

# “Empower the Learner” Profile: A Tool for Advocacy and Self-Advocacy

Presented by  
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Developed by Kathleen  
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Empower the Learner, LLC



2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE

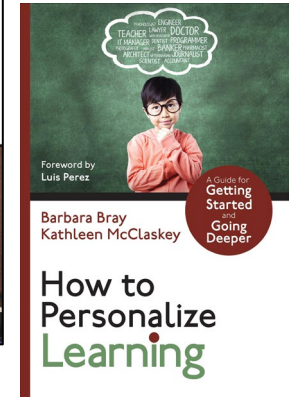
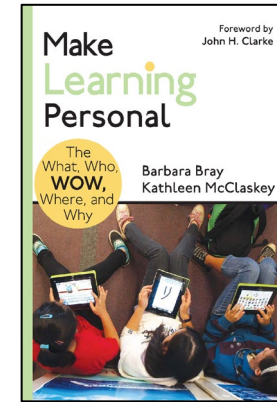


What is your GOAL  
for today's session?





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 funded by the  
 Maine  
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# Session Roadmap

- **5 Factors that Impact Learning (SoLD)**
- **“Empower the Learner” Profile - Identity**
  - **Who I Am**
  - **How I Learn (using the UDL Lens)**
  - **What I Aspire to Be**
- **ETL Profile - A Tool for Advocacy & Self-Advocacy**

# From the Science of Learning and Development (SoLD): 5 Factors that Impact Learning

## Mindfulness

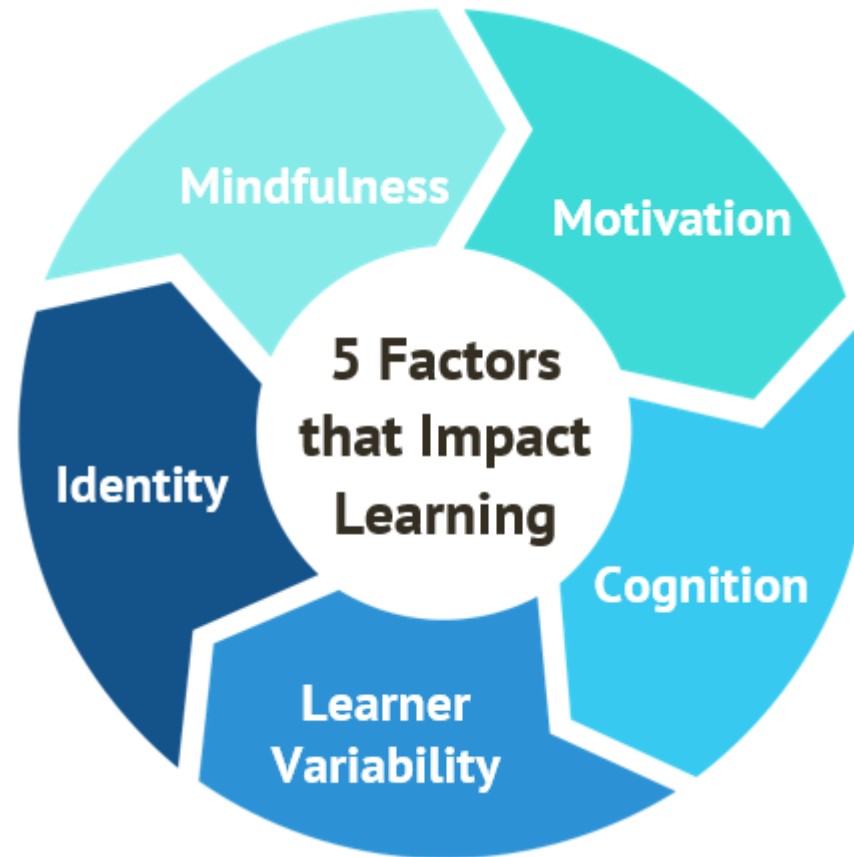
Present moment awareness  
Focus and Concentration  
Self-Regulation

## Identity

Self-understanding  
Sense of Belonging  
Navigating Identity

## Learner Variability

Life Experiences  
Developmental State  
Learning Differences



## Motivation

Value  
Self-Efficacy  
Sense of Control

## Cognition

Focused Attention  
Effective Practice  
Metacognitive Thinking  
High Quality Feedback  
Meaningful Encoding

# Identity

Principles	How it impacts learning
<b>Self-Understanding</b>	We learn best when we have a deep understanding of who we are and how we learn so that we can use this knowledge to support and enhance our learning.
<b>Sense of Belonging</b>	We learn best when we feel connected to, as well as accepted by, the people and environment around us.
<b>Navigating Identity</b>	We learn best when positive beliefs associated with our <b>identity</b> are maximized and when negative beliefs are minimized or buffered against.

# Learner Variability

Principles	How it impacts learning
<b>Life and Learning Experiences</b>	We learn best when our unique life advantages and adversities are identified, acknowledged and understood, with systems for supportive response and action plans.
<b>Developmental State</b>	We learn best when our experiences align with where we are developmentally.
<b>Learning Differences</b>	We learn best when our unique learning needs are identified, and resources and skill development are aligned with those needs.



# My Identity = “Empower the Learner” Profile™

## My Identity

To develop a positive self image to have agency in my learning and to self-advocate in the way I learn.

## Who I am

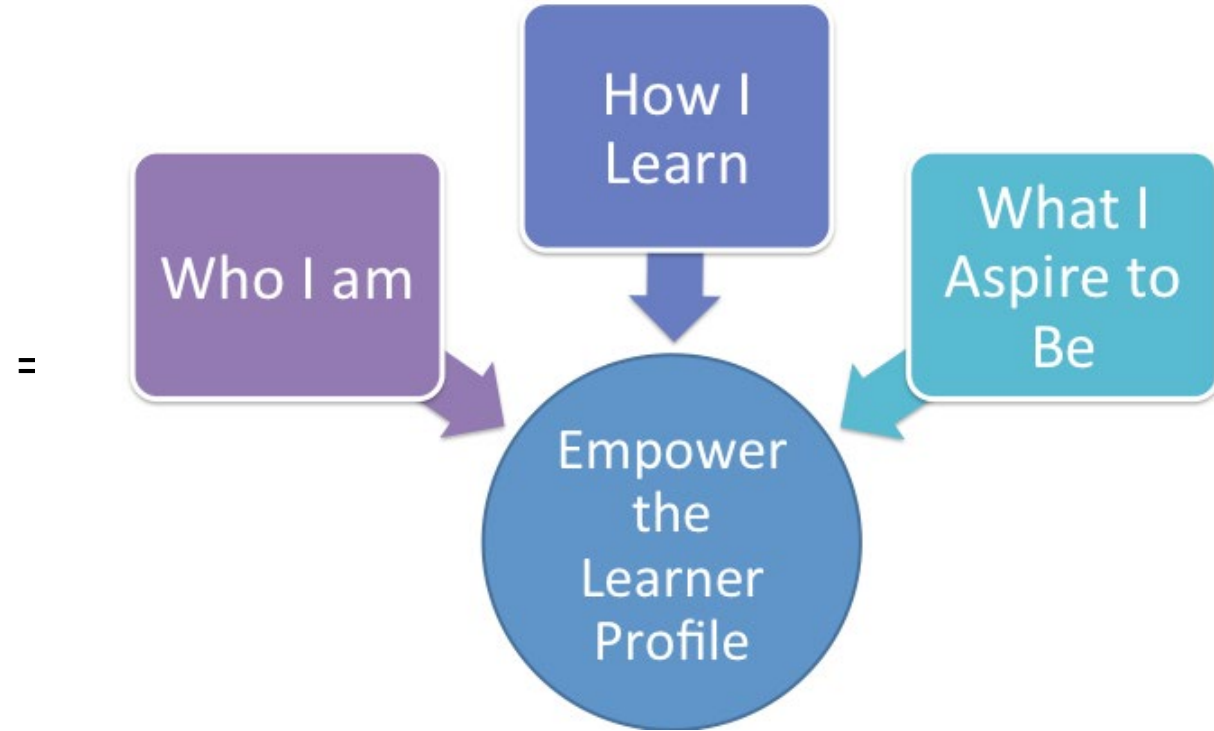
My culture, what is special about me, what I am most proud of, words that describe me, how I want to make a difference, things I love to do.

## How I learn

My strengths, challenges, preferences and needs to **Access** and process information, to **Engage** with content and concepts, and to **Express** what I know and understand.

## What I Aspire to Be

My talents and interests, my passions and aspirations, my hopes and dreams.



**“Identity is at the core of adolescent social and emotional learning.”**

(Reference: *Science of Adolescent Learning: How Identity and Empowerment Influence Student Learning*. Alliance for Excellent Education, August 2019, all4ed.org.)



# Introducing the Adapted Version of the ETL Profile for the Neurodivergent Learner



**THE Empower the Learner PROFILE**

Adapted Version for the Neurodivergent Learner

empowerthelerner.com








**Jacob Smith**  
Age 14 • 9th Grade

How I Learn			
	Strengths	Challenges	Needs
<b>ACCESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can visualize what I hear.</li> <li>I connect to ideas I already know.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I do not always understand what I read.</li> <li>I have trouble focusing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I need to use a text-to-speech tool for reading.</li> <li>I prefer video for understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>ENGAGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I like to lead others.</li> <li>I work well with others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't like doing difficult tasks.</li> <li>I have a difficult time in organizing for a project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I need tasks to be broken down into smaller tasks.</li> <li>I prefer to work with a partner.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPRESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I draw what I am thinking.</li> <li>I like telling stories orally.</li> <li>I am a good presenter / speaker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have trouble putting thoughts on paper.</li> <li>I find note taking difficult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I need to use a note taking tool.</li> <li>I prefer graphic organizers to help to organize ideas.</li> <li>I prefer to present orally.</li> </ul>

**What I aspire to be** Interests / Talents / Passions / Hopes & Dreams

I am interested in soccer, baseball and history. I am talented in storytelling, public speaking, drawing, connecting the dots and mental math. I am passionate about fishing and I aspire to have my own business one day that helps animals.

# What is included in the Empower the Learner Profile?

- **Who I Am**
- **How I Learn** – focus on Access, Engage or Express - Indicate strengths and challenges.
- **What I Aspire to Be**

 <p><b>Jacob Smith</b> Age 14 • 9th Grade</p>	<p><b>How I Learn</b></p>		
	<p><b>Strengths</b></p>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p>	<p><b>Needs</b></p>
<p><b>ACCESS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can visualize what I hear.</li> <li>• I connect to ideas I already know.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not always understand what I read.</li> <li>• I have trouble focusing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I need to use a text-to-speech tool for reading.</li> <li>• I prefer video for understanding.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>What I aspire to be</b> Interests / Talents / Passions / Hopes &amp; Dreams</p> <p>I am interested in soccer, baseball and history. I am talented in storytelling, public speaking, drawing, connecting the dots and mental math. I am passionate about fishing and I aspire to have my own business one day that helps animals.</p>			

# Let's Begin with "Who I Am"

## Who I Am CHAPTER 1



## What is included?

- I am good at ...
- In school I like to...
- When I am not in school, I like to...
- For fun, I like to...
- Something about me you might not know...
- I am glad about...
- Something I am worried or nervous about...
- My family and where we are from...
- Something I want to learn or know about...
- Words that best represent me.



# Sharing an example of an ETL Profile...

## Who I Am

### CHAPTER 1

I would start on this page for the students and eliminate 1-7 but keep those for parents.



...and where the idea of the adapted version of the “Empower the Learner” Profile began!

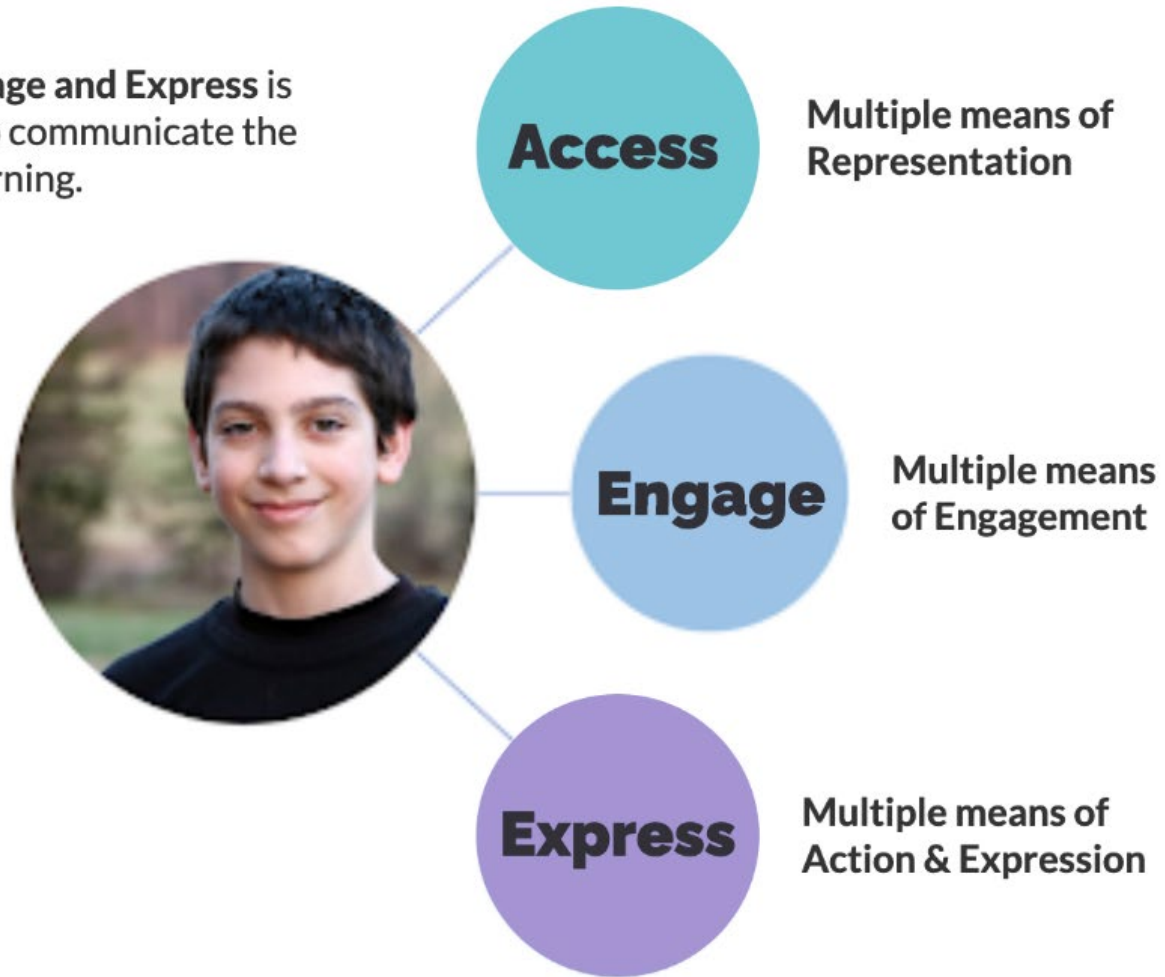
Carrie Woodcock

# Next is... How I Learn



# How I Learn

The **UDL Lens of Access, Engage and Express** is the common language used to communicate the what, why and how of our learning. It is based on cognitive neuroscience, **Universal Design for Learning**.



# Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

The Neuroscience behind the What, How and Why of Learning.

## The UDL Lens of Access, Engage and Express™

### Access

is how we get information and transform it into useable knowledge through:

- digital media
- print
- touch
- audio
- visual media

### Engage

Is how we connect with content, concepts and ideas by:

- problem-solving
- designing
- questioning
- collaboration
- reflection
- video or graphics
- interactives

### Express

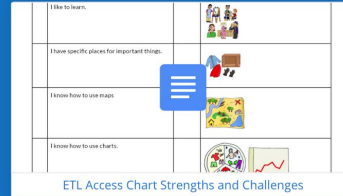
is how we express or take action about what we know and understand by:

- writing
- presenting
- storytelling
- multimedia
- building/making
- modeling
- making sense of learning

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# How I Learn using the ACCESS, ENGAGE and EXPRESS Charts

## How do you ACCESS learning?



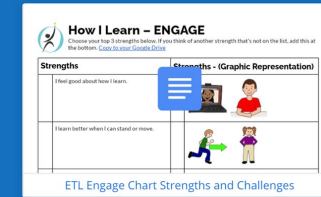
Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

At another time, go over the CHALLENGES section.

Choose your top 3 STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES. On the next two pages, put your STRENGTHS on the STRENGTHS page and CHALLENGES on the CHALLENGES page.

## How do you best ENGAGE (Work with)?



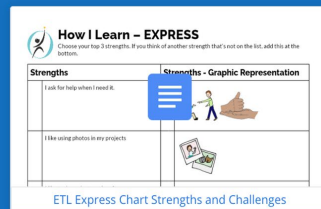
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## How do you best EXPRESS?



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Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

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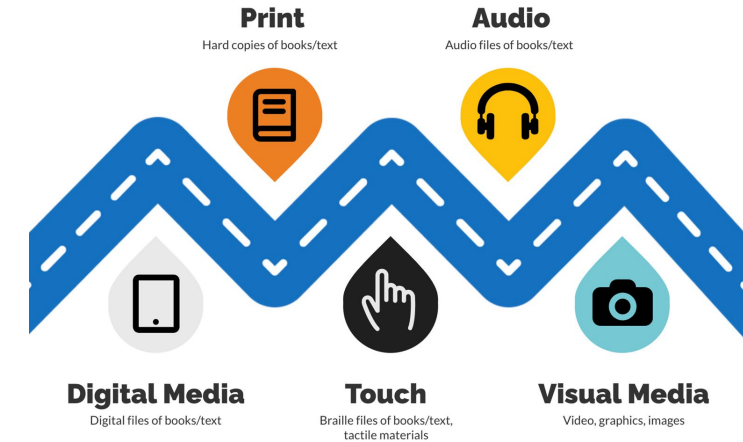
Choose your top 3 STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES. On the next two pages, put your STRENGTHS on the STRENGTHS page and CHALLENGES on the CHALLENGES page.



# ACCESS Strengths

**ACCESS:** How a learner accesses (gets) and processes information into usable knowledge.

- Let's take a look at the **ACCESS** chart around **Strengths**



## How I Learn – ACCESS Strengths

Choose your top 3 strengths. If you think of another strength that's not on the list, add this at the bottom

Strengths	Strengths (Graphic Representation)
I ask good questions.	
I like to learn.	
I have specific places for important things.	
I know how to use maps	

## How do you ACCESS learning?

Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

At another time, go over the CHALLENGES section.

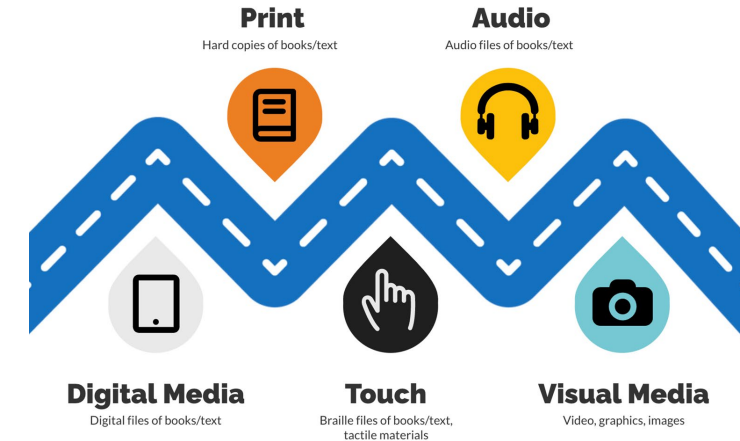
Choose your top 3 STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES. On the next two pages, put your STRENGTHS on the STRENGTHS page and CHALLENGES on the CHALLENGES page.

### Begin on Page 51

# ACCESS Challenges

**ACCESS:** How a learner can access (get) and process information into usable knowledge.

- Let's take a look at the **ACCESS** chart around **Challenges**



## How I Learn – ACCESS Challenges

Choose your top 3 challenges. If you think of another challenge that's not on the list, add this at the bottom.

Challenges	Challenges (Graphic Representation)
I have trouble seeing.	
I have trouble hearing.	
I need help reading.	
I read slowly.	

## How do you ACCESS learning?

Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

At another time, go over the CHALLENGES section.

Choose your top 3 STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES. On the next two pages, put your STRENGTHS on the STRENGTHS page and CHALLENGES on the CHALLENGES page.

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# ENGAGE Strengths

**ENGAGE:** How a learner engages with content, concepts or ideas.

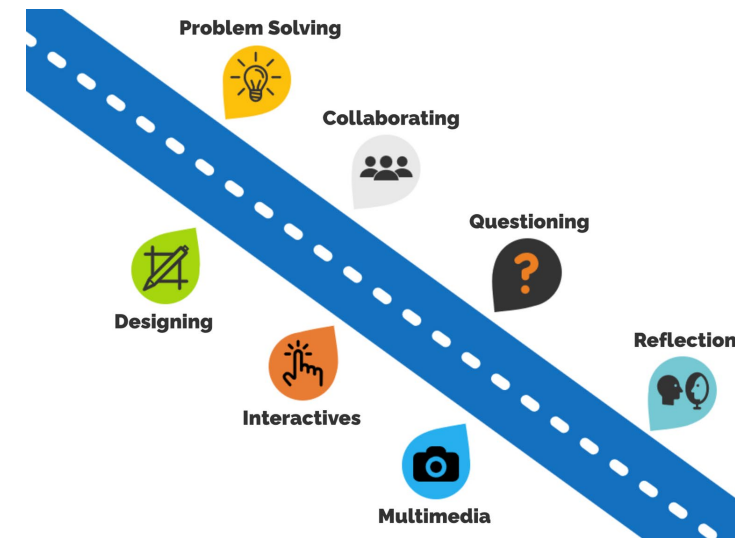
- Let's take a look at the **ENGAGE** chart around Strengths.



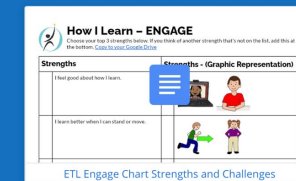
## How I Learn – ENGAGE

Choose your top 3 strengths below. If you think of another strength that's not on the list, add this at the bottom of this document.

Strengths	Strengths - (Graphic Representation)
I feel good about how I learn.	
I learn better when I can stand or move.	
I like to find answers to learn.	
I like putting things together with my hands.	



## How do you best ENGAGE (Work with)?



Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

At another time, go over the CHALLENGES section.

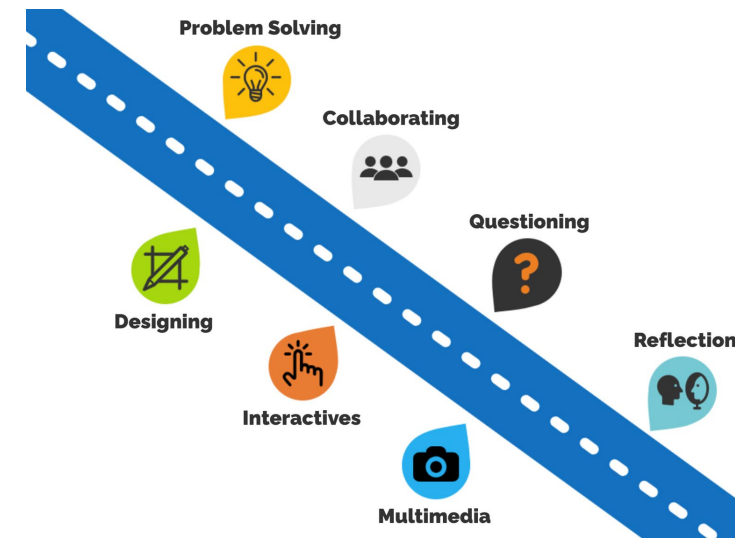
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## Begin on Page 51

# ENGAGE Challenges

**ENGAGE:** How a learner engages (works) with content, concepts or ideas.

- Let's take a look at the **ENGAGE** chart around Challenges.



## How I Learn – ENGAGE

Choose your top 3 challenges below. If you think of another challenge that's not on the list, add this at the bottom.

Challenges	Challenges (Graphic Representation)
I get upset and tired easily.	
It is hard to learn something new.	
I get tired easily with new and a lot of information.	
I need help remembering what I have been told to do.	

## How do you best ENGAGE (Work with)?

Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

Go through the STRENGTHS section first with your child, then take a break.

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### Revis on Page 51

# EXPRESS Strengths

**EXPRESS:** How a learner expresses or takes action around what they know and understand.

- Let's take a look at the **EXPRESS** chart around Strengths.



## How I Learn – EXPRESS

Choose your top 3 strengths. If you think of another strength that's not on the list, add this at the bottom.

Strengths	Strengths - Graphic Representation
I ask for help when I need it.	
I like using photos in my projects	
I like to do projects and crafts.	
I like to talk about my work in front of people.	

## How do you best EXPRESS?

ETL Express Chart Strengths and Challenges

Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

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# EXPRESS Challenges

**EXPRESS:** How a learner expresses or takes action around what they know and understand.

- Let's take a look at the **EXPRESS** chart around Challenges.



## How I Learn – EXPRESS

Choose your top 3 challenges. If you think of another challenge that's not on the list, add this at the bottom.

Challenges	Challenges - Graphic Representation
It is hard for me to show what I know.	
I feel nervous talking in front of people.	
I need help starting writing assignments.	
I do not like to be in charge of a group	

## How do you best EXPRESS?

Click the chart on the left to view a list of STRENGTHS and CHALLENGES.

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# Begins on Page 51

# Sami's Access Strengths & Challenges

## How I ACCESS (get) information?

Strengths - what I am good at;

- I ask good questions.
- I am motivated to learn.
- I understand what I read.
- I am a hands-on learner.
- I learn by helping others.
- I learn best using multiple senses.
- I understand content best with pictures.
- I am a good listener.
- I am good with using technology and mobile devices.

Challenges - what I need help with;

- I have trouble seeing - I wear glasses,
- I read slowly with the hard copy of printed text,
- I have to reread information to understand,
- I have trouble focusing,
- I get distracted easily,
- I have trouble following written directions.

## My Top 3 ACCESS (get) Strengths



1. Hands on learner



2. I am good using technology.



3. I learn best using multiple senses.

## My Top 3 ACCESS (get) Challenges



1. I have trouble focusing.



2. I get distracted easily.



3. I have trouble following written directions.

# Brody's Engage Strengths & Challenges

## My Top 3 ENGAGE Strengths



I cooperate well when things are fun for me. Making up silly songs is a great way to get me to comply with the task at hand, especially when you put them to music!



I do great with praise and positive encouragement. I like to please people and make them happy. I also like to hear that you are proud of me when I complete a task.

I like to help others, especially when it comes to cleaning and keeping things as they should be. An example would be closing doors, cabinets, vacuuming, washing tables, etc.



## My Top 3 ENGAGE Challenges



I often say, "I can't" instead of asking for help.

I sometimes find it hard to get my point across and get frustrated when people don't understand me.

I also get frustrated when I know the expectation and someone keeps reminding me over and over. I like to do things at my own pace and appreciate it when I am given the time to do so on my own.





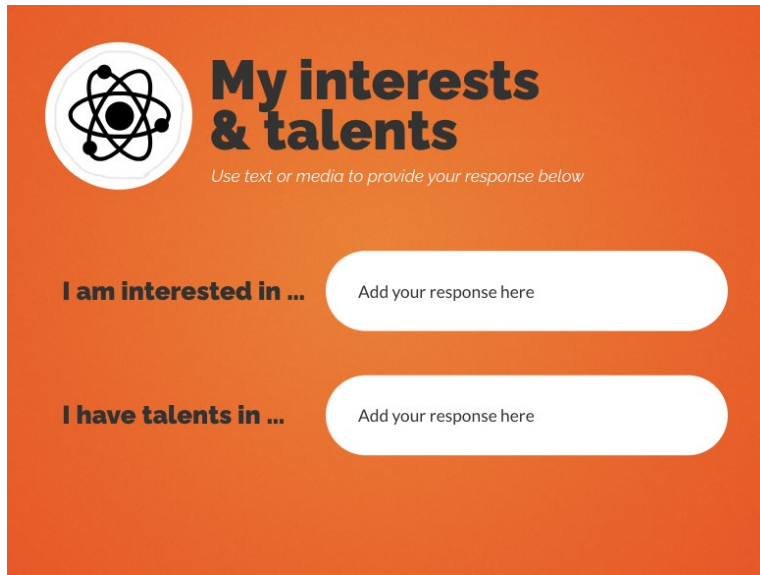
# Ben's Express Strengths & Challenges



# What I Aspire to Be



# Interests, Talents, Passions, Aspirations, Hopes, & Dreams



**My interests & talents**  
*Use text or media to provide your response below*

**I am interested in ...**

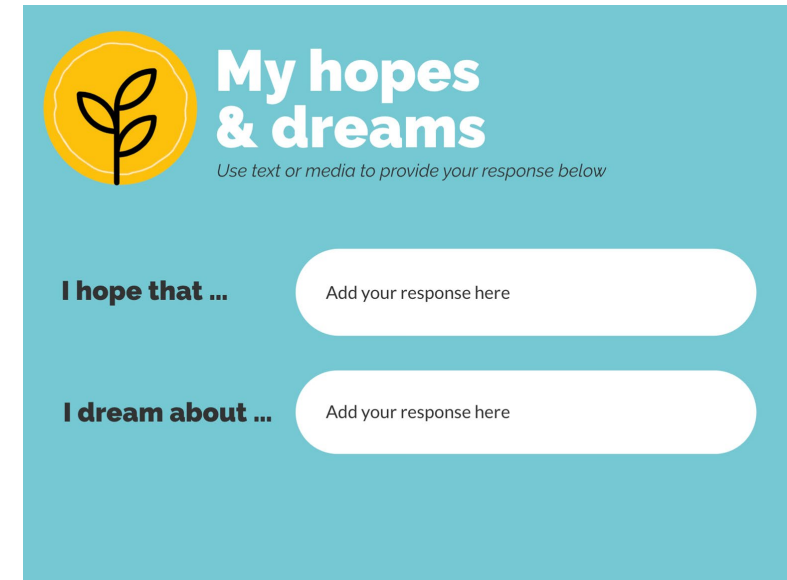
**I have talents in ...**



**My passions & aspirations**  
*Use text or media to provide your response below*

**I am passionate about ...**

**One day, I aspire to ...**



**My hopes & dreams**  
*Use text or media to provide your response below*

**I hope that ...**


**I dream about ...**

What would your child would say are their interests, talents, passions, aspirations, hopes, or dreams?

# Example



# The ETL Profile - A Tool for Advocacy and Self-Advocacy



**Jacob Smith**  
Age 14 • 9th Grade

How I Learn			
	Strengths	Challenges	Needs
<b>ACCESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can visualize what I hear.</li> <li>• I connect to ideas I already know.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not always understand what I read.</li> <li>• I have trouble focusing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I need to use a text-to-speech tool for reading.</li> <li>• I prefer video for understanding.</li> </ul>
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**Who I am**

I am really good at Math.

For fun, I like to play video and board games.

When I am not in school, I like to go snowboarding.

If I could tell others something unique about me, it would be that I like acting.

I am most proud of my skills at playing chess.

What concerns me, that I can make a difference with, is protecting animals in animal shelters.

My cultural background is Italian Irish.

Words that best describe me are: curious, imaginative, independent, artistic, optimistic.

**What I aspire to be** Interests / Talents / Passions / Hopes & Dreams

I am interested in soccer, baseball and history. I am talented in storytelling, public speaking, drawing, connecting the dots and mental math. I am passionate about fishing and I aspire to have my own business one day that helps animals.

# Identity

## The On-Ramp to Learner Empowerment

### My Identity ●

To develop a positive self image, to have agency in my learning and to self-advocate in the way I learn.

### Who I am ●

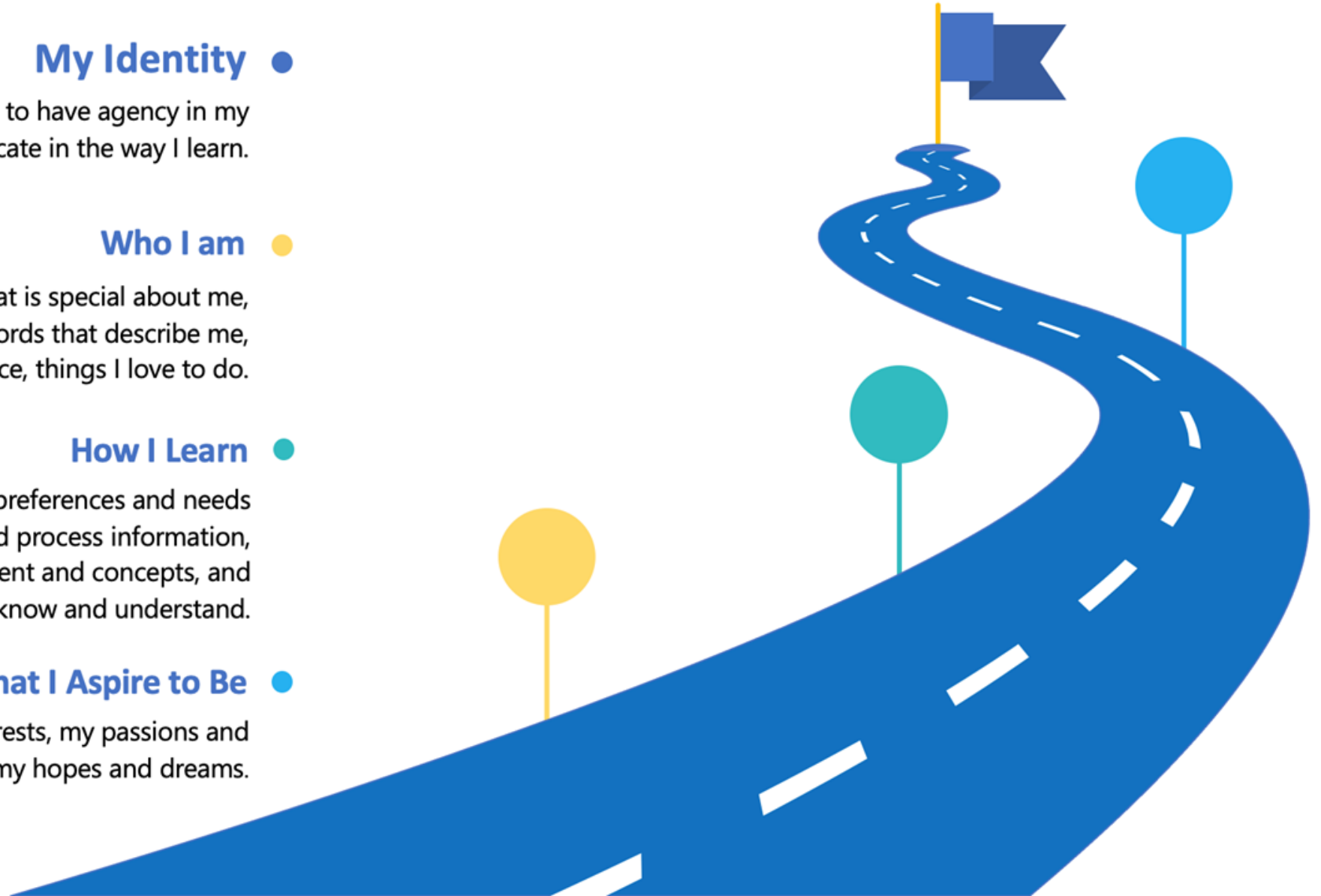
My culture, what is special about me, what I am most proud of, words that describe me, how I want to make a difference, things I love to do.

### How I Learn ●

My strengths, challenges, preferences and needs to **Access** and process information, to **Engage** with content and concepts, and to **Express** what I know and understand.

### What I Aspire to Be ●

My talents and interests, my passions and aspirations, my hopes and dreams.





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