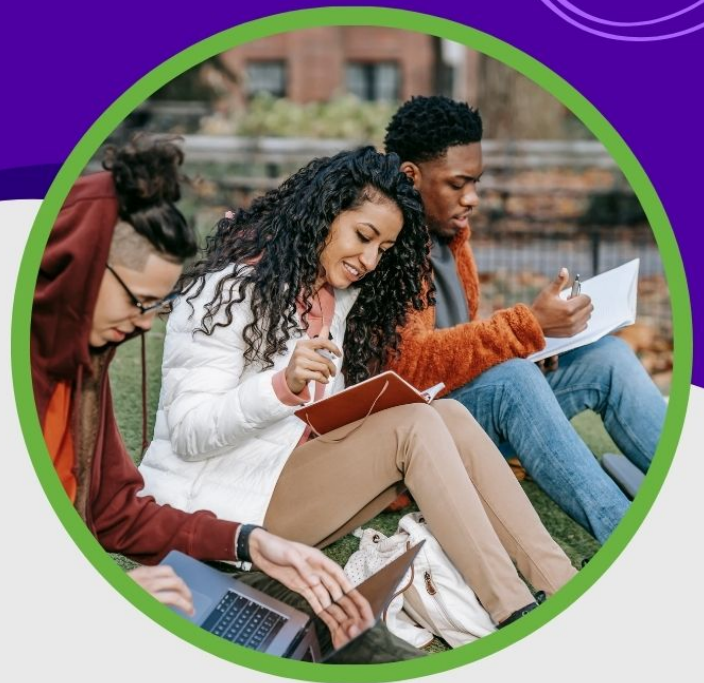




**Branch
Alliance**
for Educator Diversity



EDUTERM GUIDE

**A Comprehensive
Resource for Education
Terminology and
Acronyms**

Introduction

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, the abundance of terminology and acronyms can be overwhelming. As educators, administrators, and even parents navigate through a myriad of jargon, it becomes essential to have a reliable and efficient tool at hand to decipher the meaning behind these terms.

At BranchED, we recognize the challenges posed by the constant flux and expansion of educational terminology. That's why we've crafted a user-friendly and comprehensive tool designed to streamline your understanding of educational jargon. Whether you're grappling with the latest pedagogical trends or decoding complex acronyms, our guide is here to simplify the process.

The need for such a tool stems from the sheer volume and dynamic nature of educational terminology. With new concepts emerging and existing ones evolving, educators often find themselves seeking clarity amidst the linguistic maze. The EduTerm Guide serves as a quick-reference resource, offering succinct explanations and definitions for a wide array of educational terms and acronyms.

So, how does the EduTerm Guide work? It's simple. Users can access the guide digitally on BranchED's Resource Portal, allowing for easy reference at any time for our partners and Core community. Terms and acronyms are organized alphabetically, mirroring the structure of a traditional dictionary. This intuitive layout enables users to swiftly locate specific terms or acronyms of interest.

Upon locating a term, users are provided with concise yet comprehensive definitions, clarifying the concept in question. Acronyms are listed with full terms included. Whether you're a seasoned educator or a newcomer to the field, the EduTerm Guide caters to individuals of all levels of expertise, fostering a deeper understanding of educational terminology.

The EduTerm Guide is not just a static document – it's a living, breathing resource that evolves alongside the educational landscape. As terminology shifts and new acronyms emerge, our team of experts diligently updates the guide to ensure its relevance and accuracy. In this regard, we encourage you to contribute to the ongoing improvement of the EduTerm Guide. We welcome your input and invite you to submit any additional terms or acronyms that you believe should be included in this tool. You can send your suggestions to pk12@educatordiversity.org, allowing us to incorporate terms that our stakeholders find relevant and necessary. Together, we can enhance the comprehensiveness and utility of the EduTerm Guide, ensuring it remains an indispensable resource.

In essence, the EduTerm Guide is more than just a tool – it's a companion for educators on their journey towards linguistic clarity and pedagogical understanding. With the EduTerm Guide by your side, unraveling the complexities of educational terminology has never been easier.

Educational Terms and Definitions

Educational Term	Definition
Active Learning	A teaching and learning approach that “engages students in the process of learning through activities and/or discussion in class, as opposed to passively listening to an expert. It emphasizes higher-order thinking and often involves group work (p. 8413-4).” ¹
Asynchronous Instruction	Asynchronous instruction is the idea that students learn similar material at different times and locations. The term is often associated with online learning where student’s complete readings, assignments, or activities at their own pace and at their own chosen time. This approach is particularly useful when students are spread across different time zones or may have limited access to technology.
Authentic Assessment	Assessments in which student learners demonstrate learning by applying their knowledge to authentic, complex, real-world tasks or simulations. Proponents of authentic assessment argue that these types of knowledge checks “help students rehearse for the complex ambiguities of the ‘game’ of adult and professional life (p.1).” ²
Backwards Design	A course design process that starts with instructors identifying student learning goals and then designing course content and assessments to help students achieve these goals. Rather than starting with exams or set textbooks backwards design argues that “one starts with the end—the desired results (goals or standards) and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning (performances) called for by the standard and the teaching needed to equip students to perform (p. 19).” ³
Blended/Hybrid Course	Blended or hybrid courses are “classes in which some percentage of seat time has been reduced and replaced with online content

¹ Freeman, S., Eddy, S. L., McDonough, M. J., Smith, M. K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H., ... & Wenderoth, M. P. (2014). Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(23), 8410-8415.

<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1319030111>

² Wiggins, Grant. (2019). “The case for authentic assessment,” *practical assessment, research, and evaluation*, 2(2). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7275/ffb1-mm19>

Retrieved from: <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/pare/vol2/iss1/2>

³ Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

	and activities (p. xxix). ⁴ These courses continue to meet in-person for some percentage of the class time but content, activities, assessments, and other ways for students to engage with content are delivered online. It is important to note that these courses are intentionally designed to utilize both in-person and online class time to achieve effective student learning.
Bloom's Taxonomy	Bloom's Taxonomy is a cognitive framework of learning behaviors organized hierarchically in six categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. Bloom's taxonomy is often used as a helpful tool to create learning objectives that help define and measure the learning experience for both student and instructor. ^{5,6,7}
Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT)	This method aims to assist teachers in understanding their students' classroom learning and its effectiveness. It prioritizes the learner, is guided by teachers, benefits both parties, involves continuous assessment, is tailored to the specific environment, and is grounded in effective teaching methods. Through using a CAT the instructor can gather formative feedback on students learning to inform future ⁸ [OBJ].
Classroom Climate	"The intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which our students learn (p. 170)." ⁹ Course climate is determined by factors like faculty-student interaction, the tone the instructor sets, course demographics, student-student interactions, and the range of perspectives represented in course content.
Classroom Management	How an educator runs their classroom regarding behavior and routines.
Cognitive Load	Cognitive load refers to the demands and limitations on working memory storage given the limited amount of information processing that can occur simultaneously in the verbal and the visual processing channels of the brain. ^{10, 11}

⁴ Darby, F., Lang, J.M. (2019). *Small teaching online: Applying learning science in online classes*. Jossey-Bass.

⁵ Anderson LW, Krathwohl DR. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Longmans.

⁶ Bloom B.S. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals*. Longmans.

⁷ Krathwohl, D. (2002). A revision of bloom's taxonomy: An overview. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(4), 212-218.

⁸ Angelo, T. A. & Cross, K.P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. 2nd Ed. Jossey Bass.

⁹ Ambrose, S. et al. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. Jossey-Bass.

¹⁰ Mayer, R. E. & Moreno, R. (2003) Nine ways to reduce cognitive load in multimedia learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 38(1), 43-52.

¹¹ Schnotz, W., & Kürschner, C. (2007). A reconsideration of cognitive load theory. *Educational Psychology Review*, 19(4), 469-508.

Collaborative Learning	An umbrella term that covers many different methods in which students work together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Collaborative learning is founded in the concept that learning and knowledge building is social and requires active engagement from students. ¹²
Constructivism	A theory of learning popularized in the twentieth century argues that knowledge is actively constructed rather than passively absorbed by learners. Constructivists contend that when learners acquire new knowledge, it is through a dynamic process in which the learner recreates existing mental models, situating this new information in terms of what they already know. Social constructivists additionally recognize the role of social interaction (co-construction) and communication as key forces in learning. Foundational constructivists include John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner, and Jean Piaget. Constructivist pedagogical strategies are grounded in constructivist theory and often include opportunities for experiential learning, active exploration, student interaction, and reflection. Courses designed around this principle emphasize connections among course concepts and themes and support students in forming relationships between this new knowledge and what they already know. <i>See also zone of proximal development and student-centered teaching.</i>
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	A pedagogical framework where instructors center students' cultural identities as an important aspect of learning. Those committed to this framework deliberately work to connect course content and students' lived experiences to prompt student involvement and motivation. Culturally responsive course design includes cooperative, student-centered instruction, and diverse course readings from a variety of voices and perspectives, particularly those voices which may fall outside of traditional collegiate canons. ¹³
English as a Second Language	Refers to the program or specialized approach to language teaching designed for those whose primary language is not English.
English Language Learner	A student who is learning English as a second or additional language and may need extra support to develop language proficiency and academic skills.
Experiential Learning	Experiential learning is a process by which students develop knowledge and skills from direct experience, usually outside a traditional academic setting. Examples include internships, study

¹² Smith, B., and MacGregor, J. (1993). What is collaborative learning?. Wash Cent News. 7.

¹³ Ladson-Billings G. (2006). Yes, but how do we do it: Practicing culturally relevant pedagogy. In Landsman J., Lewis C. W. (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations, and eliminating racism* (pp. 29-41). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

	abroad, community-based learning, service learning, and research opportunities. The concept was introduced by David Kolb in 1984 and combines both a cognitive and behavioral approach to learning. ¹⁴
Fixed Mindset	Mindset refers to the beliefs and attitudes held by a person and can affect their learning outcomes and achievement. Individuals with a fixed mindset (also referred to as entity theory) are outcomes-focused, don't view intellectual ability as being malleable, and give up quickly on learning a new skill when learning becomes more challenging and difficult. ^{15, 16, 17, 18} <i>See also growth mindset.</i>
Flipped Classroom	A flipped classroom is a teaching approach where students are first exposed to content before coming to a class session and then spend class time engaging more deeply with the ideas and concepts. ¹⁹ This model encourages the use of active learning during in-person class sessions to allow students to explore concepts, solve problems, and discuss ideas with each other and the instructor.
Formative Assessment	Formative assessment is the process of providing feedback to students during the learning process. These are often low stakes activities that allow the instructor to check student work and provide feedback. An instructor writing comments and suggestions on a draft version of a paper is an example of formative assessment. ²⁰
Gamification	The use of game elements such as points, badges, leaderboards, etc. to motivate and engage students in learning activities or tasks.
Growth Mindset	Mindset refers to the beliefs and attitudes held by a person and can affect their learning outcomes and achievement. Individuals with a growth mindset (also referred to as incremental theory) are process-focused, assess their performance relative to mastery of the material, and believe that intellectual ability is malleable.

¹⁴ Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice-Hall.

¹⁵ Dweck, C. (2008). *Mindsets and math/science achievement*. Carnegie Foundation.

¹⁶ Dweck, C. S., & Master, A. (2008). "Self-theories motivate self-regulated learning". In Schunk, D. H. Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.), *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 31–51). Taylor & Francis.

¹⁷ Rattan, A., Good, C., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). "It's ok—not everyone can be good at math": Instructors with an entity theory comfort (and demotivate) students. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *48*(3), 731-737.

¹⁸ Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, *47*(4), 302–314.

¹⁹ Brame, C., (2013). Flipping the classroom. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Retrieved from <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/flipping-the-classroom/>

²⁰ Weimer, M. (2013). *Learner-centered teaching: five key changes to practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

	<p>Having a growth mindset involves sustained effort toward learning new knowledge and reflection on past failures so that one can increase their knowledge and ability.^{21,22,23,24}</p> <p><i>See also fixed mindset.</i></p>
Hidden Curriculum	<p>The hidden curriculum is a collection of unwritten norms, values, rules, and expectations that one must have awareness of in order to successfully navigate educational settings, but which remain unknown to those who have not been socialized into the dominant discourse.²⁵ The hidden curriculum includes an understanding of school structures, resources, financial aid systems, and institutional rules, along with an awareness of cultural expectations for participating in class and communicating with peers and instructors.</p> <p><i>See also social belonging and transparent assignment design.</i></p>
Inclusive Teaching	<p>A mode of teaching that intentionally designs course content and curricula to engage with students of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and lived experiences. The goal of inclusive teaching is to create a learning environment where all students feel valued and supported to succeed.</p>
Individualized Education Program	<p>A legal document that outlines the special education services and accommodations that a student with a disability is entitled to receive under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</p>
Inquiry Based Learning	<p>Inquiry-based learning is an umbrella term that includes pedagogical strategies such as problem-based learning and case-based learning that prioritize students exploring, thinking, asking, and answering content questions with peers to acquire new knowledge through a carefully designed activity. Such activities build in opportunities for students to authentically engage in and apply the scientific process as scientists rather than following a predetermined protocol.^{26,27}</p>

²¹ Dweck, C. (2008). *Mindsets and math/science achievement*. Carnegie Foundation.

²² Dweck, C. S., & Master, A. (2008). "Self-theories motivate self-regulated learning". In Schunk, D. H. Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.), *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 31–51). Taylor & Francis.

²³ Rattan, A., Good, C., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). "It's ok—not everyone can be good at math": Instructors with an entity theory comfort (and demotivate) students. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *48*(3), 731-737.

²⁴ Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, *47*(4), 302–314.

²⁵ Smith, B. (2015). *Mentoring at-risk students through the hidden curriculum of higher education*. Lexington Books.

²⁶ LaForce, M., Noble, E., & Blackwell, C. (2017). Problem-based learning (PBL) and student interest in STEM careers: The roles of motivation and ability beliefs. *Education Sciences*, *7*(4), 92.

²⁷ Yew, E. H., & Goh, K. (2016). Problem-based learning: An overview of its process and impact on learning. *Health Professions Education*, *2*(2), 75-79.

	<i>See also</i> problem-based learning , project-based learning .
Instructional Design	The process of creating learning experiences and materials systematically and efficiently based on educational theory and research.
Interdisciplinary Learning	Learning that involves integrating knowledge and skills from multiple disciplines or subject areas to address complex problems or issues.
Learning Management System	A Learning Management System enables instructors to organize and distribute course materials digitally. While features may vary, a typical LMS allows instructors to communicate with students, share readings, create and collect assignments, assess student work, and post grades. An LMS may be used to complement a face-to-face course or for an entirely online course. Popular platforms include Canvas, Blackboard, and Moodle.
Learning Objective/Goal/Outcome	Statements that articulate the knowledge and skills you want students to acquire by the end of the course or after completing a particular unit or assignment. Learning objectives help instructors shape course content and assessments and increase transparency for students by clearly communicating expectations.
Limited English Proficient	Refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. This term is usually used on documents of state or national identification to identify individuals entitled to language assistance services or benefits.
Makerspaces	Makerspaces encourage students to try, fail, and try again — just as the world’s most amazing innovators do in their labs and studios every day. Makerspaces range from elaborate fabrication shops to small carts full of craft supplies.
Mastery Learning	An approach to learning that emphasizes student mastery of specific knowledge and skills before moving on to new content or concepts.
Metacognition	Metacognition involves metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation. Metacognitive knowledge is defined as thinking or having an awareness of one’s cognitive processes. Metacognitive regulation is the active monitoring of one’s cognition through planning (identifying appropriate learning strategies), monitoring (forming an awareness of one’s task performance) and evaluating (assessing and refining one’s learning through reflection). ^{28,29}
Microlearning	Learning that is delivered in small, bite-sized units, often through digital or mobile platforms, to promote retention and application of knowledge and skills.

²⁸ Lai, E.R. (2011). Metacognition: A Literature Review. *Pearson’s Research Reports*. Retrieved from https://images.pearsonassessments.com/images/tmrs/Metacognition_Literature_Review_Final.pdf

²⁹ Tanner, K. D. (2012). Promoting student metacognition. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 11(2), 113-120.

Montessori Education	A child-centered approach to education that emphasizes self-directed learning, hands-on activities, and individualized instruction.
Motivation	An individual's "personal investment" in reaching a desired state or outcome as "seen in the direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of what is done and expressed (p. 373)." ³⁰ Research suggests that motivation plays a vital role in directing and sustaining student learning. The most motivated students see value in the task, believe that they can accomplish the task, and feel that they are in a supportive environment. ³¹
Multiple Intelligences	The theory that intelligence is not a single, fixed trait but rather a collection of different abilities or intelligences, such as verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.
National Assessment of Educational Progress	is an assessment measuring American students' progress in different subjects. Also known as The Nation's Report Card, the NAEP has been around since 1969.
No Child Left Behind	A federal law enacted in 2002 mandated annual testing and accountability measures for all public schools receiving federal funding.
Object-Based Learning	Object-based learning (OBL) is a teaching method whereby students engage with authentic or replica material objects in their learning in order to gain discipline-specific knowledge or to practice observational or practical skills that can be applied in various fields. "Objects" can include a number of different material items often housed in museums: specimens, works of art, architectural forms, relics, manuscripts and rare books, archival documents, or artifacts of various kinds. Research on OBL suggests that "objects can inspire, inform, fascinate and motivate learners at all stages of their education (p. 12)." ³²
Open Educational Resources	Educational materials that are openly licensed and freely available for use, modification, and sharing.
Pedagogy	Pedagogy is the method, practice, and study of effective teaching. To be effective, instructors must have both subject-based knowledge and pedagogic knowledge and skills. ³³
Personalized Learning	Learning tailored to the individual needs, interests, and abilities of each student, often through technology or adaptive learning systems.

³⁰ Maehr, M.L. & Meyer, H.A. (1997). "Understanding motivation and schooling: Where we've been, where we are, and where we need to go." *Educational Psychology Review*, 9(4) 358-375.

³¹ Ambrose, S. et al. (2010). *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. Jossey-Bass.

³² Jamieson, A. (2017). "Object-based learning: A new way of teaching arts west." *University of Melbourne Collections* 20 (June).

³³ Barkley, E. F., and C. H. Major (2016). *Learning Assessment Techniques: a handbook for college faculty*. Jossey Bass.

Portfolio Assessment	An assessment approach that involves collecting and evaluating a student's work samples over time to demonstrate growth and achievement in specific areas.
Problem-Based Learning	A form of student-centered teaching that focuses on having students work through open-ended problems to explore course material. Students are asked to define the problem as part of the process, research content outside of class time and iterate solutions to arrive at their final response. ³⁴
Project-Based Learning	A form of student-centered teaching that engages students with course content as they work through a complex project. These projects are typically real-world scenarios and multifaceted. Project-based learning encourages interdisciplinary conversations and groups work.
Retrieval Practice	Retrieval practice involves retrieving new knowledge from memory for durable retention in long-term memory. The process is supported by experiments which explore student's recall of new material. Retrieval practice can take the form of frequent, low-stakes quizzes, or students may employ methods like flashcards for self-testing. ³⁵
Scaffolding	A process by which instructors build on a student's previous experience or knowledge by adding in specific timely support structures in the form of activities or assignments for students to master new knowledge or skills and achieve learning goals. ^{36,37} <i>See also zone of proximal development.</i>
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)	an approach to college-level teaching that frames teaching as a form of scholarly inquiry. Through engaging in SoTL instructors examine their students' learning to innovate and engage in knowledge-sharing with colleagues. ³⁸ Instructors who engage in SoTL as part of their teaching are encouraged to reflect on personal assumptions and curiosities about how their students learn. Then consider how to test the validity of these ideas. Examples of SoTL projects include exploring the impact of implementing a single active learning strategy, considering the

³⁴ Nilson, L. B. (2016). *Teaching at Its Best: A research-based resource for college instructors*, 4th ed. Jossey-Bass.

³⁵ Brown, P., Roediger, C. H. L. and McDaniel, M. A. (2014). *Make it stick: the science of successful learning*. Harvard University Press.

³⁶ Greening, T. (1998) Scaffolding for success in problem-based learning, *Medical Education Online*, 3(1), 4297.

³⁷ Hmelo-Silver, C. E., Duncan, R. G., & Chinn, C. A. (2007). Scaffolding and achievement in problem-based and inquiry learning: a response to Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark 2006. *Educational psychologist*, 42(2), 99-107.

³⁸ Huber, M. (2013). *What is the scholarship of teaching and learning?* Stanford Teaching Commons. Retrieved from <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/teaching-talk/what-scholarship-teaching-and-learning-mary-huber>

	impact of reflection on student learning, and determining the impact of a complete course restructure. ³⁹
Social Belonging	Social belonging is a state where students feel welcomed and included into a community where they can engage freely and foster positive relationships with others. ⁴⁰
Social Emotional Learning	Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
STEAM	Content relating to Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math.
STEM	Content relating to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.
Stereotype Threat	Stereotypes are negative generalizations about groups of people. When students are subtly or overtly made aware (primed) of these stereotypes while performing challenging academic tasks in domains that are important to them, students begin to underperform in these tasks. Anxiety about confirming a negative stereotype creates additional cognitive load that reduces the capacity of working memory in the brain. ^{41, 42}
STREAM	Content relating to Science, Technology, Reading/wRiting, Engineering, Arts, and Math.
Student Engagement	Student engagement describes the ways in which students take part in the learning process and the development of their own knowledge. An increase in student engagement is thought to be linked to an increase in student learning. Student engagement is often tied to active learning techniques and student motivation. ⁴³
Student-Centered Teaching	Instructor-center teaching refers to instructors teaching content solely through a passive approach such as lecturing while students listen and take notes with minimal interaction with other students. Student-centered teaching, however, consists of instructors using a wide range of pedagogical approaches for students to learn and actively engage with the course content by having students construct knowledge with peers through

³⁹ Poole, G. (2018). "Using Intuition, Anecdote, and Observation: Rich Sources of SoTL Projects" in *SoTL in Action: Illuminating Critical Moments of Practice* edited by Chick, N.L. Sylus Publishing.

⁴⁰ Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students. *Science*, 331(6023), 1447-1451.

⁴¹ Aronson, J., Lustina, M. J., Good, C., Keough, K., Steele, C. M., & Brown, J. (1999). When white men can't do math: Necessary and sufficient factors in stereotype threat. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 35, 29-46.

⁴² Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 69(5), 797.

⁴³ Ashwin, P., McVitty, D. (2015). The meanings of student engagement: Implications for policies and practices. In: Curaj, A., Matei, L., Pricopie, R., Salmi, J., Scott, P. (eds) *The European Higher Education Area*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-20877-0_23

	collaboration, discussion, group projects, and problem solving. ^{44,45,46} <i>See also inquiry based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, constructivism, zone of proximal development.</i>
Summative Assessment	Summative assessment is the process of measuring a student's learning at the conclusion of a course (or a portion of the course). Summative assessments are typically associated with grades and can take the form of quizzes, exams or papers.
Synchronous Instruction	Synchronous instruction is the idea that students learn material at the same time. Examples of synchronous instruction might include lectures, discussions or collaborative activities. When applied to remote learning, students must be online at the same time. This approach can be disadvantageous if students are spread across different time zones or have limited access to technology.
Teaching Development Plan (TDP)	A written document that helps instructors focus on teaching specific career goals. A TDP encourages instructors to set goals and periodically reflect on progress and barriers faced while working towards them.
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages refers to those who teach English overseas or in an English-speaking country. However, while TESOL courses may cover a broader range of topics, they tend to study them in less depth. ⁴⁷
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language refers to the qualification for teaching students whose first language is not English but are currently living in an English-speaking country. ⁴⁸
Threshold Concept	Thresholds are crucial barriers in the learning process where students often get "stuck". These ideas are essential to understanding a particular discipline and progress in the discipline can be blocked until that barrier to understanding has been overcome. Examples of discipline-based threshold concepts include deep time in geology or the idea of constructed narrative in history. ^{49, 50}

⁴⁴ Felder, R. M., & Brent, R. (1996). Navigating the bumpy road to student-centered instruction. *College teaching*, 44(2), 43-47.

⁴⁵ Freeman, S., O'Connor, E., Parks, J. W., Cunningham, M., Hurley, D., Haka, D., Dirks, C. & Wenderoth, M. P. (2007). Prescribed active learning increases performance in introductory biology. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 6(2), 132-139.

⁴⁶ Handelsman, J., Miller, S., & Pfund, C. (2007). *Scientific teaching*. Macmillan.

⁴⁷ University of Toronto. (2017). What's the difference between TEFL, TESL, and TESLO? <https://teflonline.teachaway.com/blogs/tefl-resources/whats-difference-tefl-tesl-tesol>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Meyer, J and R. Land (2006). *Overcoming barriers to student understanding: Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge*. Routledge.

⁵⁰ Pace, D. (2017). *Decoding the disciplines: Seven steps to increased student learning*. Indiana University Press.

Title 1	Federal funding provided to schools with high percentages of low-income students to help learners meet educational standards.
Transfer	A cognitive process by which a learner takes what they've learned in one context and successfully applies it to another. Transfer is often broken down into "near transfer" (transfer of knowledge to a similar task or context) and "far transfer" (transfer of knowledge to novel tasks or contexts). Given that a central purpose of education is for students to take what they have learned into other classes and then into their lives beyond school, this has long been a critical area of study in educational and educational psychology research. ⁵¹
Transparent Assignment Design	An inclusive teaching practice first proposed by Mary-Ann Winkelmes and her instructional development and research team at UNLV, transparent assignments help students understand the purpose of the assessment, clearly describe the task and how it should be accomplished, and plainly define criteria for success. Assignment transparency has been shown to significantly boost student success in terms of academic confidence, sense of belonging, and metacognitive awareness of skill development. ⁵² <i>See also social belonging and hidden curriculum.</i>
Universal Design for Learning	Universal Design for Learning is a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. Designing a course according to UDL principles is centered on the key concepts of engagement, representation, and action & expression. These are sometimes summarized as the Why, What and How of learning. ^{53,54}
Zone of Proximal Development	This developmental zone stands between what the learner can already do on their own and what they cannot yet do. It is the range in which a learner is able to move from point A to point B with assistance from peers or an instructor; in other words, the zone in which learning takes place. The concept was originally described in the work of Soviet psychologist and social constructivist, Lev Vygotsky. ⁵⁵ <i>See also constructivism and scaffolding.</i>

⁵¹ Perkins, D. N. & Salomon. (2012). "Knowledge to go: A motivational and dispositional view of transfer." *Educational Psychologist*, 47(3), 248-258.

⁵² Winkelmes, M. et al. (2016). "A teaching intervention that increases underserved college students' success." *Peer Review*, (Winter/Spring).

⁵³ Murawski, W., and Scott, K. L. (2019). *What really works with universal design for learning*. Corwin.

⁵⁴ Tobin, T. J. (2018). *Reach everyone, teach everyone: Universal design for learning in higher education*. West Virginia University Press.

⁵⁵ Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard UP.

Educational Acronyms and Definitions

Educational Acronym	Meaning
PTA/PTO	Parent-Teacher Association/Organization
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD; AD/HD; ADHD; ADD/In	Attention Deficit Disorder; Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder; Attention Deficit/Inattentive Disorder
AHEAD	Association on Higher Education and Disabilities
AP	Advanced Placement
AP; APD	Auditory Processing Disorder
ARD	Admission, Review, and Dismissal (Committee)
AS	Asperger's Syndrome
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASL	American Sign Language
AT	Assistive Technology
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
BIP; BMP	Behavior Intervention Plan; Behavior Management Plan
BOE	Board of Education
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device (technology)
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAP; CAPD	Central Auditory Processing Disorder
CBA	Curriculum-Based Assessment
CCLD	Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities
CCLS	Common Core Learning Standards
CEC	Council for Exceptional Children
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHADD	Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
COPAA	The Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
CPSE	Committee on Preschool Special Education
CSE	Committee on Special Education
CST	Child Study Team
DCD	Developmental Coordination Disorder
DD	Developmentally Disabled; Developmentally Delayed
DOH	Department of Health
DSM-IV; DSM-IV-TR	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – fourth edition; Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – fourth edition, text revision
DSS	Disability Support Services
EBD	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders
ECDC	Early Childhood Development Center
ED	Emotionally Disturbed
EDGAR	Education Department General Administrative Regulations
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EIP	Early Intervention Program

Educational Acronym	Meaning
ELL	English Language Learner
EPP	Educator Preparation Program
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center
ESL	English as Second Language
ESY	Extended School Year Services
ETS	Educational Testing Service
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
fMRI	Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging
FSP	Family Support Plan
GATE	Gifted and Talented Education
GE	General Education
GED	General Education Diploma
GPA	Grade Point Average
GT/LD	Gifted and Talented with Learning Disabilities
HI	Hearing Impaired
HIPS	High Impact Practices
HOH	Hard of Hearing
HS	High School
IDA	International Dyslexia Association
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IEPT	Individualized Education Program Team
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ISTE	International Society for Technology in Education
ITP	Individual Transition Plan
K-12	Kindergarten through 12th Grade
LD	Learning Disability
LDA	Learning Disability Association
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficient
LMS	Learning Management System
LOTE	Languages Other than English
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MBD	Minimal Brain Dysfunction
MDT	Multidisciplinary Team
MH	Multiply Handicapped
MR	Mental Retardation
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
MS	Middle School
MTSS	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress

Educational Acronym	Meaning
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
NCLD	National Center for Learning Disabilities
NICHCY	National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities formerly National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
NICHD	National Institute for Child Health and Human Development
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NILD	National Institute for Learning Disabilities
NIMH	National Institutes of Mental Health
NLD; NVLD	Nonverbal Learning Disability
OBL	Object-Based Learning
OCD	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OER	Open Educational Resources
OG; O-G	Orton Gillingham [reading method]
OHI	Other Health Impaired
OMRDD	Office of Mentally Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OT	Occupational Therapist; Occupational Therapy
P & A	Protection and Advocacy
PAC	Parent Advisory Committee
PACER	Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights
PDA	Personal Data Assistant
PDD; PDD-NOS	Pervasive Developmental Disorder; Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified
PSAT	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test
PT	Physical Therapist; Physical Therapy
PTI	Parent Training and Information (Center)
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RFBD	Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic
RSP	Resource Specialist Program
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SD	School District
SED	State Education Department; Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SI	Sensory Integration
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SLO	Student Learning Objective
SLP	Speech and Language Program
SMT	Simultaneous Multisensory Teaching
SoTL	Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
SP/Lang, SP/LG	Speech and Language
SPED	Special Education
SSI	Supplemental Security Income (related to Social Security)

Educational Acronym	Meaning
SST	Student Study Team
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.
STREAM	Science, Technology, Reading/wRiting, Engineering, Arts, and Math
TDP	Teaching Development Plan
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TESOL/TESL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and Teaching English as a Second Language
UDL	Universal Design Learning
URL	Uniform Resource Locator [website address]
V/V	Verbalization/Visualization
WIAT	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test
WISC; WISCIII; WISCIV	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
WJ; WJ-III, WJIII; WJ-4; WJ4	Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development



Suggested Citation

Garcia, B. (2023). *Educational Acronyms and Terminology*. Peachtree City, GA: Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity.



COPYRIGHT © 2023 by the M.E.B Alliance for Educator Diversity, Inc.,
Peachtree City, GA

Educational Acronyms and Terminology --- February 2024

The content herein is CC-BY-NC-SA. It can be shared and remixed for noncommercial purposes with attribution to BranchED.