1.0 Learning Launch

CHALLENGE

By the end of this session, educators will…

☑ **Develop initial criteria for a robust learner profile.**

GOALS

1. **To surface the complexity of teaching all students.**

2. **To validate how teachers feel about teaching students with learning disabilities in particular.**

3. **To recognize that increased knowledge about learning disabilities helps both the teacher and the student.**

SUMMARY

During this facilitated learning opportunity, participants will refine and deepen their understanding of what a robust learner profile would look like. They begin by identifying the challenging factors that make teaching complex, particularly with respect to the range of strengths and needs of their learners. Participants then consider a variety of visuals and select the one that best reflects their current thinking, feelings and beliefs about teaching students with learning disabilities. They are presented with a brief sample profile of a student with a learning disability and determine the degree to which it would help inform their planning. Through the discussion, participants develop and refine the criteria for a robust learner profile.

FACILITATOR PREPARATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

Read through the activities for the session. Depending on the size of the group, the knowledge and experience of participants, and the grade level they teach, you may need to make choices about presentation style, instructional strategies or activity materials.

The following chart summarizes the challenge, activities and materials for this session.

SESSION TITLE	CHALLENGE By the end of the session, educators will:	OVERVIEW OF SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
1.0 Learning Launch (Introduction)	Develop initial criteria for a robust learner profile	A. Rate the complexity of teaching B. Select the visual that best reflects current thinking C. Create the criteria for a robust learner profile	Appendix 1 *Sample Images*

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

A. Rate the complexity of teaching

- Ask educators to discuss with a partner where they would place teaching on the following continuum of work complexity.

Very simple	Fairly straightforward	Often complex	Very complex

- Invite participants to share their thoughts with the group. Prompt participants to suggest what factor(s) may contribute the most to the complexity of teaching. Guide the conversation to explore reasons behind the various views on the complexity of teaching, including working with students with complex profiles.

B. Select the visual that best reflects current thinking

- Display the four images from Appendix 1 around the room or on a screen. Label four different locations of the room with a 1, 2, 3, or 4.

> **Consideration:** Four sample images have been included: an iceberg, a bank, an orchestra and a coffee shop. If you wish to select different visuals, consider images that might imply complexity, variation, interplay between users, and changes over time.

- Ask participants to individually think about the images and then physically move to the image (or numbered sheet of paper) that matches their response to the prompt.
- Once participants are in four groups, ask them to discuss with a partner the reasons for their selection.
- Invite volunteers to share their thinking with the whole group.
- Invite participants to complete the following prompt: "Teaching students with learning disabilities is like… because…".

C. Create the criteria for a robust learner profile

- Suggest that a robust learner profile can be a valuable tool in navigating the complexities of teaching students with learning disabilities.

> **Key Points:** Many school districts generate student profiles based on details captured in their student management systems. In Learning for All, however, a student learning profile is described as a process of gathering and making sense of information from a variety of sources to inform and guide decisions regarding instruction and targeted assessments. This process is often documented in a Student Profile Template (see Learning for All, page 49) and is particularly important for students with learning disabilities.

- Invite teachers to imagine they have received the following information about a student with learning disabilities in their class.

  Dan is a grade 5 student with learning disabilities. He enjoys school, gets along well with his classmates and loves class discussions.

> **Consideration:** You may wish to change the details about the student to match the experiences and contexts of participants.

- Ask teachers to discuss with a partner what might be added or changed to make Dan's learner profile more robust.

- Record participant responses on a whiteboard or on chart paper. Group common ideas together to generate three or four initial criteria for a robust profile.

> **Key Point:** The goal is to generate initial criteria that can be refined over the course of the module. A robust profile might be
>
> • thorough,
>
> • specific.

- Consider posting the initial criteria in a common space. Suggest that in future sessions there will be opportunities to revisit, refine and use the criteria to examine, rework and create learner profiles.

Appendix 1

Sample Images

CHALLENGE

Use this activity to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with teaching students with learning disabilities. When you hear the sentence "Teaching students with learning disabilities is like… because…," which of the four images most resonates with you? Discuss with a partner why you selected the image you did.
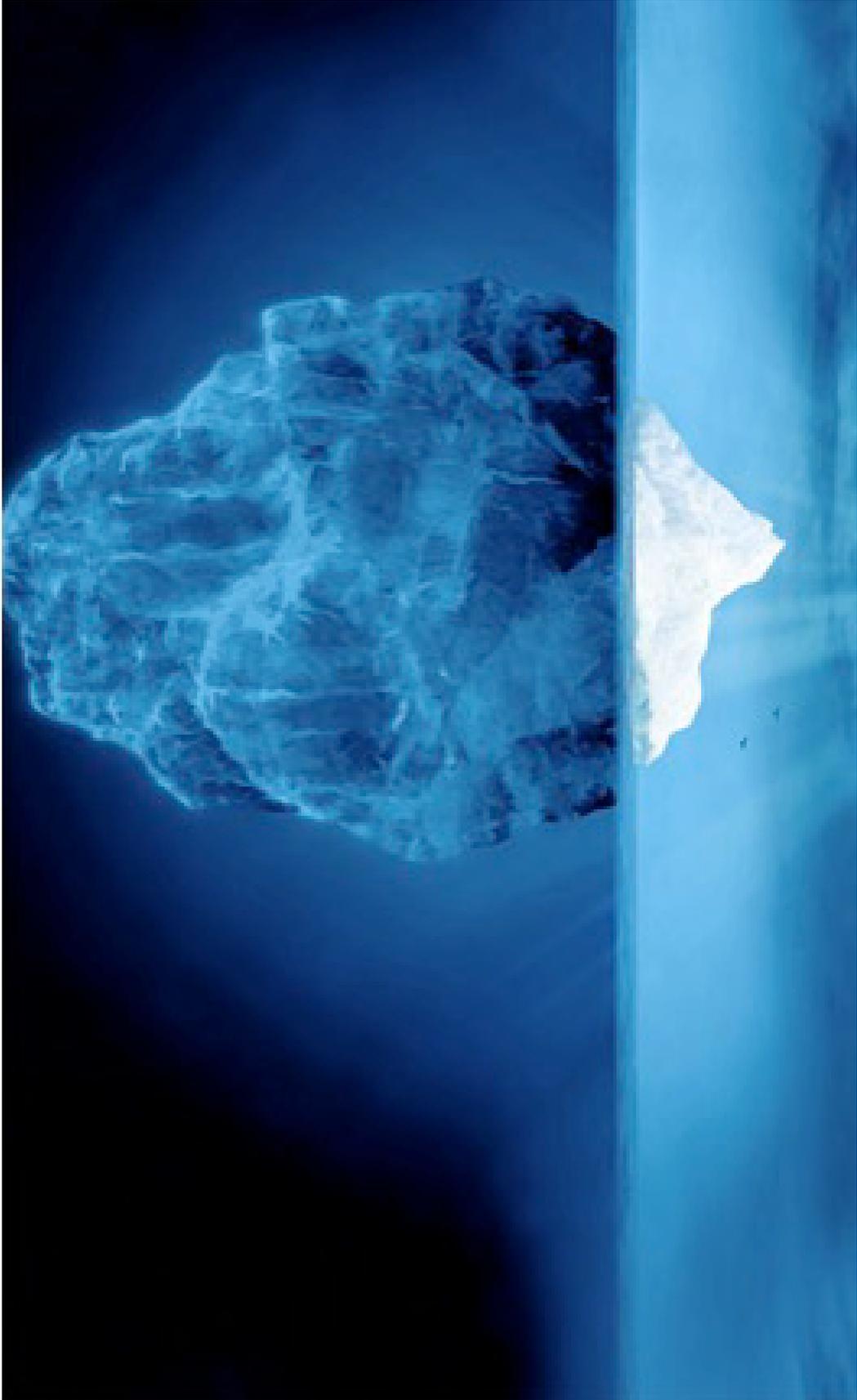
Image 3: An Orchestra