introduction to Our Project

The focus of our project covered a few areas:

- ❖ Identify learning gaps in the area of learning difficulties for adults and students on Haida Gwaii;
- ❖ How we can use informal assessments to help identify and support learners with learning difficulties;
- ❖ Share teaching strategies and tools among literacy practitioners, instructors, tutors, classroom teachers and community service providers;
- ❖ Identify resources and community support for learners who face learning difficulties;
- ❖ Generated community awareness and help advocate the importance of LD

The basis for our project arose from the following issues and concerns:

- ❖ There are no psychologists or professionals who can do formal assessments on the island;
- ❖ NWCC Haida Gwaii does not have a Learning Support Centre to support its adult students;
- ❖ There are evident cases of adult students who deal with issues like trauma, dyslexia, FASD, ADHD, etc but there are no formal assessments or resources available on Haida Gwaii to help address this need.

## Summary of LD Workshop

We hosted a dialogue with invitations to all service providers on Haida Gwaii and shared the information we gained from the Whole Life Project training forum organised by Literacy BC in November 2010.

Feedback from various community service providers indicated that at times, they **deal with clients/learners whom they “suspect” may have certain** learning challenges but they as service providers, are uncertain how they can offer help or which organization they can talk to on behalf of their clients so as to make appropriate referrals.

Questions that popped up at our community discussions included

- *“How do such learners learn?”*
- *“What’s their world like?”*
- *“I want to help but I don’t know how?”*
- *“Where do I go for help for my clients/learners?”*
- *“How can we support their learning?”*

To assist the community in answering the above questions, we decided to use a small portion of the funding to organise a workshop engaging help from Learning Disabilities Association of BC (Vancouver Chapter). The workshop **was titled “Walk a Mile in My Shoes”**. It was a simulation workshop with exercises that engaged participants in understanding what LD learners deal with everyday and the daily frustration they faced.

**Feedback from participants at the “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” was very positive.** Through a series of stimulated exercises, many participants gained a more in-depth understanding of what LD learners have to go through as an everyday struggle. The facilitator also shared her personal stories of her

own LD challenges and life struggles at the workshop. The impacts of learning difficulties, strategies and support for LD were discussed at the workshop.

We managed to bring together 58 participants for the workshop representing the following areas:

- Northern Health
- Northwest Community College
- Haida Gwaii Career Development Centre & Community Futures
- Northern Credit Union
- Skidegate Band Health Centre
- School District Trustees and teachers
- Old Massett Band School
- tutors and literacy practitioners
- parents & advocates

*Some quotes from the workshop*

*"I enjoyed the way the presenter helped us see what it might be like to live in the shoes of a person who is somehow learning disabled."*

*"I really appreciated in depth information on learning disabilities and to find out how confusing "regular" instruction can be for some of our students."*

*"I am discouraged by the lack of funding – unsure about how to make the necessary "raise" that will finally allow the category of learning disabilities to exist."*

*"I liked the reminder of what it is like to be disabled, so that I can try to avoid doing things "teachers do" such as saying "hurry up" and give too many verbal directions without writing them on the board."*

## Our Community Response

The opportunity to have college instructors, tutors, school teachers and several community service providers to come together allowed a communal network of support and dialogue. A few initiatives have started within our community. Collaborative partnership was formed between Northern Health's Supported Child Development and School District 50's Early Learning program. Kindergarten teachers, preschool teachers and parents with young LD preschoolers meet in May every year to establish an individualised learning support system for their children transitioning into kindergarten. A Child and Youth Development Table was also recently formed to help address the needs of supporting these groups of learners.

### A Personal Story

*"I was recently hired for a job. I was upfront [with my employers] that I have a LD. The first question to me was "what are you doing to fix that?" This question has always been posed to me and it always makes me angry as I know that this LD is just part of me. It is so wonderful to get more tips and ideas of how to explain to others my LD and also to help others.*

Learning challenges, particularly in adulthood, are a "whole life" issue that shape not only literacy and learning, but also people's self-esteem, family and work life. It is our hope that we can extend the individualised learning support for early learning to helping high school students with learning challenges work on transitioning to colleges, work or other upgrading programs. We need to understand that their difficulties in taking in and processing information are not due to their low intelligence, poor educational backgrounds, poor motivation, or emotional problems.

# Signs of Learning Difficulties

The following are some of the characteristics of LD that your student or client might exhibit<sup>1</sup>:

## Reading

- ❖ Gets confused with similar words
- ❖ Has problem with multi-syllable words
- ❖ Reads at a slower rate
- ❖ Has difficulty retaining information, comprehension, remembering
- ❖ Has a difficult time picking out important themes or points
- ❖ Usually skips words or lines of printed materials
- ❖ Has a hard time reading for long periods of time

## Writing

- ❖ Has difficulty with sentence structure
- ❖ Omits words in sentences
- ❖ Frequent but inconsistent misspelling errors
- ❖ Forms letters poorly
- ❖ Has difficulty with spacing, capitals, punctuation
- ❖ Has difficulty planning and organizing a topic
- ❖ Find it hard to put thoughts on paper
- ❖ Has difficulty with proofreading and revision
- ❖ Sentences written in an illogical sequence
- ❖ Writes very slowly

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<sup>1</sup> *Informal assessment guide, Colorado State University*

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/ldteach/app3.cfm>

- ❖ May write off the lines
- ❖ Has difficulty with expressive, creative language

### **Summarizing**

- ❖ Unable to summarize from organizer chart
- ❖ Does not know how or where to begin
- ❖ Unable to find main idea
- ❖ Has difficult time separating main idea from supporting details
- ❖ Finds it hard to see connections between points
- ❖ Cannot link reading to prior knowledge
- ❖ cannot understand context clues in text

### **Study/Organization skills**

- ❖ Has poor organization and time management
- ❖ Has difficulty following directions
- ❖ Has poor organization of written materials
- ❖ Usually turns things in late
- ❖ Is slow to start tasks

### **Revising**

- ❖ Has difficulty when asked to scan or discuss what is written
- ❖ Has a hard time identifying errors in own writing
- ❖ Unable to use a dictionary successfully to check for errors
- ❖ Finds it hard to differentiate spelling of the same word
- ❖ Unable to understand or use grammatically correct sentence structure

### **Other Signs**

- ❖ Has difficulty reading facial expressions and body language
- ❖ Has inappropriate, impulsive behavior

- ❖ has a hard time grasping subtlety
- ❖ spatial problems
- ❖ Faces "overloads" quickly and "shuts down"
- ❖ Gets distracted
- ❖ Has trouble sustaining attention

# Community Response Tool Kit

This tool kit was developed based on requests for a simple guide from community service providers, teachers and tutors. Many of these professionals are not fully aware of the issues faced by individuals with learning difficulties. Not all teachers are also trained to provide differentiated instruction that responds to the different instructional needs that students bring to the classroom.

It is our aim to include learners with learning difficulties into the fabric and mainstream of the community. Through community dialogues and the LD workshop, we have achieved capacity building, collaborative energy and network.

This tool kit provides:

- ❖ General information to strengthen community inclusion.
- ❖ Brief background information on understanding different learning styles
- ❖ General information on community services and off-island resources

The aim of the tool kit is to help community service providers with some basic informal assessment guides to help them with their job. This guide does not, however, suggest that informal assessment is to replace all formal assessments. It is only to assist service providers, teachers and tutors spot potential problems and adapt our teaching and counselling activities to accommodate our learners/clients.

We should never try to "decide" whether a student or client has a disability, and we are never to tell the student or client that they have one. Can you imagine the distress a student might experience if she is suddenly told that she has a "disability?" Can you imagine what might happen if you have misdiagnosed a student in your haste to help her?

# VAK Assessment (Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic)



VAK is one of many forms of assessment to determine learning styles. Its aim is to simply help learners identify their learning preference. There are several other assessments available online. You can use this informal **assessment to identify your learner's learning style, hence working with them using their strength and learning style preferences<sup>2</sup>**

There are two VAK assessment formats presented in this tool kit. Use the one you think would appeal best to your learner or client. When you use format 1, do not show the learning categories to your learner/client. Help your learner/client read if he has reading difficulty. Let him know there are no right or wrong answers. If your learner/client might feel too overwhelmed when presented with all the questions at once, split the questions into different pages showing only 3 to 5 questions on each page.

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<sup>2</sup> VAK questionnaire

[www.businessballs.com/howardgardnermultipleintelligences.htm#vark](http://www.businessballs.com/howardgardnermultipleintelligences.htm#vark) *learning styles model*



## Assessment Format 1

Put a tick (✓) on the sentence that best describes you. Add the number of ticks (✓) for each column and record your total.

When using a new equipment, I prefer to	read instructions	listen to or ask for explanation	have a go and learn by 'trial and error'	
When seeking travel directions, I..	look at a map	ask for spoken directions	follow my nose or use a compass	
When cooking a new dish I..	follow a recipe	call a friend for explanation	follow my instinct, tasting as I cook	
To teach someone something, I..	write instructions	explain verbally	demonstrate and let them have a go	
I tend to say..	"I see what you mean"	"I hear what you are saying"	"I know how you feel"	
I tend to say..	"show me"	"tell me"	"let me try"	
I tend to say..	"watch how I do it"	"listen to me explain"	"you have a go"	
I prefer these leisure activities	museums or galleries	music or conversation	physical activities or making things	
When shopping I generally tend to..	look and decide	discuss with shop staff	try on, handle or test	
When choosing a holiday I..	read the brochures	listen to recommendations	imagine the experience	
When learning a new skill ...	I watch what the teacher is doing	I talk through with the teacher what I'm supposed to do	I like to give it a try and work it out as I go along by doing it	
When choosing from a restaurant menu..	I imagine what the food will look like	I think through the options in my head	I imagine what the food will taste like	
When listening to a band ...	I sing along in my head or out loud	I listen to the lyrics and the beats	I move in time with the music	
When concentrating I..	focus on the words or pictures	discuss problem and possible solutions in my head	move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils, touch unrelated things	

I remember things best by..	writing notes or keeping printed details	saying them aloud or repeating key points	doing and practising the activity, or imagining it being done
When anxious, I..	visualise the worst-case scenarios	talk over in my head what worries me most	can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
I feel especially connected to others because of	how they look	what they say to me	how they make me feel
When I revise for an exam, I..	write revision notes (using many colours)	I repeat notes to myself or to other people	imagine making the movement or creating the formula
When explaining something to someone, I tend to..	show them what I mean	explain in different ways till they understand	encourage them to try and help through the idea as they try
My main interests are	Photography, watching films or people	listening to music, listening to radio or talking to friends	physical/sports activities, fine wines, fine foods or dancing
Most of my free time is spent..	watching television	talking to friends	doing physical activity or making things
I first notice how people..	look and dress	sound and speak	stand and move
If I am very angry..	I replay in my mind what upsets me	I shout lots and tell people how I feel	I stomp about, slam doors and throw things
I find it easiest to remember	faces	names	things I have done
I think I can tell someone is lying because..	they avoid looking at you	their voice changes	the vibes I get from them
<b>totals</b>	<b>visual</b>	<b>auditory</b>	<b>kinesthetic</b>

©VAK learning styles self-test: Victoria Chislett MSc and Alan Chapman 2005.

This learning styles self-assessment tool is a rough guide to individual learning styles only - it is not a scientifically validated instrument. With thanks also to Anita Mountain and Chris Davidson for their advice in creating this tool.



## VAK assessment format 1 - SAMPLE ANSWER

	Visual		Auditory		Kinesthetic	
When using a new equipment, I prefer to	read instructions	√	listen to or ask for explanation		have a go and learn by 'trial and error'	
When seeking travel directions, I..	look at a map	√	ask for spoken directions		follow my nose or use a compass	
When cooking a new dish I..	follow a recipe		call a friend for explanation		follow my instinct, tasting as I cook	√
To teach someone something, I..	write instructions		explain verbally		demonstrate and let them have a go	√
I tend to say..	"I see what you mean"	√	"I hear what you are saying"		"I know how you feel"	
I tend to say..	"show me"		"tell me"	√	"let me try"	
I tend to say..	"watch how I do it"		"listen to me explain"	√	"you have a go"	
I prefer these leisure activities	museums or galleries		music or conversation	√	physical activities or making things	
When shopping I generally tend to..	look and decide		discuss with shop staff	√	try on, handle or test	
When choosing a holiday I..	read the brochures	√	listen to recommendations		imagine the experience	
When learning a new skill ...	I watch what the teacher is doing	√	I talk through with the teacher what <b>I'm supposed to do</b>		I like to give it a try and work it out as I go along by doing it	
When choosing from a restaurant menu..	I imagine what the food will look like		I think through the options in my head		I imagine what the food will taste like	√
When listening to a band ...	I sing along in my head or out loud	√	I listen to the lyrics and the beats		I move in time with the music	
When concentrating I..	focus on the words or pictures	√	discuss problem and possible solutions in my head		move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils, touch unrelated things	

I remember things best by..	writing notes or keeping printed details	√	saying them aloud or repeating key points	doing and practising the activity, or imagining it being done	
When anxious, I..	visualise the worst-case scenarios		talk over in my head what worries me most	√	can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
I feel especially connected to others because of	how they look		what they say to me		√
When I revise for an exam, I..	write revision notes (using many colours)		I repeat notes to myself or to other people	√	imagine making the movement or creating the formula
When explaining something to someone, I tend to..	show them what I mean		explain in different ways till they understand	√	encourage them to try and help through the idea as they try
My main interests are	Photography, watching films or people	√	listening to music, listening to radio or talking to friends		physical/sports activities, fine wines, fine foods or dancing
Most of my free time is spent..	watching television	√	talking to friends		doing physical activity or making things
I first notice how people..	look and dress	√	sound and speak		stand and move
If I am very angry..	I replay in my mind what upsets me	√	I shout lots and tell people how I feel		I stomp about, slam doors and throw things
I find it easiest to remember	faces	√	names		things I have done
I think I can tell someone is lying because..	they avoid looking at you		their voice changes	√	the vibes I get from them
<b>totals</b>	<b>Visual (13)</b>		<b>Auditory (8)</b>		<b>Kinesthetic (4)</b>

If you chose mostly A's, you have a **VISUAL** learning style.

If you chose mostly B's, you have an **AUDITORY** learning style.

If you chose mostly C's, you have a **KINESTHETIC** learning style.



## Assessment Format 2

Circle or tick the answer that most represents how you generally behave.

1. When I operate new equipment I generally:
  - a) read the instructions first
  - b) listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
  - c) go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it
  
2. When I need directions for travelling I usually:
  - a) look at a map
  - b) ask for spoken directions
  - c) follow my nose and maybe use a compass
  
3. When I cook a new dish, I like to:
  - a) follow a written recipe
  - b) call a friend for an explanation
  - c) follow my instincts, testing as I cook
  
4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:
  - a) write instructions down for them
  - b) give them a verbal explanation
  - c) demonstrate first and then let them have a go
  
5. I tend to say:
  - a) watch how I do it
  - b) listen to me explain
  - c) you have a go
  
6. During my free time I most enjoy:
  - a) going to museums and galleries
  - b) listening to music and talking to my friends
  - c) playing sport or doing DIY

7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to:
  - a) imagine what they would look like on me
  - b) discuss them with the shop staff
  - c) try them on and test them out
  
8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:
  - a) read lots of brochures
  - b) listen to recommendations from friends
  - c) imagine what it would be like to be there
  
9. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:
  - a) watching what the teacher is doing
  - b) **talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do**
  - c) giving it a try myself and work it out as I go
  
10. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:
  - a) imagine what the food will look like
  - b) talk through the options in my head or with my partner
  - c) imagine what the food will taste like
  
- 11. When I listen to a band, I can't help:**
  - a) watching the band members and other people in the audience
  - b) listening to the lyrics and the beats
  - c) moving in time with the music
  
12. When I concentrate, I most often:
  - a) focus on the words or the pictures in front of me
  - b) discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
  - c) move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things
  
13. My first memory is of:
  - a) looking at something
  - b) being spoken to
  - c) doing something

14. When I am anxious, I:
- a) visualise the worst-case scenarios
  - b) talk over in my head what worries me most
  - c) **can't sit still**, fiddle and move around constantly
15. I feel especially connected to other people because of:
- a) how they look
  - b) what they say to me
  - c) how they make me feel
16. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:
- a) write lots of revision notes and diagrams
  - b) talk over my notes, alone or with other people
  - c) imagine making the movement or creating the formula
17. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:
- a) show them what I mean
  - b) explain to them in different ways until they understand
  - c) encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it
18. I really love:
- a) watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching
  - b) listening to music, the radio or talking to friends
  - c) taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines or dancing
19. Most of my free time is spent:
- a) watching television
  - b) talking to friends
  - c) doing physical activity or making things
20. I first notice how people:
- a) look and dress
  - b) sound and speak
  - c) stand and move

21. If I am angry, I tend to:
- a) keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me
  - b) raise my voice and tell people how I feel
  - c) stamp about, slam doors and physically demonstrate my anger

22. I find it easiest to remember:
- a) faces
  - b) names
  - c) things I have done

23. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:
- a) they avoid looking at you
  - b) their voices changes
  - c) they give me funny vibes

24. I remember things best by:
- a) writing notes or keeping printed details
  - b) saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head
  - c) doing and practising the activity or imagining it being done

25. I tend to say:
- a) I see what you mean
  - b) I hear what you are saying
  - c) I know how you feel

Now add up the number of **A's**, **B's** and **C's** you selected.

**A's** = \_\_\_\_\_      **B's** = \_\_\_\_\_      **C's** = \_\_\_\_\_

If you chose mostly **A's**, you have a **VISUAL** learning style.

If you chose mostly **B's**, you have an **AUDITORY** learning style.

If you chose mostly **C's**, you have a **KINESTHETIC** learning style.

# Learning Styles Defined



Some people have very strong preferences, even to the extent that they have little or no preference in one or two of the styles. Other people have more evenly balanced preferences, with no particularly strong style. The point is simply to try to understand as much as you can about your client or **learner's strengths, and then make best use of learning methods** which suit their strengths.

Here are some suggestions pertaining to each learning style<sup>3</sup>:

## **Visual Learners:**

- use visual materials such as pictures, charts, maps, graphs, etc.
- have a clear view of your teachers when they are speaking so you can see their body language and facial expression
- use colour to highlight important points in text
- take notes or ask your teacher to provide handouts
- illustrate your ideas as a picture or brainstorming bubble before writing them down
- write a story and illustrate it
- use multi-media (e.g. computers, videos, and filmstrips)
- study in a quiet place away from verbal disturbances
- read illustrated books
- visualize information as a picture to aid memorization

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<sup>3</sup> VAK Learning styles

[www.ldpride.net/learning\\_style\\_work.html](http://www.ldpride.net/learning_style_work.html)

### **Auditory Learners:**

- participate in class discussions/debates
- make speeches and presentations
- use a tape recorder during lectures instead of taking notes
- read text out aloud
- create musical jingles to aid memorization
- create mnemonics to aid memorization
- discuss your ideas verbally
- dictate to someone while they write down your thoughts
- use verbal analogies, and story telling to demonstrate your point

### **Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners**

- take frequent study breaks
- move around to learn new things (e.g. read while on an exercise bike, mold a piece of clay to learn a new concept)
- work at a standing position
- chew gum while studying
- use bright colors to highlight reading material
- dress up your work space with posters
- if you wish, listen to music while you study
- skim through reading material to get a rough idea what it is about before settling down to read it in detail.



## **“GET TO KNOW ME”**

- 1. It is important to develop trust and rapport with your learner/client. Your learner/client must be comfortable with you before you try to informally assess his difficulties and find compensatory strategies.**
- 2. LDs are not constant or consistent. You need to constantly watch, adapt, revise, assess, and ask questions. What might work one day is not an automatic assurance that it would always work.**
- 3. Give your learner constant feedback and opportunities to employ the strategies you have shown.**
- 4. Often, you cannot use your own learning strategies to teach students with learning challenges. An explanation that seems clear to you may seem incomprehensible to your learner. Hence your explanations, instead of being helpful, become a frustration to the learner.**
- 5. Do not rely on one kind of explanation; you need to be flexible and adapt. Try to offer several different ways of explaining a topic.**

# Self Evaluation for Instructors/Teachers



Now that we understand our learners have preferred styles of learning, How can you ensure you apply all three VAK sensory categories to engage learning from your learners? How can you help them develop the categories they are less comfortable using? How can you ensure you are using various activities to suit all your clients/learners? Do you tend to communicate using your preferred sensory category or do you use more than one? The following checklist is adapted from Jamie Duncan and Laura Szmuch's article on "Complete and Integrated VAK in the classroom".<sup>4</sup>

## Self evaluation checklist

1. What activities do you like doing most with your learners?  
Keep a list of a few lessons and annotate them with a V, A, or K. See if one sensory category appears more than others.
2. What type of homework do you give?  
Is there a variety for different learners/clients?
3. How do you speak in class?  
Is your pace fast and high pitched (V); medium pace and pitch (A); slow and low (K)?
4. What is your personal teaching style?  
An instructor, who uses pictures and objects will appeal to a visual learner. Kinesthetic learners enjoy a teacher who moves among them giving assistance and offering hands-on help.
5. How do you deliver information in class?  
Do you tell them (A); do you have them read the material (V); do you give them a task to let them discover the information (K)?

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<sup>4</sup> Duncan, Jamie and Szmuch, Laura. Complete and Integrated VAK in the classroom  
[www.resourcefulteaching.com.ar](http://www.resourcefulteaching.com.ar)

# Checklist



Here is a checklist for community organizations, colleges or schools that may work with clients/learners with LD. This may help ease an action plan (career or employment plan, goal setting plan, family support plan, school assignments, etc) you are creating with your client/learner:

1. Clearly outline action plan assignments to allow clients/learner to plan the workload effectively, thus reducing anxiety.
2. Provide clear time lines and due dates for all assignments in both oral and written form.
3. When working with clients /learners with learning disabilities, introduce a variety of study strategies that will reinforce important concepts.
4. If reading is required in a workshop or assignment, provide the reading lists ahead of time.
5. Allow time to review and clarify information on overheads, charts and lecture material.
6. Signal important key words or concepts verbally by
  - writing on the board
  - underlining
  - or by highlighting
7. Read out information you write on the board.
8. Encourage the use of daily planners to record important information such as appointments, assignment due dates, and workshop sessions.
9. Minimize distractions in your learning environment.
10. When working with clients or learners learning disabilities, it is important to encourage, and to accept that skills may be at varying levels.



## ***"BE SENSITIVE TO MY NEEDS"***

- 1. Meet your learner/client in a private and confidential setting**
- 2. Avoid using jargon**
- 3. Listen to your learner/client attentively and avoid interrupting her or talking too much**
- 4. Be culturally sensitive to your learner/client**
- 5. Keep note-taking to a minimum; do not let your learner/client feel like a case study subject**
- 6. Follow verbal and non-verbal cues from your learner/client to determine if you should continue with the approach you chose**
- 7. Do not be judgmental**
- 8. Be tactful but honest with your client/learner**
- 9. Ask open-ended questions**
- 10. Remain relaxed**
- 11. Avoid being sarcastic and defensive**
- 12. Remember that learning challenges cannot be "fixed". Help your learner/client identify their learning strengths instead.**

# Learning Strategies for LD Students



It is a myth that students with learning difficulties cannot learn. They have the skills to learn how to use strategies and accommodations to help them achieve their goals. It is important for community service organizations, schools, colleges to help such learners build on their strengths. Some learners may find it hard to articulate what their strengths are. Below are some strategies that are based on what you may already know of your client/learner. This is taken from Pat Hatt's resource "*Supporting and Sharing: Best Practices in Learning Disabilities Practitioner Training*" (Source: *Skills for Life*<sup>5</sup>)

If your learner/client:

- ❖ can remember words he knows
- ❖ guesses words that look like the word eg. attraction or attractive
- ❖ has trouble with big words
- ❖ has trouble with pronunciation
- ❖ cannot blend sounds well
- ❖ may know sounds but mixes them up when sounding out
- ❖ does not respond to rhyming clues
- ❖ spells based on known words

Use these strategies to build on strengths:

- ❖ use visual cues like diagrams, pictures, graphs to reinforce concepts
- ❖ provide learner with written instructions
- ❖ talk at a slower pace
- ❖ give one task at a time
- ❖ repeat instructions if needed

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<sup>5</sup> *Skills for Life*

[www.contactpoint.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=416&catid=63&Itemid=37](http://www.contactpoint.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=416&catid=63&Itemid=37)

If your learner/client:

- ❖ can sound out words
- ❖ can blend sounds
- ❖ can substitute letters
- ❖ is able to work with word families or rhyming words\
- ❖ is very verbal and chatty
- ❖ **cannot recognise words that she "knows"**
- ❖ has trouble with oral reading, stumbles and hesitates
- ❖ gets lost and uses finger to find spot
- ❖ spells based on the sounds
- ❖ has problems with irregular sounds (ough, eigh)

Use these strategies to build on strengths:

- ❖ read directions aloud and provide oral instructions
- ❖ use colour coding and colour transparencies
- ❖ enlarge text
- ❖ allow learner to record lessons or listen to text on tape

If your learner/client:

- ❖ takes longer to understand and respond to questions but the quality of the answer is good
- ❖ has trouble giving clear, concise answers to simple questions
- ❖ complains of trouble focussing
- ❖ needs rewording of questions but answers are good
- ❖ has trouble with attendance and follow through

Use these strategies to build on strengths:

- ❖ provide more time for the learner to finish work
- ❖ provide a calendar with weekly plan
- ❖ provide written detailed explanation for projects
- ❖ help the learner develop task management skills
- ❖ break the tasks into simpler tasks
- ❖ help the learner develop skills for organizing space by physically showing them – show how to organize notes, binder, workspace, etc.

# Community Strength and Support for Haida Gwaii

Here are some organizations that you can connect with on behalf of your learner/client. Organizations are categorised from local to national.

## **Services on Island**

### **Northern Health**

[www.northernhealth.ca](http://www.northernhealth.ca)

#### **1. Speech & Language Program**

*Speech-language screening and assessment for infant and preschool children, early speech-language intervention and therapy*

Masset Office

(250)626-4725

#### **2. Mental Health and Addiction Services**

*Clinical assessment & treatment; life skills training; recreational & occupational therapy; vocational rehabilitation*

Masset Office

(250) 626-6051

Queen Charlotte Office

(250)559-8765

#### **3. Infant Development Program**

*Family centred programs to assist infants overcome developmental challenges.*

Masset Office

(250) 626-4716

Queen Charlotte Office

(250) 559-8910

#### **4. Supported Child Development**

Consulting and support services to children, families and child care centres.

Masset Office

250) 626-4717

#### **Skidegate Band Council**

[www.skidegate.ca](http://www.skidegate.ca)

##### **1. Skidegate Health Centre**

*Services include community health, pregnancy & breastfeeding outreach, dental clinic, mental health*

Skidegate Office

(250) 559-4610

##### **2. Skidegate Education Department**

*Aboriginal education services, post secondary and upgrading opportunities.*

Skidegate Office

(250) 559-4496

##### **3. Social Development Department**

*Social assistance programs for First Nations.*

Skidegate Office

(250) 559-2317

#### **Old Massett Band Council**

##### **1. Old Massett Health Centre**

*Services include community health, pregnancy & breastfeeding outreach, dental clinic, mental health*

Old Massett Office

(250) 626-3911

##### **2. Old Massett Education Department**

*Aboriginal education services, post secondary and upgrading opportunities.*

Old Massett Office

(250) 626-5119

## **Haida Gwaii Career Development Centre**

[www.haidagwaiijobs.ca](http://www.haidagwaiijobs.ca)

*Assistance in finding career path, job search, job training & funding assistance, self-employed options*

Masset Office

(250) 626-3813

Queen Charlotte Office

(250) 559-7731

Skidegate Office

(250) 559-0043

## **Haida Gwaii Community Futures**

[www.haidagwaiifutures.ca](http://www.haidagwaiifutures.ca)

*One-stop business registration, assistance in setting business plan & financing packages, business skills training & development*

Masset Office

(250) 626-5594

Queen Charlotte Office

(250) 559-2343 (Tuesdays & Thursdays)

Skidegate Office

(250) 559-4499 (Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays)

## **Northwest Community College**

[www.nwcc.bc.ca](http://www.nwcc.bc.ca)

*Career & College Preparation opportunities, continuing education, Industry Training & Business Technology courses*

Masset Campus

(250) 626-3670

Skidegate Campus

(250) 559-7885 ext 237

Queen Charlotte Campus

(250) 559-8222

## **School District 50**

[www.sd50.bc.ca](http://www.sd50.bc.ca)

*K-12 education, early learning programs, adult dogwood & E-Bus learning opportunities*

Queen Charlotte Board Office

(250) 559-8471

Student Services Project Manager

(250) 559-8822

## **Services in B.C.**

### **Hecate Strait Employment Development Society & Training Centre**

[www.hseds.ca](http://www.hseds.ca)

*Self Employment Benefits Program*

Prince Rupert Office

1-800-808-3988

### **Skeena Native Development Society**

[www.snds.bc.ca](http://www.snds.bc.ca)

*Sponsorship Funding For Aboriginals*

Toll Free: 1-800-721-1333

### **BC Coalition of People with Disabilities**

[www.bccpd.bc.ca](http://www.bccpd.bc.ca)

*Disability advocacy for individuals and groups, community need programs and workshops*

### **Literacy BC**

[www.literacybc.ca](http://www.literacybc.ca)

*Supports literacy and lifelong learning in British Columbia, literacy research, free provincial resource library for learners and instructors*

### **Whole Life and Learning Disabilities in Adult Literacy**

[www.ldandwholelifelearning.ca](http://www.ldandwholelifelearning.ca)

*Resourceful site for educators to share ideas and resources to support adult learners who may have a learning disability*

## **Learning Disabilities Association of British Columbia**

[www.ldabc.ca](http://www.ldabc.ca)

*Resource site for parents, educators on information and tools to help with LD*

## **Services in Canada**

### **Canadian Council on Social Development: Disability Research Information Page (DRIP)**

[www.ccsd.ca](http://www.ccsd.ca)

### **Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of Canada**

[www.cafc.ca](http://www.cafc.ca)

### **Anxiety Disorders Association of Ontario**

[www.anxietyontario.com](http://www.anxietyontario.com)

### **Ontario Brain Injury Association**

[www.obia.on.ca](http://www.obia.on.ca)

### **Canadian Dyslexia Association**

[www.dyslexiaassociation.ca](http://www.dyslexiaassociation.ca)

### **Canadian Mental Health Association**

[www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

### **Link-Up Employment Services**

[www.linkup.ca](http://www.linkup.ca)

### **Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)**

[www.ldac-acta.ca](http://www.ldac-acta.ca)

### **Literacy for Independent Living**

[www.nald.ca/ava/english/english.htm](http://www.nald.ca/ava/english/english.htm)

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