

Quick tips to create an inclusive classroom

1. Give directions in more than one way.

Remove barriers to understanding by giving directions out loud and in writing. If possible, have students repeat the directions to make sure they understand them.

Example: Use a tool like [Screencastify](#) to record yourself providing verbal and visual directions.

Dive deeper: [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)



2. Use consistent verbal and visual cues.

Use clear and consistent verbal and visual cues to remind students of expectations.

Example: Before a group activity, verbally remind students about noise levels. Display a site like [Bouncy Balls](#) so students can use this visual aid to monitor classroom noise.

Dive deeper: [Nonverbal signals](#)

3. Use graphic organizers.

Use graphic organizers to help students organize and understand information. Provide completed examples to help students learn how to use them.

Example: A concept map can help students make connections within the content. This can help all students, but it may be extra helpful for neurodivergent students.

Dive deeper: [Download: Graphic organizers for kids](#)

4. Assign roles for group work.

Assign clearly defined roles in group projects. This can help students with different abilities and strengths contribute meaningfully to the project.

Example: During group projects, assign consistent roles across the groups. You might have a reader, a note-taker, a materials manager, and a timekeeper.

Dive deeper: [Flexible grouping](#)

5. Be specific with praise and feedback.

Praise students in ways that make it clear what they did correctly. Give feedback on effort, process, and specific behaviors. Include phrases that encourage students to self-praise.

Example: “Nice work getting your homework out of your folder first thing this morning. I hope you’re feeling proud of yourself for all the effort you’ve been putting in.”

Dive deeper: [Effective praise](#)

6. Create an accommodations cheat sheet for yourself.

Make a list of your students’ accommodations. Put the most common accommodations first. Print copies to have with you for assessments, team planning, and grading.

Example: Keep a copy of your cheat sheet on a clipboard for assessment days to make sure you’re providing appropriate testing accommodations.

Dive deeper: [Accommodations and modifications](#)

7. Do an accessibility check on learning materials.

When picking materials for a lesson, think about how accessible they are. Remember that not all students with disabilities have formal accommodation plans at school.

Example: When you test your videos before class, practice turning on the closed captions and adjusting the video speed.

Dive deeper: [Assistive technology and adaptive tools in school](#)

8. Survey your students.

Use a survey to learn about your students’ backgrounds, interests, strengths, and challenges. Use this information — along with IEPs, 504 plans, and English-language learner assessment results — to create engaging lesson plans.

Example: If some of your students say they enjoy Minecraft, you can integrate [Minecraft Education](#) into a choice board activity.

Dive deeper: [Student and family questionnaires](#)

9. Give students choices.

Give students flexible ways to reach learning goals. Offer options for how they can engage with content and show their understanding.

Example: During history class, give students options for how to show their understanding of an event. They could write an article, create an art project, or make a video or podcast.

Dive deeper: [Lesson planning with UDL](#)