

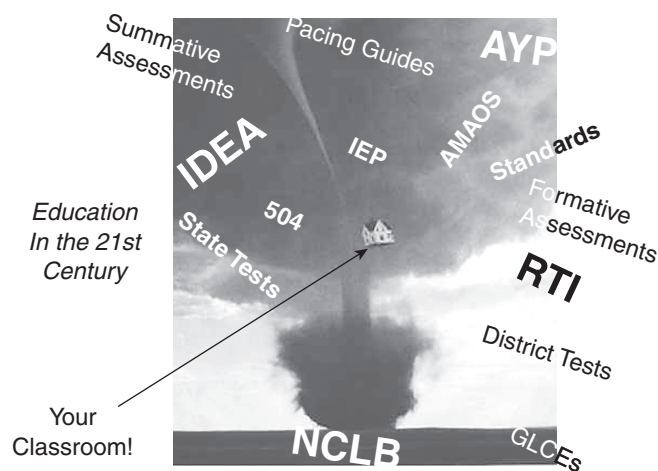
Preface

As teachers we have a choice. We can choose to see our students' differences as an obstacle to reaching and teaching them. Or we can be joyfully curious, choosing to see the possibilities and the gifts that each student brings to our teaching and to our lives.

—Kathleen Kryza, Alicia Duncan, & S. Joy Stephens (2009, p. 2)

We are truly excited about the publication of our third book together, which is based on the C U KAN and chunk, chew, and check chapters from our first two books, *Inspiring Middle and Secondary Learners* (2007) and *Inspiring Elementary Learners* (2008). Our readers and the teachers we work with kept telling us that the C U KAN and the chunk, chew, and check framework made it easier for them to implement effective, differentiated instruction. When they asked for more, we said, “Okay, here it is!”

So the goal of this book is quite simply—keep it simple! Most of us already feel bombarded with the whirlwind of initiatives we are expected to address in today’s classrooms such as Response to Intervention (RTI), Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Understanding by Design (UBD), to name only a few.



We created C U KAN and chunk, chew, and check as memorable and doable frameworks to support and transform our teaching from the chaotic frenzy that makes us feel like Dorothy when she rode the tornado into Oz to having that calm sense of inner knowing about our teaching that Dorothy had when she realized the power to get home was always inside her.

From these two frameworks we can create a clear vision of a classroom that is intentionally differentiated. The C U KAN framework helps us know where we are going. The CCC framework tells us how to get there. These frameworks help us to connect and simplify the UBD, RTI, and UDL initiatives into our classroom instruction (see Figure 0.1 for a schematic representation). Note that C U KAN provides a simplified framework for helping us design clear and meaningful targets for our lessons, while the CCC framework shows us where in our lesson to plug in the strategies to help students access the target.

FIGURE 0.1 Connecting Educational Initiatives to C U KAN and CCC Frameworks

Initiative	Intent	Data Needed	Questions to Ask	Making It Real
Understanding by Design (UBD)	Intentionally teach standards and benchmarks in meaningful ways using a six page template	Student interests, readiness, learning styles, and preferences	How can we make learning meaningful for our students? How do we know if students are learning the understand, know, and able to do of a lesson?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify your target 2. Know your students 3. Vary the pathways <p>C U KAN: Give it a go! Write clear and meaningful learning targets for the understand, know, and able to do on a one page template</p>
Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Intentionally provide access to information with multiple means: having flexible goals, methods, materials, and assessments	Student interests, readiness, learning styles, and preferences	Where in the lesson do we need to provide multiple means of access?	<p>Chunk, Chew, and Check:</p> <p>Doable strategies, activities, and resources for planning multiple means of access during the input, process, or output of learning</p>

Response to Intervention (RTI)	Intentionally address levels of learning differences and remediate learner deficits	What is working or not working for the student?	Where in the lesson do we need to address levels of learning and remediate learner deficits?	Chunk, Chew, and Check: Practical approaches to tier the chunk, chew, or check portion of a lesson
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This easy-to-use, practical book will show how to—

1. Identify a clear learning target
2. Know your students, as people and as learners
3. Understand how to vary the learning pathways that will lead these many different learners to the same learning target

In Chapter 1 of this book, we refer to a lesson-planning framework we call the C U KAN framework, an acronym based on the following components—

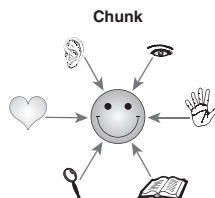
- **Concept:** the big overarching idea of a unit or lesson
- **Understand:** the underlying principles that tell why the concept is important to learn
- **Know:** key facts and vocabulary
- **Able to do:** skills of the discipline that students need
- **Now you get it:** the way students demonstrate understanding (transfer) of the targeted learning objective

We use the C U KAN framework to develop clear, focused learning targets so that our lessons are relevant and rigorous for all learners, *and* also meet our state standards and benchmarks. (By the way, we like the name C U KAN because it inspires us to do the important work we do. *See, you can! See, we can* teach for meaning as well as teach to the standards and benchmarks. It’s a joyful reminder that helps us improve the quality of our lessons.)

You’ll notice that our chapters also begin with this acronym. It frames the content of each chapter as a teacher-learning target with the same components we use when creating lesson plans for students.

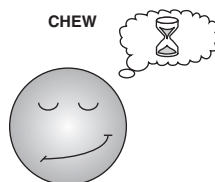
After clearly defining our learning target, we are then faced with the seemingly daunting task of helping very different learners reach that target. An important component in making this happen is to know and understand how different learners learn. We need to know our students as people *and* as learners. Chapter 2 offers ideas for getting to know our students and building a community that honors and accepts all learners. In Chapter 3 we define the second key framework that allows us to differentiate the pathways for all students to reach the same learning target. The chunk, chew, and check framework includes the following parts:

Chunk, (input): *Same learning target, different ways to input new information into learning brains.*



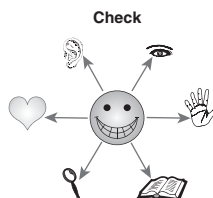
The brain learns best when it receives new information in small chunks. Because each brain perceives incoming information differently, we need to vary how we offer chunks of new learning.

Chew (process): *Same learning target, different ways for learners to process new information.*



All brains have a unique way of connecting new information to what it already knows. Therefore, we need to offer students a variety of ways to chew on new information we have presented to them.

Check (output): *Same learning target, different ways for learners to output what has been learned.*



We know that individuals possess unique talents and therefore demonstrate understanding in their own way. We need to balance the ways we formatively and summatively check for student understanding.

Keeping the chunk, chew, and check framework in mind as we design our lessons will help us vary our teaching and offer better access to learning for all students in our classrooms. Every lesson, every day, we can begin to think this way:

“Chunk, chew, and check . . . it’s how the brain learns best!”

Chapters 4 (chunk), 5 (chew), and 6 (check) offer dozens of practical ideas on how to vary lessons at both the elementary and the secondary level. Each of these three chapters includes the following:

- Ideas for varying that part of the lesson (chunk, chew, or check) by whole group, student choice/interests, and student readiness
- Ideas, strategies, and lesson examples that work for gifted, special education, and English language learners
- Technology ideas
- Lesson examples at elementary, middle, and high school

Finally, in Chapter 7, we show various ways to pull it all together: how to intentionally design differentiated lessons that weave in and out of chunk, chew, and check strategies and differentiate by whole class, choice, or readiness. We've included sample lessons at both elementary and secondary levels to use as a guide. (Keep in mind that our first two books are filled with lessons and rubrics to support you as you continue to grow your skills.)

Just as Dorothy and her friends followed the Yellow Brick Road one step at a time to lead them to the Great Oz and find their way home, if we approach our challenges one step at a time, we *too* will find our way home.



Dorothy has C U KAN and chunk, chew, and check in her basket of teaching tools to help her organize all her district initiatives

“You have plenty of courage, I am sure,” answered Oz. “All you need is confidence in yourself. There is no living thing that is not afraid when it faces danger. The true courage is in facing danger when you are afraid, and that kind of courage you have in plenty.”

—L. Frank Baum, from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, 1900