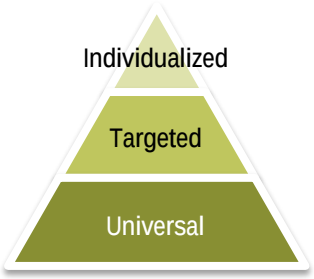
KWL (what I ***know***, what I ***want*** to know, what I ***learned***)

Background Knowledge

KWL is a graphic organizer used at the beginning, middle, and end of a lesson to collect information and ideas on a topic. It can be used to record questions, to guide an inquiry on a topic, and to collect reflections on what students have learned during an inquiry. KWL is an effective visual tool that activates students' background knowledge and creates interest for learning a new concept or topic.



A teacher's understanding of their students' learning needs helps determine when to provide universal, targeted, or individualized instructional strategies. For some students, universal instructional strategies may be enough to meet their learning needs. For others, more targeted instructional strategies are the starting point for implementing the curriculum. The strategy described is a guideline that teachers can use depending on the learning context.

Why use this strategy in an inclusive learning environment

- Encourages students to think about what they already know about a topic and to connect prior knowledge to new learning.
- Helps students to pursue their own line of research into a topic.
- Encourages students to monitor their comprehension and is a record of student learning.
- Can be used across subjects/disciplines and a wide range of ages and student performance levels.

How this strategy could be used in an inclusive learning environment

1. Provide the students with a template and a topic of inquiry or have them decide on one for themselves.

2. Ask the students to record the information they already **K**now about the topic in the first column. Brainstorm with them if they have difficulty getting started.

KWL		
What I Know	What I Want to know	What I Learned

3. In the second column, have the students write a list of questions regarding what they **W**ant to learn about the topic. Encourage students to generate open-ended questions rather than questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Remind students that these questions are used to guide their inquiries and can be revised and added to throughout the process.

4. During or after the students' research and exploration, have them record the information they **L**earned about the topic in the third column (e.g., answers to the questions from the second column).

5. Have the students examine their findings and determine if they have answered the questions and whether there are any new questions they would like to explore. Consider having the students discuss and compare their completed **KWL** charts.

6. Once students have learned and understand the process, they can create **KWL** charts individually or in small groups for their own inquiry as a way of organizing information.

Example

Topic: Electricity

K What I Know	W What I Want to Know	L What I Learned
– makes lots of things work – runs through wires – switches turn it on and off – makes lightning – sparks in clothes in winter – dangerous	– How does a light bulb turn on? – Why is electricity dangerous? – Can we use the electricity in lightning? – Why does the power go out sometimes? – Where does electricity come from?	– electricity has to go in a complete loop that's called a circuit or it doesn't work – when electricity goes through some materials there's lots of resistance and that can make heat and light like in a light bulb – there are lots of ways to hook up wires to make bulbs work, but sometimes the light is dimmer

Tips for individualized supports

- Engage students' interests before having them recall what they know or identify what they would like to know more about.
- Model the process of using a KWL visual organizer by exploring a topic of interest with students. Fill in the organizer collaboratively and encourage students to refer to it when creating their own.
- Explore concepts and key vocabulary in advance to prepare students to participate in the activity.
- Adjust the number of statements that students are required to complete.
- Allow extended wait time for students to reflect and respond.
- Provide reading material in a digital format and use word prediction to complete digital charts.

- Use text-to-speech software for research and online visual dictionaries for new words.
- Use engaging picture prompts to stimulate student interest as a catalyst for discussion.
- Provide opportunities for students to represent their ideas in multiple ways, including drawing, selecting symbols, images, or text.