VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

SMURTILIVE: A PUBLIC SPEAKING RESOURCE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

by

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We accept the Applied Project as conforming to the required standard

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Abstract

Public speaking is a fundamental life skill that students need to be exposed to during their middle school years. As a fundamental life skill, public speaking is also known to elicits barriers in the form of fear and anxiety that many students feel they can’t overcome. The goal is to provide students with an opportunity to engage in this skill set in a safe, fun, and engaging way that will provide students with the basic mechanics of public speaking. The main goal of this applied project is to provide middle school teachers with a resource guide to implement public speaking in their own classroom. All graphics and designs were made specifically for this resource. This guide, known as smurtiLIVE, was developed over three years where I have taught fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students. All additional and updated resources can be found at:

www.smurtilive.ca

Keywords:
Public Speaking, Special Education, Oral Fluency, Middle School, Teacher Guide
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Thank you for affirming that there was purpose to all the hard work I was pouring into my
profession. Though we were worlds apart in our respective professions and to fully comprehend
what I was trying to accomplish was difficult at times, what remained steady and unchanging
was your love and support. Thank you.
Dedication

This public speaking resource guide is dedicated to my family:

My father, Madhu Krishna Murti.

My mother, Vishalachi Murti.

My brother, Chris Murti.

My aunt, Subamma Naidu.

My maternal grandfather, Subrail Naidu.

My paternal grandfather, Guruwaiya.

To every student who was on the brink of throwing in the towel, I ask that you don’t.

I ask that you continue to be patient with yourself, because learning is not just a periodic achievement you get, rather, it’s a lifelong pursuit. I ask that you persevere, because as daunting as this journey may seem, each step you take comes with a necessary revelation that will take you to the next step. When all is said and done, all the steps you’ve taken, as tedious and difficult as they were, will inevitable be the story you share. A story that will inspire and help someone realize their own potential. Failure is just an extra step towards success. You never know which life you will impact by simply sharing your story.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of Problem

Over the years, British Columbia has been redesigning its provincial curriculum to fit an ever-changing and evolving 21st century model of education. “21st - century skills is the term used to describe the combinations of specific skills, content knowledge, expertise, and literacies that are essential for today’s graduates” (Ministry of Education, 2018 p. 1). The growing concern amongst educators is this shift towards differentiated instruction across all content-based subjects, with a key emphasis on a “Know-Do-Understand” model of core competencies in areas of learning as more and more students with specials needs are being integrated into the mainstream classroom. The issue at hand is that it is easy to talk about the need for change and discuss the need for differentiated instruction as opposed to the difficulty of actually implementing the process. "Many teachers seem quite willing to continue with [their] traditional teacher-directed, whole class instructional model, even if they harbour deep uncertainties about their fundamental effectiveness” (George, 2005 p. 191). As a result, it interferes with a teacher’s ability/ and or willingness to implement an inquiry-based style of learning. The inquiry-based style of learning refers to "the mindset that students use to build their knowledge and understanding through an active, open-minded exploration of a meaningful question, problem, or issue […] Inquiry should be scaffolded to match the background knowledge and abilities of students” (Ministry of Education, 2018 p. 5), which is something all students, including those with special needs, are entitled too (Erten and Savage, 2012).

BC’s Curriculum
What is BC’s New Curriculum? It is a redesigned curriculum that includes literacy and numeracy foundations, essential learning, and core competencies which are defined as follows by the Ministry of Education (2018 p. 1-9):

- Literacy and Numeracy Foundations – focuses on “text literacy (reading and writing), number and financial literacy, visual literacy, and digital literacy.”
- Essential Learning – places a “deeper understanding of concepts and the application of process [rather] than on memorization of isolated facts and information.” [Essentially] what students are expected to know, be able to do, and understand at each grade.”
- Core Competencies – “are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop to engage in deeper learning. The Core Competencies include thinking, communication, and social and personal.”

With an understanding of the elements and terminology of the redesigned curriculum, the curricular model itself is summarized by three core elements: Big Ideas, Core Competencies, and Curricular Competencies. The Ministry of Education (2018a, p. 1-3) defines these three elements as such:

- "Big ideas are statements that are central to one's understanding in an area of learning. A Big Idea is broad and abstract. It contains key concepts that are timeless and transferable to other situations."
- “Core competencies are a set of intellectual, personal, and social competencies that students develop to engage in deeper learning and to support lifelong learning through the course of their schooling.”
- “Curricular Competencies are the skills, strategies, and processes that students develop over time.”
Teachers combine the three elements in ways they see fit to personalize the learning and meet the academic needs of the individual student. This newly redesigned model, provides an opportunity to develop further a deeper understanding of how to move towards differentiated instruction also, consequently, allowing a way to integrate the Universal Design for Learning process. These learning goals were designed to teach all students even those with special needs/exceptionalities who are very much becoming a part of the everyday classroom. “The primary goal of the British Columbia school system is to support the intellectual development of students, with the support of families and the community. Enabling students to achieve the goals of human and social development and career development is a responsibility shared by schools, families and the community. These goals apply to all students, including students with special needs (Special Programs Branch of the Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 4).”

**Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiation itself is a proactive response to learner needs shaped by a mindset and guided with general principles surrounding environment, quality of curriculum, educational assessments, instructions that respond to student needs, and giving managing routines over to the student. Teachers themselves can differentiate through content, process, product, and also affect the environment according to a student's readiness, interest, and learning profile through a variety of instructional strategies (Tomlinson & Moon, 2014). Differentiated instruction is a critical focal point in the movement towards 21st-century education in British Columbia. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education (2018) defines it as: “differentiated instruction is an approach to learning in which instruction and assessment based on the specific needs, interests, developmental level, and other learning preferences of the individual student (p.3).” It is important to understand that differentiated instruction is the first step to ‘recognize students’
varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning interest, and to react responsively (Hall, Strangman, & Myer, 2003).”

Universal Design for Learning

Differentiated Instruction is supported by the three guiding principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) requirements (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003; Rose & Meyer, 2002). UDL refers to "a set of principles for curriculum development that gives all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone—not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs” (National Centre on Universal Design for Learning, 2012 p#?). UDL is essentially a means of removing obstacles and barriers that may otherwise have interfered with the learning needs of a diverse group of students (Meo, 2008; Rose & Meyer, 2002). Within the framework of UDL exists the three guiding principles (Hall et al., 2003, p 5):

- “Principle 1: To support recognition learning, provide multiple, flexible methods of presentation.”
- “Principle 2: To support strategic learning, providing multiple, flexible methods of expression and apprenticeships.”
- “Principle 3: To support effective learning, provide multiple, flexible options for engagement”

Public Speaking History to the 21st

Amongst the challenges many educators face, confidence in public speaking, more commonly known as oral language, has always fallen short to areas such as numeracy, reading, and writing despite it being a core value of language arts development. Historically, public
speaking in its earliest form has been known by its alternative name, rhetoric. “Aristotle (384-322 BCE) defined rhetoric as the art of ‘discovering in any particular case, all of the available means of persuasion” (as cited by Corbett & Connors, 1999 p. 1). Historically, public speaking was always considered to be a relationship between the speaker and the audience with “the aim of moving the audience’s opinion in one direction or another “(Bailey, 2018 p. 3). There is such a rich history of this form of communication that has evolved throughout the centuries from the time of Aristotle, to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the nineteenth century, the twentieth century, and our present day 21st century. Public speaking is more than rhetoric, especially with the introduction of the technological age. From a time where rhetoric was central to community gatherings, the introduction of the telephone and news media negated the necessity to be present directly amongst the audience. This really jumped boundaries and helped transform public speaking to simply talking amongst one another. “While following the rules of formal elocution may no longer be the key to proving a speakers’ merit, one might argue that the quality of visual aids such as PowerPoint in presentations has become another public speaking skill to master in order to be taken seriously. Ted Talks is an example of this with their intelligent, sympathetic and casual style, with the clear aim of improving the audience’s day to day lives” (Bailey, 2018 p.10 ). The current need for these fundamental skills still exists in all components of life as they are not readily practiced, however, “our public speaking classrooms may be the place where those speakers can practice taking a breath, grounding themselves, and lifting their voices (Bailey, 2018).”

**Personal Content**

In my interactions with middle school teachers, there is a consistent trend of uncertainty of moving forward with differentiated instruction. Though we desire to jump on board with our
new provincial curriculum, we lack the time and resources to push forward, hence, falling back into the patterns of the previous methods of a teacher-directed approach in preparing lessons, methods of assessment, formative and summative practices. As a grade 7 teacher in a BC elementary school, I am both excited about the opportunity to usher in more in-depth learning, differentiated instruction, and to apply inquiry-based approaches but I am also challenged with how to successfully initiate self-directed knowledge as well as integrate and include students with special needs/exceptionalities. When I reflect on my practice, questions such as the following come to mind:

- How do I differentiate social studies, so it's not just another lecture-based course?
- How do I differentiate oral presentation of a research assignment for someone who has a behavior or learning designation but not additional in-class support?
- When do I find the time, amongst the emails, marking, assessments, lesson planning, teaching and day-to-day responsibilities of my classroom to plan something new and engaging in keeping with the ideology of our new curriculum?
- What are other teachers doing? How can I find examples of differentiated instruction?
- Where can I find samples of differentiated instruction that don’t require hours of searching, reading and prepping?
- What are alternative ways to assess my students besides the traditional means of marks, exams, and grades?

Over time, as these questions have become more challenging to address, it slowly became a discouraging task as a whole where I had to stand back and convince myself to change just one thing about my practice, just one, and then I would proceed from there. My passion and skills lie in the areas of presentation and creative design. I decided to use this passion and my skill set to
create something useful for myself and then over time forward it to my colleagues. I began by first looking at what I found to be valuable in an educational resource. It had to possess the following traits: short and simple in description, colourful examples and templates with footnotes. The simplicity of the design will always be meant to be a platform for someone else to take it further and diversify the approach. Good educators need not just an idea, but a sample of what to expect in order to diversify and expand the project beyond what was originally presented.

A fundamental truth within our education system is that at one point or another, a teacher will assign some form of speaking assignment. It’s important that these assignments are well supported to provide students with an optimized route for success. This can be particularly difficult for students with special needs/exceptionalities who already struggle in so many areas of learning, providing a tool kit for success is important. These practices are not just designed for students with exceptionalities as the barriers they face with public speaking skills are widespread across all spectrums. Before teachers can beginning to aid students in this light, we need to explore this question first: “What do middle school teachers understand about differentiated instruction in content-based subject areas?” As BC’s new education curriculum moves towards a 21st-century model of inclusion/integration, I am finding in my practice that a more substantial number of students with special needs/exceptionalities are continually being placed in classrooms with limited to no support. This makes the integration process of trying new practices a very intimidating task and one that can be easily abandoned.

**Personal Issues and Experience**

For the past three years, I have developed a public speaking guide which is called *smurtiLIVE*. This encompasses several core competencies that are outlined in BC’s New
Curriculum. Over the course of three years, it has been consistently adapted through trial and error to meet the needs of all of my students, including those who have special needs such as autism, chronic health, learning disabilities as well as students who struggle with performance anxiety and shyness. I have been developing and designing this guide, utilizing feedback from colleagues, parents, and students to find areas to improve. As this all began as a passion project of mine, I have devoted countless hours fine tuning my approach in teaching public speaking skills. What I have concluded is that the whole program sincerely relies on understanding who my audience is. As I have never conducted this program the same way, initially I began to feel like I had failed. Taking a few steps back, I began to see what was truly happening, I wasn’t necessarily failing, I was meeting the needs of my students for that particular year. This guide can/should be built around who is sitting in your classroom, not who you think is in your classroom. Therefore, relationships are key and are extremely important to the process of building a successful public speaking program.

Statement of Purpose

In this project, I will explore the value and need of a public speaking guide for teachers as they differentiate learning to support students with diverse learning needs. I have taught grades 5, 6, and 7, which all fall under the umbrella of the middle school range in which I have tried this guide. I intend to develop a teaching guide for smurtiLIVE in addition to a website that will provide additional resources and will allow me to update my resources as I progress forward with every new experience and interaction.

Project Questions

The following are essential questions that should be asked over the course of this project for the purpose of developing this public speaking resource guide.
What do middle school teachers understand about differentiated instruction, UDL, public speaking skills and anxiety?

How can a smurtiLIVE strategy support teachers in addressing the curricular competencies and components of oral language?

Overview of Project

The general objective is to design a public speaking guide based on differentiated instructions and UDL in regards to teaching content-based subjects within a middle school classroom setting for a 21st-century education model with an emphasis on building public speaking/oral fluency skills.

The specific objectives are the following:

- Provide middle school teachers with a teacher guide of how to incorporate a public speaking unit in their classroom.

- Design a website that teachers can reference for additional updated information such as guided power points, student guides and visual examples in the form of samples, photographs, and videos.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Differentiated instruction is rooted in the ideology of an inclusive classroom in the mainstream of general education. One of the main challenges faced is perception of its validity and needs within the general education setting. Understanding the stigmatization associated with inclusive education, as well as the perceptions of general and special education teachers, is a fundamental step that needs to be explored in order for inclusive education to become mainstream. Teacher perception is key in fully realizing the potential for inclusive education in understanding the needs and wants of the general classroom teacher to help foster and build an inclusive environment which will further extend to creating successful programs in building oral fluency skills amongst students with increasing teacher confidence for implementation.

Regarding inclusive education, the framework that supports differentiated instruction, perception is the fundamental foundation that methodologies and practices are built on. Looking at inclusive education from a broad point of view helps compare the practices that are conducted here in British Columbia. Ferguson (2008) examined international perceptions of inclusive education in the United States and Europe. He found that there still existed a barrier for success in regards to minority students and those with some form of disability. Ferguson stands firm on the notion that the challenges of inclusive education are worth the end result, giving everyone equal opportunity to thrive. Ferguson outlines various steps that should be taken to help push inclusivity into mainstream schools, however, notes that current practices continue to be uneven at best. He concludes that minority students, poverty-stricken students, and those with various disabilities consistently fall short to their other peers in the general education system. School reform on various levels is necessary to push the notion of inclusive classrooms in fairly
educating all citizens, not just those who fit the general model of education. Thus, understanding that inclusive education is an agenda that needs to be represented at multiple levels so that it can be successful in the mainstream of general education.

**Rationale for Inclusive Education**

The British Columbia Ministry of Education has implemented an inclusion policy where all students with special needs/exceptionalities are entitled to be learners within the same community as the general public. It’s clear in the policy that inclusion is not just an act of integration, but that of meeting the needs of different learners in a meaningful way that promotes interactions with all members of the community (Ministry of Education, 2018c).

Comprehending the idea of inclusive education and understanding why new models of the system needs to exist should be examined. Erten and Savage (2012) examined the rationale for inclusive education and how it is seen as a fundamental right for students to have an educational experience with all their peers, regardless of designation. They recognized a split in perspective amongst special education teachers who argue that the inclusion methods will never truly help these students reach their full potential, on the other end, other educators argue that separation from general education settings creates more emotional and social barriers for these students. Additionally, they recognized the connection between differentiated instruction and an inclusive classroom as being fundamental, however, teacher perceptions remained that implementing differentiated instruction was both challenging and demanding. In their final note, they argue that general educational policy was a big contributor in the hesitation and prevention of implementing an inclusive environment. They argued that questions of “how” to integrate, instead of “why” to integrate should be often asked as schools have a responsibility to foster an inclusive classroom. Thus, Erten and Savage (2012) demonstrate that the next step is shifting
how we ask questions. It is no longer a debate of identifying the need for an inclusive model, rather, how to make it a reality should be questions that push further studies on this topic.

**Impact of Differentiated Instruction**

Identifying the impact of differentiated instruction is very important as it becomes the driving force to pursue the methodology. Valiandes (2015) examined how differentiated instruction help promote equity for all participants in a mixed ability classroom. She notes that in order for differentiated to have its effect, teachers must have adequate knowledge of the content as well as understanding the strengths and needs of their students to fully implement this methodology. A working definition of differentiation was established to be the foundation of this study. It is seen as “a contemporary pedagogic framework which acts as an optimum methodological umbrella and at the same time incorporates the basic characteristics of effective teaching, as supported by research” (Valiandes. 2015). The study itself had three goals: determine the effectiveness of differentiation in mixed ability classrooms, determine characteristics of effective differentiated instruction on the quality of teaching, and to measure the equity and quality of student outcomes. The findings of this study were positive in respect to the data gathered. They identify and justify the need for differentiated instruction in order to raise educational quality and equity.

Coubergs, Struyven, and Vanthournout (2017) examine to “develop and validate a theory-driven instrument with the objective of describing the extent to which teachers think and act according to the philosophy and principles of Differentiated Instruction in their classrooms, called the DI-Quest” (p. 41). Their survey is based on the works of Tomlinson (2005) who identifies differentiated instruction as a proactive method of teaching and Dweck (2006) who distinguished two types of mindset: fixed and growth. The method in which this study was
carried out through a carefully crafted questionnaire. The questions were constructed and reviewed by educational experts in the field of differentiated instruction. The results measured five different constructs: fixed mindset, ethical compass, flexible grouping, output=input, and differentiation. Essentially, the aim of the study was to test the validity of the differentiated instruction questionnaire. In conclusion, the results were positive and “can help teachers to develop their competencies to implement differentiated instruction in their classrooms” (p.53).

As the goal of study is to create a resource guide/unit on public speaking, it is important to look at what research has been conducted in this specific area. Carlson and Smith-Howell (1995) examined the reliability and validity of evaluation instruments as a means of assessing public speaking skills. They analyzed a number of rating instruments used in classrooms as well as the experience of the raters conducting the assessments. The study aimed to answer this question: “Do evaluation forms and/or speech evaluation experience affect speech ratings?” (p.88). The findings of the study confirm the validity and reliability of various different types of evaluation instruments as long as they adhere to measuring constructs of delivery and content.

Understanding terminology is very important when discussing anything related to special needs, special education and designation. An example of this is the term anxiety. It exists on a blurred lined between a basic human characteristic to a symptom for a diagnostic; otherwise known as Anxiety and Anxiety disorders. In a general outlook, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) defines the two as such: “a normal reaction to stress and can be beneficial in some situations. It can alert us to dangers and help us prepare and pay attention. Anxiety disorder differ from normal feelings of nervousness or anxiousness, and involve excessive fear or anxiety (2018).” This may very well be the first step in teacher development, understanding the terms that define the students that enter the general classroom.
Teacher Perceptions

Understanding teacher perception is a vital perspective that ultimately will guide how an inclusive classroom is implemented. Blecker and Boakes (2010) examined skills, knowledge and dispositions of general and special education teachers towards inclusive education. As well, the study also addressed teacher perception of school climate regarding inclusive education and whether or not adequate support was given from administrative and professional levels. They found that, between varied years of experienced teachers, that adequate support was a fundamental issue. There was a big concern over the lack of preparation time and professional development to obtain and explore the necessary skills to foster an inclusive environment. As well, there was a clear statement that there was not enough collaboration time between general and special education teachers. Special education teachers often employed strategies to foster individual success as they continually implied that there was a great disconnect between their field and the general school climate. Understanding these perceptions will help guide how these educators receive support foster an inclusive classroom within the mainstream of general education.

Perceptions are often followed by identifying challenges. Ferguson (2008) examined international perceptions of inclusive education in the United States and Europe. He found that there still existed a barrier for success in regards to minority students and those with some form of disability. He stands firm on the notion that the challenges of inclusive education are worth the end result, giving everyone equal opportunity to thrive. Ferguson outlines various steps that should be taken to help push inclusivity into mainstream schools, however, notes that current practices continue to be uneven at best. He concludes that minority students, poverty-stricken students, and those with various disabilities consistently fall short to their other peers in the
School reform on various levels is necessary to push the notion of inclusive classrooms in fairly educating all citizens, not just those who fit the general model of education.

Ernest, Heckaman, Thompson, Hull, and Carter (2011) examined the perspective and experience of a special education teacher who had just started their career in this field. They outline a general description of what differentiation is and the importance of this approach in an educational setting. As well, they outline rationale and methods for using a differentiated approach. They optimize the use of Tomlinson’s categorical hierarchy of success in this specific area by addressing content, product, process, and learning environments. The teachers own data collection method involved self-assessment of current practice and curricula areas, reflections, identifying possible differentiated strategies, implementation, and more reflection of practice. The method of data collection for student progress came in the form of pre-assessments, self-assessments, and ongoing assessments. What came out of this case study was an overview of a successful integration of differentiated instruction. The process of reflection and practice were evident in this case study.

**Teaching to Autism Spectrum Disorder**

What is Autism Spectrum Disorder? The American Psychiatric Association defines it such: “Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition that involves persistent challenges in social interaction, speech and nonverbal communication, and restricted/repetitive behaviours. The effects of ASD and the severity of symptoms are different in each person” (2018).

Much of the literature surrounding ASD research focuses on interventions that lead to successful outcomes. Long and Simpson (2017) examine the research documenting basic
foundational structure and supports for successful classroom experiences by reporting
“practitioner’s recommendations for foundational elements for four groups of elementary-age
learners with ASD who differed in age and severity of disability” (p. 269). The study involved
120 experienced educators with a range of experience and presented practitioners’
recommendations as followed: collaborative teaming, human and other resources, classroom
structure, academic-preacademic-cognitive supports, social skills support, challenging behaviour
supports, family participation, communication supports and sensory supports (Long & Simpson,
2017, p. 273-275). One main limitation of this study was that there were few comparable studies
to test the full validity of the recommendations. As for future considerations, it’s important to
explore the success rate of these children beyond the elementary years. In retrospect, these
recommendations provide useful insight when considering the necessary supports a student with
ASD requires to have a successful experience within the general classroom setting.

ASD presents unique challenges to educators as inclusive practices become more
common and expected in the general classroom setting. Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber and Kincaid
(2003) respond to the challenges of teaching students with ASD with the notion that “although
an impressive body of research identifying practise has emerged, there have been minimal
attempts to integrate the findings into a curricular foundation to be adopted by school districts”
(p.150). It is necessary to note that in the pursuit of finding strategies to teach students with
ASD, it’s important to remind ourselves that “students with ASD are heterogeneous in their
presentation of behaviours and in their unique preferences, interests, and learning styles requiring
individualized instructional support needs” (Dunlap & Fox, 2002; Dunlap & Robbins, 1991 as
cited by Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber & Kincaid 2013, p.153). This notion reinforces the
indistinguishable fact that like all students in a general stream classroom, students with ASD are
no different when it comes to the way they learn. Yes, these students have similarities, however it’s still very important to approach these students as individuals as opposed to designations. Their study concluded three important areas to focus on when considering individualized approaches of support: “1 considering family preferences when determining goals to be taught and the methods by which instruction will be delivered, 2 incorporating the child’s preferences and special interests into the instructional period (Hurth et al., 1999), and 3 focusing on the child’s strengths and weakness to determine the most appropriate intensity and level of instruction to meet the child’s individual goals (National Research Council, 2001) (Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber and Kincaid 2013, p.153).”

Lindsay, Proulx, Scott and Thomson (2013) provide insight into various strategies teachers use to include children who have ASD in mainstream classrooms. Their study was conducted in Ontario, Canada with 13 participants whose teaching experience ranged between 3 to 22 years. Participants had to meet the following criteria: “(1) had at least 2 years of teaching experience in a mainstream (integrated) class; (2) currently teach in an integrated class in an elementary public school within the local district school board; and/or (3) have experience in teaching a student with ASD within a mainstream class (2014, p. 104).” The research conducted is congruent with the inclusion practice as each child is considered to be valued members of the learning community who therefore should be given an opportunity to thrive within a school culture. Lindsay et. al (2013) draw their inclusive pedagogy as outlined by Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) as “(1) a shift in teaching and learning from an approach that works best for most learners towards one that involves the development of a rich learning opportunity that is made available to everyone; (2) a rejection of deterministic beliefs about ability; and (3) a way of working with others that respects the dignity of learners as full members of the classroom
This pedagogy falls directly into line with the parameters of the public speaking guide I am developing. The results of this study provide valuable strategies in teaching/including students with ASD in the classroom such as: “(1) advocating for resources and essential training; (2) tailored teaching methods; (3) teamwork within the school; (4) building rapport with parents and students; and (5) building a climate of acceptance within the classroom through disability awareness, education and sensitivity training (p. 109).” Patience, consistency, creative planning and flexibility are core findings of this study with regards to teacher perception which stand as the pillars in which this public speaking guide was built upon.

Evidence-based practices (EBP) in teaching students with autism and other documented disabilities continues to provide valuable insight for the general classroom teacher. Knight, Huber, Kuntz, Carter, and Juarez (2018) attempt to provide positive educational outcomes for students with autism and intellectual disabilities. Their study involved surveying 535 special education teachers who worked with at least one student with autism or a designation who shared “perspectives regarding (a) implementation of EBP, (b) access to resources on these practices, (c) instructional decision making (e.g., professional judgment, recommended in journal articles), and (d) the importance of, and level of, preparedness related to instructional areas (e.g., social skills, reading) (2018, p. 11).” Knight et. al (2018) reported that educators used EBP daily from a range of approaches from modeling to environmental changes based on their own self confidence to carry out these instructional practices; all of which relied heavily on weighing and addressing “individual student need[s] and the type[s] of skill[s] their students need to learn as factors” (p. 11-13). An overarching theme amongst many EBP across several fields is the need to provide more training for such practices.

**Teaching to ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder)**
What is ADHD? The American Psychiatric Association defines it such: “Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common mental disorders affecting children. ADHD also affects many adults. Symptoms of ADHD include inattention (not being able to keep focus), hyperactivity (excess movement that is not fitting to the setting) and impulsivity (hasty acts that occur in the moment without thought)” (2018).

Anderson, Watt, and Shanley (2017) examine the ambivalent attitudes about teaching children with ADHD since the characteristics associated with this designation are usually the opposite of what is required in the classroom setting. Considering the formation of teachers’ perceptions of students with ADHD, it is critical as they are often “exposed to numerous sources of inconsistent information about ADHD during training courses, through the media, their interactions with children, and their personal experience” (Anderson, Watt, & Shanley, p.333-334, 2017). Anderson, Watt, and Shanley examined studies that “measured teacher attitudes towards ADHD, but they did not differentiate between attitudes and knowledge...[later] studies found participants with greater knowledge of ADHD also held more positive attitudes (p. 334).” This implies that the general foundation of perception is dependent on factual knowledge over opinion, which Anderson, Watt, and Shanley (2017) implied earlier is consistently contested with several other sources of information. Their paper aims to “describe the nature and extent of pre-service and in-service teachers’ attitudinal ambivalence in relation to teaching children with ADHD” (p. 335, 2017). Anderson, Watt, and Shanley conducted a survey on both in-service and pre-service teachers. “One hundred and twenty-seven [in-service] teachers (35 males and 92 females; 64 primary teachers and 61 secondary teachers – two scores missing) [...] Three hundred and twenty-seven [pre-service] education students (59 males and 268 females’ 198 primary teachers and 128 secondary teachers)” participated in the study (p.335-336, 2017). The method
of data collection was an online survey which identified the following: demographic items, global attitude, perceived ambivalence, objective knowledge, and attitude content. The results of the study recommend specific avenues be taken in order to properly support teachers who teach students with ADHD such as safe and supportive environments where teachers can address their concerns; be provided with psycho-education about managing disruptive behaviour; support for teachers to regulate their own emotions; as well as independent counselling support. Anderson, Watt, and Shanley (2017) conclude that the results of the study show “that attitudinal ambivalence about teaching children with ADHD is commonly experienced by both pre-service and in-service teachers … [and that] … [a]wareness, education and support are recommend to prevent teacher burnout, stress and attrition, as well as to promote the best outcomes for children with symptoms of ADHD” (p. 347).

Dupal, Wayandt, and Janusis (2011) examine effective classroom intervention strategies for students who are designated with ADHD at the core of their research. They explore behavioral and academic interventions for students with ADHD. Loe and Feldman (2007), as cited by Dupal, Wayandt, and Janusis (2011), acknowledge that “[a]cademically, children with ADHD are more likely to have poor grades, lower scores on standardized tests, greater likelihood of identification for special education, and an increased use of school-based services, compared to peers without the disorder” (p.36). Though medication is the common avenue many families implement, it rarely gets to the roots of the actual struggle the student faces. Intervention strategies must be used in accordance with other procedural methods to provide the student with the best opportunity to be successful. In regards to academic related tasks, it would be beneficial to modify the length of the assignment as to not overwhelm the student as well as provide a variety of options with similar expected outcomes; “As students demonstrate success with
shorter assignments, the length of assignment can be gradually increased … [and]… [t]he various options should all lead to similar outcomes” (Dupal, Wayandt, and Janusis p.36, 2011). Dupal, Wayandt, and Janusis (2011) conclude in their research that “[s]chool-based interventions are a critical component to a comprehensive treatment plan for students with ADHD… [and that there are] three important principles to consider when designing and implementing school-based interventions (p.40).” These principles are as followed: “First, treatment plans should be balanced by including both proactive (i.e., antecedent-based) and reactive (i.e., consequence-based) behavioral interventions…[s]econd, assessment data should be used to design evaluation, and modify interventions within and across the school year…[ and thirdly], multiple mediators (e.g., peers, computer technology, and students with ADHD) should be used to deliver treatment so that classroom teachers are not asked to shoulder all of the responsibility for intervention” (Dupal, Wayandt, and Janusis, 2011, p.40).

Nowacek and Mamlin (2007) examined teacher comprehension of the characteristics associated with ADHD to see if any substantial modifications were made for their students in the general classroom setting. Interestingly to note, a majority of students with ADHD do not qualify for additional special education programs and as a result, all the responsibility of their success is solely dependent on the general classroom teacher. For their research, Nowacek and Mamlin (2007) conducted two independent studies; the first study involved two teachers for lower primary and two teachers from upper primary; the second study involved two middle school grade teams. All participants had to meet the criteria set out by Nowacek & Mamlin (2007): “(a) were identified by their principal as being effective, (b) had at least 5 years teaching experience, and (c) were currently teaching students with ADHD” (p.29). The results of their study yielded many conclusions about elementary and middle school general classroom teachers view and
respond to ADHD. One notable conclusion is this: “In general, the middle-grades teachers we observed and interviewed made more academic than behavioral modifications in contrast to the elementary teachers in our study. One middle-grades teacher offered the explanation that these older students regulated their behaviours, either through the use of medication or because they have learned to manage their own behaviours in elementary school” (p. 34).

Nowacek and Mamlin (2007) concluding remarks about their study is often what the average classroom teacher feels when they are searching for ways to incorporate students with ADHD under the moniker of inclusion as they state: “Although the elementary and middle-school teachers we interviewed reported that they attempted to meet the needs of their students with ADHD, they seemed to select modifications that could be performed without advanced planning, that did not require differentiated instruction, or behavioral intervention, or that could be addressed by another professional or support person” (p. 34). It’s important to keep this in mind when creating a teacher guide for middle school teachers to understand their own limitations and perspective regarding students with ADHD and any other designation. The responsibility of the general classroom teacher is to teach to the class, when possible, teach to the individual, given the resources and time that are realistically available to them.

**Teaching to LD (Specific Learning Disorder)**

What is Specific Learning Disorder? The American Psychiatric Association defines it such: “Specific learning disorder is a development disorder that begins by school-age, although it may not be recognized until later. It involves ongoing problems learning key academic skills, including reading, writing and math” (2018).

Mazher (2018) examines different ways in which “teach students with learning disabilities (LD) to cope effectively, so that they may develop self-determination (independence)
skills in middle school” (p.1). Self-determination is absolutely necessary for students with these kinds of exceptionalities to feel successful, especially in relation to public speaking activities/assignments; which are already fear provoking in itself. Coping in itself is noted to be “efforts, both action-oriented and intra-psychic, to manage (i.e., masters, tolerate, reduce, or minimize) environmental and internal demands, and conflicts among them, which tax or exceed a person’s resources” (Lazarus and Lauiner, 1978) as cited by Mazher (2018). To understand coping methods, it is important to understand the underlying challenges associated with LD students. Mazher (2018) provides an understanding of the processing challenges students with LD possess such as, “problems related to decoding and understanding print; remembering verbal information (i.e., information coded in language); and processing information efficiently… [as well as] … memory problems [that] affect the retention of complex verbal information” (p.2). Mazher has outlined a number of school arrangements that promote effective coping: Assessing what students can do, letting the student lead the IEP meeting, learning support coaches, teaching for mastery/not performance, methods of coping instruction, problem-focused coping, preventing avoidance, preventing acting out, blunting self-blame, assertive coping, sublimation (2018).

Levi, Einay, Raskind, Ziv & Margalit (2013) examine the importance of positive self-perceptions teachers should have in their own ability to teach students with exceptionalities. The goal of their study “was to examine the relations between the personal resources and self-efficacy (SE) beliefs” (p.431). At the heart of this, exists teachers’ ability to process judgment by others of their capabilities in the classroom. Consistently, teachers second guess their abilities, whether they are doing something right, making an impact, or if they feel like they are making a difference. Looking into this area of teachers’ confidence to teach students with designations, in an increasingly diverse and inclusive environment, it is very important to set teachers up for
success. A growing concern amongst teachers is that “[s]tudents with LD present numerous challenges, not only to teachers’ professional skills, but to their personal resource as well. Some teachers have reported that they do not feel competent teaching students with special needs” (de Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert, 2010 as cited by Levi et. al 2013 p. 428). Levi et. al (2013) bring fourth three approaches, Hope Theory, Sense of Coherence, and Self-Efficacy to discover they encompass and what impact they could possibly have on teachers. The study ends with looking at other “interesting questions regarding the potential contributions of other variables may include additional personality characteristics (e.g. self-esteem, sensitivity, or openness to experiences) and environmental characteristics (e.g. school climate, parental involvement, or peer support)” (Levi et. al., 2013 p. 437).

Kellems & Edwards (2015) explore and examine practitioners’ evidence-based teaching strategies in teaching students with learning disabilities (LD) using video modeling (VM) intervention strategies. There are various types of VM practices that both support instruction and participation such as video prompting (VP), video self-modeling (VSM), and point-of-view modeling (PVM) and they are described as followed:

- “Video prompting (VP) is a form of video modeling in which the video is broken down into different clips or segments” (p.207).
- “Video self-modeling (VSM) occurs when a student watches a video of himself performing the desired behaviour” (p.207).
- “Point-of-view modeling (PVM) is when a student views a film depicting the desired behaviour what the performance would look like from the student’s perspective” (p.208).
This is an important avenue to explore as this will support the differentiated approach of teaching to a public speaking guide through multiple platforms. Kellems and Edwards (2015) conclude the benefits of using technology in the classroom as “[t]his intervention is easily adaptable and can be used as a means to deliver Common Core academic instruction to students with LD” (p. 214) and it also becomes applicable for all students, those with and without special designations.

**Public Speaking Barriers**

Before creating a public speaking guide, understanding the barriers that make it so difficult for so many people are important to know as it helps determine to address and which require a greater emphasis. “According to most studies, people’s number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two? Does that seem right? To the average person that means that if they have to go to a funeral, they’d be better off in the casket than giving the eulogy” (Seinfeld, 1993). Public speaking barrier terminology can range as far and wide from words such as anxiety to shyness. That being said, as the terminology is far and wide, we see that there is a fundamental block that creates barriers for many students to feel comfortable with this skill set. It’s important to have a foundational understanding of barriers in order to offer an initial process for remedy.

Language Arts is generally renowned in three discipline areas: reading, writing, oral. Oral language is a fundamental life skill. Backlund (1985) examines fundamental speaking and listening skills appropriate to elementary students by stating that “speech communication is probably the most widely used and least recognized area of knowledge essential to education.” Backlund (1985) identified four fundamental areas that are deemed essential for speaking and listening skills: “Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Codes,” “Functional Skills,”
“Interaction and Message Strategy Skills,” and “Receptive and Evaluation Skills.” Looking at educational practices and observations as a linear progression, we see that a study by Masduki, Zakaria and Ismail (2018) examine the implications and challenges of oral language for elementary school aged children, to which their findings state that children still experience the highest levels of shyness when there is a need to do an oral presentation individually (p.6). Creating opportunities for students to practice speaking skills is something that should be considered across all platforms and “teachers should encourage all children, including the quiet ones to talk in front of others by planning various communication activities during the co-curricular program such as speech, debate, and drama” (Masduki, Zakaria and Ismail, 2018, p. 7).

Lefebvre and Allen (2018) examine how teaching must address how to manage fears that lead to PSA. Though this study conducted for students in post-secondary schools, the elicit fears and anxiety remain common ground throughout the elementary and secondary lives of students. Fear has no distinguished level of existence, it exists in all key demographics of life as “competence in oral communication constitutes a prerequisite to academic, personal, and professional success” (Morreal & Pearson, 2008; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2016; National Postdoctoral Association, 2009 as cited by Lefebvre and Allen, 2018 p. 348). Lefebvre and Allen outline internal fears (25%) and external fears (75%) over 12 categories in which they go in extensive detail in breaking down as potential barriers within PSA in descending order: audience response (30%), inability to self-regulate (23%), disfluency (8%), performance evaluation (7%), excessive activation (6%), ineffective nonverbal vocal delivery (5%), unpreparedness (5%), insufficient audience analysis (4%), misaligned information (4%), inadequate public speaking skills (3%), distracting non-verbal physical delivery (2%), and
unexpected events (1%) (2018, p. 352-357). These findings create pillars in which to build a public speaking guide in taking in considerations various types of internal/externa barriers students encounter with the art of public speaking.

**Research Based Resources**

Katz (2013) examines the fundamental roles of the resource and general classroom education teacher in midst of an inclusive environment focusing on a three-block model of universal design for learning. In her book, she uses a response to intervention model to illustrate the potential and successful uses of the UDL model in supporting students at all levels on intervention to achieve social and academic success.

Tomlinson (2016) offers teachers with practical research-based strategies to meet the demands and challenges of differentiation in the classroom. In her book, she outlines the theoretical basis of differentiated instruction, different variables in curricula, various learning environments, instructional strategies. As well, she goes into depth into elementary classrooms and explores how teachers are differentiating their instruction amongst multiple areas of content-based subjects and how they support students. This book offers a strong foundation on how to develop a differentiated classroom by introducing knowledge and expanding current understandings of the content at hand.

Tomlinson and McTighe (2006) offer new perspectives on some of the most challenging factors educators face today from creating purposeful curriculum in a standardized world to ensuring academic success for all types of learners. This books clearly notes that this is a curriculum focused entry of evaluating what we teach in the classrooms. As well, this mindset feeds into differentiated instruction and identifies who we teach, where we teach and how we teach in a mainstream general classroom. Essentially, this book guides teachers by providing the
necessary tools for success and guides them in the development of instruction in regards to the curriculum.

Tomlinson and Moon (2014) examine assessment and how differentiation can help student success across various grades and subjects. They go from a broad sense of the methodology and focus specifically on various forms of assessment such as pre-assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. They acknowledge that they can capture student interest, offer teachers a better understanding of practice, and identify a student’s individual differences and similarities. Their work is grounded in research and their own teaching experience offers credible information and strategies.

Summary

It appears that teacher perception is at the heart of whether or not an inclusive classroom can exist. Teacher perception is dependent on whether they feel supported in fostering this type of environment. The idea that the mainstream general classroom can be an inclusive environment needs to be supported not just by methodology and perspective, but with support and training for teachers. They are the ones who are experiencing this move of culture first hand. Expectations of creating this inclusive environment, on a model that previously supported separation of general and special education classrooms needs to be addressed. The method in which teachers are given preparation, professional development, collaboration, are all factors that need to be reimagined to fit an inclusive model of education.

Moving forward caution should be advised, though; Ferguson (2008) and Blecker and Boakes (2010) outline a concern for the lack of methodologies used in extending current knowledge about research in this field. As they summarize general perceptions and evidence for their case, specific outcomes from direct sources need to be conducted as they will provide a
deeper understanding. Like Erten and Savage (2012), more research should be conducted at the school and classroom levels to create a better understanding and deeper insight in this area, especially in regards to teaching students with special needs. This study will focus on specific designations, as outlined by the ministry of education in creating a public speaking guide.
Chapter 3: 

Project Outline

Research Questions

The following are essential questions that should be asked over the course of this study.

- What do middle school teachers understand about differentiated instruction, UDL, students with exceptionalities, public speaking skills and anxiety?
- How can a smurtiLIVE strategy support teachers in addressing the curricular competencies and components of oral language?

The following headings represent what kind of information will be included in the smurtiLIVE: Teacher Guide as well as information that can be found on the smurtiLIVE website. This detailed description breakdown is meant to provide a general idea of what information will be included in the smurtiLIVE resource package.

BC’s New Core Competencies

The foundations of BC’s new curriculum are built around three core competencies: communication, thinking, personal and social. These competencies are amongst the most evident in almost every aspect of learning (BC Ministry of Education, 2016a). Specifically, communication, creative thinking and critical thinking play important roles in the public speaking process as it challenges students to communicate their learning, think about the content they are sharing, and make meaningful connections with their audience to share what they have learned in an effective manner. These competencies are closely tied with how this public speaking guide is being produced. This description is intended to provide teachers with a clear understanding of how this public speaking unit is closely tied with BC Education expectations and mandates.
1. **Communication** is at the heart of a public speaking unit as it is encompassing the entire process of research and development of ideas and thoughts. The BC Ministry of Education defines this competency as followed: “[it] encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences, and ideas, to explore the world around them, and to understand and effectively engage in the use of digital media. Communication competency provides a bridge between students’ learning, their personal and social identity and relationships, and the world in which they interact” (2016b, p.2).

2. **Creative thinking** is an extension of the public speaking process as the goal is to draw the attention of the audience in, for a few movements, to express and share a thought-provoking piece of information. The BC Ministry of Education defines this competency as followed: “[it] involves the generation of new ideas and concepts that have value to individual or others, and the development of these ideas and concepts from though to reality” (2016c, p.2).

3. **Critical thinking** is that moment that draws a line between the pursuit of knowledge and standing still. For many students, it’s arguably a very difficult skill set to embrace. Encompassing this skill set into this public speaking unit will not always yield positive results, however, it provides exposure and allows students to experience something different and unfamiliar in hopes that it becomes a common place skill set. The BC Ministry of Education defines this competency as followed: “[it] involves making judgments based on reasoning: students consider options; analyze these using specific criteria; and draw conclusions and make judgments. Critical thinking competency encompasses a set of abilities that students use to examine their own thinking, and that of others, about information that the receive through observations, experiences, and various forms of communication” (2016d, p.2).
BC’s English Language Arts Curriculum

To simplify where this public speaking unit fits within a subject field would be to say its primary placement lies within English Language Arts. That being said, this public speaking unit is purposefully designed to exist across multiple subject fields where it draws on content and skills across the field. The teachable content within English Language Arts is something that exists between multiple grade levels, which means the process of learning and acquiring those skills is meant to be a continuing motion of progression and development. Within grades six, seven, and eight, the content that students are expected to know are outlined by the BC Ministry of Education: techniques of persuasion (use of emotion for appeal), oral language strategies (focus on speaker, expressing opinions, staying on topic), metacognitive strategies (talking and thinking about learning), features of oral language (including tone, volume, inflection, pace, and gesture), presentation techniques (reflects appropriate medium for audience, careful organization), elements of style (diction, tone, degree of formality), and syntax (transitional words and phrases, complete thoughts) (2016e-g).

BC’s Special Programs Branch Teaching Resources

The British Columbia Ministry of Education has a Special Programs Branch that provides teaching resources for the different types of designations that exist within the BC school system. Their approach is teaching for student differences as outlined in their general statement across their policies and manuals. With the diversity, distributed learning, and inclusion policies playing prominent roles in its development (Ministry of Education, 2018c,d,e). The following is a list of teaching strategies the Special Programs Branch has distributed that highlight the special needs/exceptionalities section of the teacher guide:


Public Speaking Resources

Within the smurtiLIVE teacher guide, there will be specific sections that address various public speaking skills students should possess that teachers can focus on developing with their students. Students who are highly anxious about assignments that require public speaking have the opportunity to ask questions about the upcoming assignment. This typically will help with insecurities or lack of knowledge about what is truly expected. These fundamental guidelines will draw from the success of other print sources that also focus on oral fluency/public speaking success. The following are list of print source references I will use to create the subsection “Public Speaking Tips” within my smurtiLIVE teacher guide.


2. “Well Spoken: Teaching Speaking To All Students” by Erik Palmer

3. “Public Speaking: How to overcome the fear of public speaking and be a confident public speaker – use what you have to make a great speech and win over any audience” by Wallace Foulds


Design Overview
Below is a general overview of the specific sections that will be included in the smurtiLIVE Teacher Guide. The teacher guide acts as the primary resource for educators to access while the website is a secondary source of information to aid the teacher guide.

**Primary Resource: smurtiLIVE Teacher Guide**

- **“What is smurtiLIVE?”** – This introductory section describes what this guide is and how it is designed to promote and build public speaking skills.
- **“BC Education”** – Describes in detail how smurtiLIVE is connected to the BC curriculum in both content of subject fields and core competencies (As outlined earlier in Chapter 3).
- **“Time Line”** – A short description surrounding an implementation time line. Noting this time line is a suggested guide for the mainstream general classroom. A variant time line for students who have special needs/exceptionalities will also be included with short descriptions and will be found under the heading “Teaching to Diversity.”
- **“Teaching to Diversity”** – This section outlines terminology, experience, and various teaching strategies for students with special needs/exceptionalities. The breakdown of flexible time line, additional support, creativity/interest driven, general assistance will be specific to three types of designations: ASD, ADHD, and LD. These are designations previous students in my class have had, I focus mainly on my experience supported by peer-reviewed/evidence-based strategies.
- **“Theme is Everything”** – This section will focus on how the right theme for the right class can set the tone. Providing examples of various themes, I have used in the past coupled with themes that are subject related to meet curriculum expectations as outlined by the BC Ministry of Education. In addition to the theme description, student handouts designed
around each theme will be attached in the appendix of the teacher research (also available as individual documents on the website).

- “Research Guide” – This section will focus on the research process. It elaborates in detail the different steps in the process of building a smurtiLIVE presentation. The snapshot steps are as followed: discover your choice, general research, yes/no, refine research, draft speaking points, practice speaking, determine visual aids, draft presentation tools, refine and adjust. The research section spills into the speech and visual aid building process as research is consistently needed to update and rearrange different sections. An additional section called “Theme Variance” will be included in the research section as different themes require different skills sets such as communication through email to help with the inquiry process.

- “The Speaking Guide” – This section will draw attention to successful speaking points and draw awareness to public speaking barriers and what students might feel. In addition to examples and descriptions, a power point will be attached to this section for educators to use in the classroom.

- “The Technology Aid” – This section will draw attention to the different components of creating a useful presentation tool. In addition to examples and descriptions, a power point will be attached to this section for educators to use in the classroom.

- “Assessment” – This section will draw attention to the assessment rubrics being used. There will be two types of assessment rubrics that educators can choose from that are designed for student expectations in grade six, seven, and eight. These rubrics of assessment are rooted in the language as outlined by the BC Ministry of Education. The scale ranges between four stages of academic achievement; emerging, developing,
proficient, and extending. The following descriptions of the proficiency scale are from the framework for classroom assessment by the BC Ministry of Education (2016h, p.10):

- **Emerging**: The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.”
- **Developing**: The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.”
- **Proficient**: The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.”
- **Extending**: The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.”

The numerical assessment, otherwise known as the 1-3-5 Assessment, was developed through my own experience in the classroom. Understanding that it is difficult to assign a specific numerical value on any given category, the 1-3-5 assessment was designed to allow for flexibility. Wherein a student may have done better than a 1, but not quite earned a mark of 3, the numerical values 2,4,6 are indications of ongoing growth towards the initial desired achievement.

- **“Setting the Stage”** – This section will draw attention to different ways to bring this public speaking event to life. How to create an experience and not just an obligation. Descriptions of my own experience and photos will reinforce this section.

**Secondary Resource: [www.smurtilive.ca](http://www.smurtilive.ca)**

The secondary resource to the smurtiLIVE: Teacher Guide will be a website dedicated to provide additional resources for the smurtiLIVE experience. This website allows me to keep my resources up to date with new experiences, ideas, and insight into how to incorporate public
speaking into the general classroom. Below are a few of the additional resources that will be immediately incorporated:

a. Video and Photo samples of smurtiLIVE (with parent consent) to show educators what smurtiLIVE looks and sounds like. Having visual examples brings depth to the descriptions outlined in the teacher guide.

b. Instructional PowerPoints – Teaching specific sections of smurtiLIVE such as public speaking points to how to create presentations tools will have small tutorial PowerPoints for students.

c. Theme outlines and student handouts will be available online for quick access

d. Direct links to the BC Ministry of Education and other relevant websites will be linked to the smurtiLIVE website

e. All relevant documents such as the teacher guide and student outline will be provided.
Chapter 4

Conclusions and Reflections

The objective of smurtiLIVE is to provide teachers with a teaching resource of how to implement public speaking lessons into the general mainstream classroom to have a meaningful impact that reaches the diverse population of learners within a single classroom. Using differentiated instruction, rooted in a UDL design, brings oral fluency skills to the forefront of a 21st-century education skill set that allows educators too feel comfortable in becoming facilitators, given they have the necessary resources. Evidence-based research gives this resource the necessary pillars to stand on to be an effective tool for educators to use. Being able to bring a passion project of mine, in the form of a public speaking guide called smurtiLIVE, supported with evidence-based practices and research has been a very rewarding experience for myself and I am excited to be able to share this resource with other educators as this is only the beginning.

Realizing when to “step back” and reevaluate my approach when events don’t unfold the way I want too is entirely what smurtiLIVE is built on. It’s coming to an understanding that I can’t expect a student to master a skill that has realistically taken myself decades to understand. I’ve realized that these students have only been walking on this planet for a short period of time and that having an understanding that learning is a process, uniquely conducted at the speed of each individual student, is important to know. That’s why educators need to constantly remind themselves of the fact that they are facilitators of learning and trying more than one approach is acceptable and sometimes necessary. I look at my own learning throughout my elementary years and I realized how difficult it was to learn anything related to reading, writing, and numeracy. It wasn’t until I reached my university career that I began to find my voice in writing; it wasn’t that my teacher did a bad job, simply put, it was just the speed in which I processed information, it
always took me a little longer to understand concepts. Areas of interest, such as creative design and history were areas I excelled in because I had an invested interest. Fast forward to the present where I am a teacher now, I see that public speaking, initially, is an area of interest many students try to avoid, but with smurtiLIVE I began to see I was building a bridge over a gap and it was because I continued to re-evaluate and implement my approach.

Sharing what I know with other educators has had to be one of the most nerve-wrecking experiences I have felt in a long time. It’s that idea of having people see the final results of a project and asking me how they can replicate it; it’s a terrifying feeling because the “what-if” scenarios start running through my mind. “What-If” I explain it wrong and others can’t duplicate the results, “What-If” I explain it in a way that exposes my own ignorance? What will people think of me? I know this sounds ridiculous, but I’m sure it’s a common feeling many educators face. Standing in front of a classroom of 28 plus students and teaching is easy because I know they look to me to control the environment; the moment another adult is present, it’s as if I’m being observed under the microscope and I begin to second guess everything I do. It’s as if I take my own confidence and place it on a shelf.

More recently, the moments I begin to second guess myself, I am reminded other educators and people that are close to me that I am just like everyone else, I am human, I am flawed, I am passionate, and I am constantly learning. Over the course of three years I have spent countless hours figuring out how to share my project and passion in a language and format that others would understand; indeed, it has been a challenging but rewarding process. Challenging because I feel like I should be moving on to new discoveries of practice. Rewarding because at every avenue of uncertainty, I find new ways to express my thinking. I do believe I have a compulsive desire to constantly change things as I go, from seating arrangements in my
classroom to how I present instructions, it’s always changing. As I move forward, I am sure I will discover new ways to present smurtiLIVE. Every barrier I encounter is just a new opportunity to find success.

To help educators understand where smurtiLIVE came from, it’s important to share my story to see why I chose to do things a certain way. Below you will find three years’ worth of reflections condensed into short inserts to see the barriers and growth this public speak guide has experienced. The growth doesn’t stop at the 2019 reflection, that’s merely the end of this applied project, you can stay connected with me through the smurtiLIVE website: www.smurtilive.ca.

**Before smurtiLIVE 2017 Personal Reflection**

February 2017, I found myself taking on a term specific contract to teach fifth grade students until the end of the school year. Jumping right into the mix of a school year that had been ongoing for five months, I found myself slowly adjusting to the classroom routines that had been previously established. Students had a number of ongoing assignments, one which was called “Genius Hour.” This was the third “Genius Hour” presentation students were preparing and I was very excited to see this unit in action. Perhaps it was the execution of the unit or the fact this was the third presentation they were conducting, I was a bit disappointed with how students were communicating their findings. Some students chose very interesting topics, however, the manner in which they presented were below what I had expected. I knew I had to shake things up. I couldn’t blame anyone, nor did I even have the right to do so. “Genius Hour” was its own strategy for discovering topics students were interested/passionate about. I had to ask myself a question, what did I want from “Genius Hour?” I knew I wanted students to research interesting topics, but most importantly I wanted them to be able to effectively communicate their finds; to grab my attention and be confident in their ability to share
information. A few days later, I laughed at that idea. I thought to myself, there is no way fifth
grade students would be capable of this task. This feeling was short-lived as I found my
inspiration for public speaking in the most unlikely of places, a social media platform called
Instagram.

I wanted to find inspiration on a platform that was easy to manage and easy to search,
Instagram immediately became that platform. I had discovered an entire world of educators who
were sharing what they were doing in their own classrooms. It was presented in the simplest
way: a picture and a short description. That’s all I truly wanted and needed. For myself, an image
could speak to me in a way a description could never do. I discovered a teacher, Gary Gray, who
had been doing his own version of “Ted Talks” with his third-grade students. The stage, the
setup, the showmanship. It all caught my attention. I had grown up behind the scenes in theatre
design with lighting and sound for many years – presentation was my natural skill set. The image
of the iconic three large red letters and a description that said “grade 3 class” was all the
information I needed to start my own Ted Talk.

Little be known to others, I grew up in a retail atmosphere all my life. Showmanship was
something I was raised in. So, I knew I had to use these skills in my classroom to shake things
up. I also knew these students had only known me for a month and a half. They had to buy into
what I was offering. I started off by stating “We are going to do something different, something
you haven’t done before, we are going to do a Ted Talk.” The excitement flooded the room as
“Ted Talk” was such an inspirational name they had seen on YouTube, and now they were going
to be a part of the name. There was no template nor was there even a clear idea of what this
would like, I just knew I had to do it. At this point, I knew what these students were capable off,
so I knew how much control I needed to take and how much control I needed to release. I set the
tone with a theme “30 Scientific Ideas in 30 Seconds.” This proved to be the best thing I could chose for these fifth-grade students. They each chose one scientific idea and they were expected to expand on the 30 seconds to 3-4 minutes. The excitement was clear, but the lack of preparation and direction did prove to be difficult initially.

Looking back, I knew at the beginning that the parameters should have been clearer, but none the less, we were on to something good. After the first week, I was able to present some clear indications of what I was expecting. At this point, there was no focused instruction to public speaking skills, it was simply following verbal ques. I should have known the importance of writing things down, but it was all so new and I had assumed it would work out. It did, but not without its own challenges. Students had to research and present their finds through a PowerPoint. During our practice periods, I never said they couldn’t read from the slides or notes so when I saw a majority of their eyes glued to their computer screens I was a little concerned. That being said, a few were able to present without reading off their slides during the practice periods which gave me hope that it is possible.

I decided that this had to be a standout event, so I had coordinated with the librarian to use her space to mimic the feeling of a conference centre. When the students arrived to the library, one student immediately said: “Mr. Murti, I can’t believe you did all of this for us.” They didn’t see it coming! I had built the “Ted” letters, rented lights, built a stage, and created a Ted Talk stage. No one was expecting this and to be honest neither was I, they knew from that moment, this was going to be a big deal. Ups and downs, at the end of the day, they knew the bar was set very high. What was heart-warming was when they asked, immediately after we finished, “when is the next Ted Talk?” From that point, I knew I had something special. Two months later, we did a year end “Ted Talk” and they had improved so much since the first one. It
was apparent from the last “Ted Talk” of 2017 where my focus really was; building public speaking skills. I also knew I needed to start writing things down in order to give students clear expectations of how to put on a “Ted Talk.”

Figure 1: (Photo Left) Ted Talk Jr. April 2017. (Photo Right) Ted Talk Jr. June 2017

smurtiLIVE 2018 Personal Reflection

New year, new grade, same Ted Talk … or so I thought. During the 2017/2018 school year I was assigned to teach a combined class of sixth and seventh grade students. This was the first time I had to teach seventh grade and a combined class in general so challenges were already present for the year. This was also the first year I had a number of students with exceptionalities, designations such as autism, chronic health, and several undiagnosed students. To increase my work load ever so slightly, I had just started the Masters in Special Education program at Vancouver Island University, so it was a year full of firsts. Looking back, I don’t know how I was able to teach full time and complete all my first-year graduate studies but it’s always an interesting case when you have a certain group of students who push you to achieve
something great. This group was enthusiastic and energetic, but academic barriers existed right across the field. I knew that clear expectations and guidelines had to be given out this year. I knew I had to teach specific parts of the research process as well as the presentation guide. It was clear I had to get organized immediately.

After we completed our first Ted Talk of the year I knew I had to share this resource with other teachers, but first I needed permission from TED to distribute documents with their name on it. Little to be known, a heart-breaking email from TED almost made me give up this whole pursuit. There were no cruel words or discouraging phrases, just the reality of registered trademarks and copy right rules. TED was and is such an iconic name that nearly everyone knows about. I wanted to use this brand as a stepping stool to help create a strong oral literacy program for middle school students. Our students are growing up in one of the most stimulating and demanding environments in the history of our existence, having their attention is literally going up against so many other things that are visually more interesting. I thought to myself, anything to engage students must be worth pursuing. A number of colleagues wanted to use what I had gathered to conduct their own TED talk in their classroom. I was using TED in the name of education to help grow and develop strong public speakers in middle school. I didn’t really know who to message at TED, so I ended up emailing TED’s general inquiry division. Though heart-breaking to hear the word “no” in a very kind way, they did direct me to other programs educators were using under their own platform. As grateful I was for their suggestions, it wasn’t exactly what I was doing in my classroom. It was an unsettling feeling because for the first time in a long time, I felt like I had something real to offer other educators. I encountered a barrier… or so I thought. Little did I know; this barrier would be the push I needed to create smurtiLIVE.
When I said these students pushed me to achieve amazing achievements, it wasn’t an exaggeration as they were the reason why smurtiLIVE exists today. I remember walking into my classroom with this defeated look on my face, sometimes you can’t hide your feeling no matter how good of an actor you might be. I felt like I was on the brink of something pretty amazing. Me, the person that had struggled with education throughout his life, well into his university years, was able to produce something for education. When the students asked me when we were going to do the next TED talk, I was honest with them. I said I don’t think it’ll happen. Sure, I could have continued doing TED events and simply not shared it, but I knew it would lay heavy on my heart for some reason, a reason I still can’t explain to this day. I explained to them what had happened and I said I wanted to honour what they said about using the TED name, as much as I disliked it. All of sudden I heard one of my students speak up interrupting my train of thought by saying: “We don’t need them, we can make our own event.” A genuine unplanned smile took over my face and that was it. All of a sudden, I was reminded about why I started this whole thing, it was for my students. Just like that, all of my creativity and passion surrounding this public speaking guide began to flood in and we settled on a new name: smurtiLIVE.

At this point, I began to really refine what the purpose of this unit would be. I wanted to build a fundamental skill, but I knew I had to start by tackling fundamental fears. I began to research what elicits public speaking anxiety and I what I found was something very relatable. A human characteristic that causes you to freeze and the trigger is never the same for every person. What I understood quickly in my teaching profession is the absolute importance of knowing your audience, this builds the bridge of trust which inevitably allows for inquiry to take growth. Building honest, positive, transparent relationships with students. Rita Pierson spoke at a TED event and her story was that every child deserves a champion to look up to and the most
resounding quote that still stands with me to this day is this: “Kids don’t learn from people they don’t like (Pierson, 2013).” Providing opportunity and building on student relationships was key and continues to be the first step in implementing any curricular challenge to students. There were moments where I needed to sit with students one-to-one and talk about fears and barriers they had. Having that human connection to say, it’s okay if you don’t get it right away, the first step is taking a chance. Take a chance, if you fail, you learn how to not do something. If you succeed, you learn how to make yourself better than you were. Saying the words, “I am proud of you,” is something that lifted my spirits when I was in school and so I figured why not share those words of encouragement. Those are moments I treasure and to be on the other end of the conversation many years later, being the one who gets to say those words, it’s a privilege and a tremendous responsibility I hold near and dear to my heart. At this point of implementing this public speaking guide, I not only knew what it could be, I knew what it had to be.

Figure 2: (Photo Left) Ted Talk. February 2018. (Photo Right) smurtiLIVE June 2018

smurtiLIVE 2019 Personal Reflection
Refine and define was the name of this year’s smurtiLIVE. This year’s smurtiLIVE had its challenges. I was in season of personal and professional growth and it was also the final stretch of this master’s program. I felt like I was racing against time as I wanted to complete one final smurtiLIVE before I put this resource together for submission. It was this year I encountered the most barriers and consequently it was the year I learned how wide this public speaking guide can stretch.

Taking a few steps back to move leaps ahead. This was a concept I was still getting used to. This was the year I broke down the research process in detail. I stopped assuming students “knew” what was expected and began providing the information in a “just in case” method. Those who knew the expectations moved forward and those who didn’t were lucky to have the detailed instruction. The exceptionalities during this year’s composition was challenging in itself, I found a new appreciation for in-class support. I found myself on my feet giving feedback from editing speeches, helping students make power points, to just talking about the whole process to speaking to students fear about public speaking.

The toughest theme brought the greatest barriers for some and for others it was the moment where they truly began to flourish with confidence. There were moments where I thought I had thought of every possible barrier and had some sort of plan. I was wrong. That’s the wonderful thing about learning, the process never stops and the moment you think you’ve learned everything is the moment you learn your biggest lesson. Equity and equality were trending terms this year as I truly began to look at what I can do for each student as opposed to generalizing them all; giving students what they need to succeed instead of giving everyone the same resource was something I really had to spend time understanding and that it was merely the first step in a long race of barriers we would encounter (Kutter, 2016; Karel, 2018). This doesn’t
come easy in a classroom of over twenty-five students as it came down to understanding who my students are. Finding time in a classroom where time was simply not readily available was difficult, I had to learn to rely on giving effective instruction and also to be kind to myself that I was doing everything I could.

This year I had to remind myself that I couldn’t automatically expect these students to demonstrate skills that took me over 3 decades to learn. There were some students who felt comfortable in front of their peers, some who were nervous but were able to present, and some who needed to just present in front of a few people. There is no weakness in any of those scenarios, it’s simply meeting students where they are and helping them get to where they need to be. When I realized that this event was causing so much fear for a few students, my heart absolutely broke. I never wanted smurtiLIVE to be a reason why students struggled with learning. This was a great realisation for myself as it reminded me of the diversity that existed in my classroom. For some, presenting in front of two to three other people was a huge step, that was an accomplishment I needed to celebrate and encourage it as a step in the right direction. Failure is just discovering the need to find new ways to a goal. A lesson that I believe doesn’t just apply to students, but educators like myself as well. We can be our own worst critic.

My own personal and professional growth continues to be on the upward motion but not without its own barriers. Creating a stage should reflect your own creativity and passion. The level of detail that goes into a smurtiLIVE set is not necessary by any means, it’s actually just a labour of love from my part. It’s showing my students how important attention to detail really is and that if you are going to do something, put everything you have into it. A more elegant way of saying that is “Never half-ass two things, whole-ass one thing (Ron Swanson, 2014).” If I expect students to work hard, sometimes they need to see that I’m putting in an effort as well. This
project allows me to pursue my own passions and to learn new skills while providing an opportunity for students to learn, discover, and flourish. From learning how to cut letters out of wood to create a backdrop to learning video editing skills to create movie style trailers to build excitement. It’s all about using your passion and drive to teach a skill set. Remarkably, we are all facilitators in education yet we are all diverse in our approach. That’s what smurtiLIVE is meant to be, a changing experience, something that adapts and modifies itself to an audience. Our audience may be always be students, but the diversity and exceptionalities that make up our class will always be different. So why should our approach be any different?
Limitations and Further Considerations

There are limitations to this project like any other potential academic resource. The fundamental issue that arises is not in content, but delivery and acceptance. Delivery is being able to take resources and present it to an audience in a meaningful way that sparks inquiry and creativity. Acceptance refers to your audience, in this case, students in a classroom. The composition of every classroom will fundamentally be different, while similarities, descriptions, and designations may be similar, each child is unique in their own right; which means the way they interpret and process information will always be different. You are never truly teaching a singular grade of students. The relevance of the factory method of how we teach students continues to become an increasingly complex and outdated method.

Students with special needs/exceptionalities may have similar codes and designations, but they could not be more different from each other. My own personal experience teaching four students with Autism over the past two years is evidence enough to see how different these students are. One is driven by facts and reasoning, the other is driven by organized thoughts and complex theories, the third is driven through interest-based topics only, and the fourth is not driven by any of the above and simply relies on joy and positive outlooks in life with little to regard for academic excellence. Yet interestingly enough, they all have the same ministry designation of Autism. I can do my upmost best to provide teaching strategies for students with Autism, but the fundamental step isn’t just having the strategies, it’s understanding that you are teaching a unique person, not a designation.

This project, at the moment, is only geared towards three specific designations: ASD, ADHD, LD, as these are the experiences I have had in my own classroom. The wide spectrum of potential designations that students will come into your classroom with, will for the most part, be
uncharted territory. Considerations should be made for students who have other designations. As well as physical designations, how do students fare with physical limitations such as sight and speech? These are questions and inquiries that should be further pursued as the purpose of smurtiLIVE is to provide opportunity. That opportunity doesn’t have to look the same, it just has to be given.
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Appendix A – Teacher Guide
WELCOME TO SMURTI LIVE

Dear Educator,

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. My name is Simon Murti and I am an intermediate Elementary school teacher in British Columbia, Canada. Simply put, smurtiLIVE is a passion project of mine that I have been working on for over three years. It’s about creating a lasting experience that makes kids come to school excited. I’ve had the wonderful opportunity to turn smurtiLIVE into my master’s applied thesis project in Special Education.

The job we have is tough. You never know who’s going to walk through your classroom doors in September. Always remember, no matter how much we know or expect, these kids have only been walking on this planet a short while. Be kind to yourself and be patient with yourself. Every day we experience success and failure which is something we call growth. Our ideas and plans aren’t going to work every time, but that’s okay. Just remember, above all, you are providing an opportunity for students learn and grow. Some students will take it and run and some might struggle along the way. Be confident in yourself and realize that you are doing the best job you can. You are a world changer. In retrospect, you may only go as far as your classroom walls, but your influence goes wherever your students place their feet.

Be Creative in your approach, the kids see it even if you feel like they don’t.
Be Passionate about your delivery, if kids see you care about this project they will see it must be something special.
Be Hilarious in your mind, our environment can be tough. The gift of joy and laughter is our fuel to get through the days and not just survive, but thrive.
WHAT IS SMURTI LIVE?

A public speaking unit designed to promote the necessary speaking and research skills associated with communication. Creating an opportunity to promote public speaking skills, smurtiLIVE is designed to create a fun and engaging experience that draws on the theatrics of creativity and passion. Articulation in public speaking exists in many forms and in its most basic and underlying form is the art of effective communication. Grounded in research and findings, being able to express oneself with confidence is a fundamental life skill all students will need to develop in some form or capacity. Public speaking, speaking in crowds, presentations – for many, create a sense of fear and uncertainty.

Aligned with the BC Curriculum – this unit draws from the core competencies and has correlations with the English Language Arts Big Ideas and general content stream.

From where we started with Ted Talks in 2017 to where we are now with smurtiLIVE in 2019. I am excited to share this resource with you all.
THE TIMELINE

After three years of implementing smurtiLIVE in the classroom, it’s still never been done the exact same way. This is primarily based on realizing that the composition of students, though similar to previous years, is always going to be different. Finding a set template to use with different classes, some succeeding and some that fall apart shouldn’t be solely based on a specific time line. It should be malleable - that’s why the time line to teach and produce a smurtiLIVE event, like many other lessons, should be treated as a living document. Always changing and always being redefined for the audience it’s being used for. Simply put: “If it doesn’t work for one class, that’s okay, it doesn’t mean it’s wrong, it just needs to be adjusted.” As educators, we can be our own worst critic. So, please treat this suggested time line as a living document, something that is malleable and open for change.

I recommended doing two smurtiLIVE events in an academic school year. One in January and one in May. This allows the teacher to have a good idea of the skill set their students have from September to December, which can help you decide what kind of theme you can do with the students in your class. The first smurtiLIVE takes time, for many students it’s new and uncharted territory. The second smurtiLIVE takes the edge off for many students. They know what to expect and most importantly, they know the process.

One of my favourite quotes from a past student: “Mr. Murti, look at how much research I have, I did this in like two days. WHY did it take me weeks to get this much done during the first time?!?” Those are moments I do sincerely treasure. It’s a classic example of what overthinking looks like and how to overcome challenges.
SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Below you will find a suggested timeline to work off of. This is a rough idea of how the smurtiLIVE process has been used in the past. It is open for change!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK ONE - Start the Process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduce smurtiLIVE by telling students they will be participating in a public speaking event.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Day 1**
1. Introduce the Theme
2. Introduce the Choice Sheet – Remind students that only one topic or choice will be presented on to avoid repeated presentations. (Provide a list of generated topics for the theme, encourage students to choose at least 3 options)
3. Give a brief explanation of expectations: What students will be assessed on. Give them the rubrics.
4. Allow in-class time for students to start browsing potential topics.

**Day 2**
1. Recap the previous day's lesson with a quick overview
2. Allow more in-class time for students to choose at least 3 options

**Day 3/4**
1. (Optional) if the majority of the class is ready to find out who/what they are presenting on, you can go ahead and begin sorting choices. This can be done any way you feel is best for your class (what works for you)
   - If not, you can spend another day on general research
2. Once you have figured out who is presenting on what (note this will change as students dive deeper into research) you can give students their handout of what areas to find/focus on in their research
3. Their speech is outlined in the same format as a 5-paragraph essay:
   - Introduction/Body(s)/Conclusion

**Weekend Assignment:**
Rough Draft of notes to support the different sections of your speech as well as sending emails (if necessary) to gather more information. *Reference the Research section.

*Time Frame for the first smurtiLIVE can be extended as this is a whole new process for many students and also one must consider the availability of technology.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK TWO - The Buffer Zone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By now, some students will have gone ahead and started. Those who are still catching up, this week provides a buffer zone for you to help students who are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
struggling and those with exceptionalities to narrow down their research parameters.

**WEEK THREE - Drafting the Speech**

**Day 1**

2. Introduce a lesson on public speaking. Show case the skills yourself.

Show different Ted Talks and presentations to demonstrate how different speakers address their audience from how they use tone, eye contact, body language, and expression.

**WEEK FOUR - Add Tech Support**

**Day 1**

2. Types of Images: PNG, JPG
3. Back Ground (Pexels)
4. Font
5. Content
6. USB/Online Saving
7. Editing tools: Canva & editing apps such as Vintage Pro

**Day 2 - 3**

1. Class time to work on Power Point
2. Review Slides with students. No name/No thank you slide. Right to the point!

**WEEK FIVE- Run the Draft**

1. Use this week to allow students to practice with their peers using their notes and slide show.
2. Work with students who are still struggling with the process

**WEEK SIX - Lights-Cameras-Action.**

1. Use this time to develop and create a stage!
2. Refer to “Setting the Stage” for more detail

Refer to the Research Guide for a detailed explanation of how to begin the process. Accessing technology is not always easily accessible for many schools.
Having a good idea of what resources are readily available to you truly does determine the route of how to conduct this unit.

**TEACHING TO DIVERSITY**

Students who walk into your classroom are unique. Every student holds this fact to be true. We live in a world where some students require extra support, where their exceptionality should not just be seen as a challenge, but a way to discovery something familiar in a different way - outside of the norm. These students learn differently, so our approach should be the same. When we take an honest look at our approach. The first step is admitting we don’t know what to do all the time.

The difference between equality and equity. Equality is giving all the students the same opportunity and resources to be “fair and equal.” Equity is giving each student what they individually need to become successful and proficient. We want students to have the tools to match the needs they have.

Below is a general outlook at supporting students with exceptionalities.

**Flexible Time Line**
- Go with the flow. Some groups catch on quick and some take a little more time. Be patient with the duration of inquiry.

**Additional Support**
- Breaking down the task from creating guided questions
- Fill in the blank slides
- Finding the research (copy paste article on document) Print it and let them summarize the information in their own words
- Student can dictate speech

**Creativity/Interest Driven**
- Topic of interest (Doesn’t have to be theme related for these students)
- It’s about using their interest as a driving point

**Assistance**
- Instead of having to memorize it, read from notes
- Team presenting
- Video recording (Introduce video + answer questions)

In the following pages, you will find strategies for teaching students with **LD, AUTISM, ADHD and ANXIETY** designations.
IMPORTANT: The information provided in this guide is descriptive information I have come across in my own classrooms as well as information I have gathered through the Ministry of Educations’ Special Programs Department. This specific information should NOT be used for any diagnostic purposes.

LD Designation

“Learning Disabilities refer to a number of conditions that might affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These disorders affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from global intellectual disabilities.”

(BC Ministry of Education)

The following is a list of inattention symptoms for students with an LD designation. The information is provided by the BC Ministry of Education. Keep these notes in consideration.

- Less engaged in learning tasks
- Less confident in their ability to learn
- Less willing to take risks in learning situations
- Unable to cope with multiple instructions
- Poorly organized in both thoughts and work habits
- Frustrated with difficult work tasks
- Discouraged by their lack of success

Children with a Learning Disability find success when you explore what their strengths and interest are and provide an abundance of opportunities with lots of positive reinforcement.

- Break down tasks into smaller steps.
- Give extended deadlines
- Allow students to use instructional materials that struggle with printing
- Allow students to work with peers who can help keep them on task
- Provide tech support for students to scribe/record their work
- Keep parents/guardians updated on timeline deadlines
AUTISM Designation

“Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition that involves persistent challenges in social interactions, speech and nonverbal communication, and restricted/repetitive behaviours. The effects of ASD are the severity of symptoms are different in each person…Autism differs from person to person in severity and combination of symptoms. There is a great range of abilities and characteristics of children with autism spectrum disorder - no two children appear or behave the same way/ Symptoms can range from mild to severe and often change over time” (American Psychiatric Association, 2018).

Children with Autism find success when there is structure, routines, and clear expectations. The information is provided by the BC Ministry of Education. Keep these notes in consideration.

- Visual Guides
- Provide precise, positive praise while the student is learning
- Use meaningful reinforcements
- Plan tasks at an appropriate level of difficulty
- Use age appropriate materials
- Provide opportunities for choice but limit the # of choice as to not overwhelm the student
- Break down oral instructions into small steps
- Pay attention to processing and pacing issues
- Use concrete examples and hand-on activities
- Be predictable - Routines & Structures
- Keep language simple and repetitive - avoid sarcasm and idioms, this will confuse the validity of your request/and or comment
- Provide checkpoints and examples for what “finished” looks like so they know they achieved a point in the process
- Always clarify instructions and comments by asking the student to repeat them to you, as to be sure the student understand expectations
ADHD Designation

“Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common mental disorders affecting children. ADHD also affects many adults. Symptoms of ADHD include inattention (not being able to keep focus), hyperactivity (excess movement that is not fitting to the setting) and impulsivity (hasty acts that occur in the moment without thought) (American Psychiatric Association, 2018).

In the classroom, students with ADHD may exhibit the following:

- Difficulty getting started;
- Difficulty regulating attention to task or to people;
- Difficulty organizing or follow through on instructions, school work, chores and/or classroom duties;
- Easily distracted and forgetful;
- Constantly on the go and into everything, or, for adolescents, a constant feeling of restlessness;
- Often very verbal and impulsive;
- Often requires more supervision than age peers, particularly in unstructured settings;
- Often displays highly erratic production in terms of quality and quantity of work completed from day to day and at different times in the same day; and
- Difficulty dealing with change, such as moving from one activity to the next

Children with ADHD find success when there is structure, routines, and clear expectations.

- Clear Classroom Timeline
- Instructions - Simple with demonstrations (visual aids)
- No multi-tasking routines, focus on one task at a time and speak directly to the student making eye contact.
- Maintain communication with parents/guardians about the specifics of assignments. Structured classroom activities that require active learning and a high response rate from students
- Teach students organization skills that will help them to complete assignments
- Clearly communicate rules and behavioural expectations and establish classroom routines.
Adaptions

ANXIETY Designation

"Anxiety refers to anticipation of a future concern and is more associated with muscle tension and avoidance behaviour. Fear is an emotional response to an immediate threat and is more associated with a fight or flight reaction - either staying to fight or leaving to escape danger. Anxiety disorder can cause people [too] avoid situations that trigger or worsen their symptoms. Job performance, school work and personal relationships can be affected." (American Psychiatric Association, 2018).

Anxiety is a common characteristic that everyone faces at some point in their lives, however, for some students it’s more severe and has a larger impact in their ability to learn and function.

Children with Anxiety can find success when they can implement the following strategies:

- Breathing exercises
- Frequent breaks outside of the classroom
- Positive Achievement points - successfully completing micro tasks
- Accommodations based on their needs (presenting in front of one friend and the teacher instead of the entire class) Try different venues/stages
- Offer alternative assessment rubrics - go over it together in detail
- Portion the delivery method by alternating between power point and notes
- Provide feedback in a calm tone - find moments of success and highlight that as an accomplishment
- Check in frequently throughout the process, never assume they are doing just fine
- Keep a constant line of communication open with parents/guardians to get an idea of how they reacting and destressing at home
- Relate - (Acknowledge their feelings) share your own experience with failure, frustration, success. This really helps build a connection and makes the student known to the fact that they are not alone in this process.
THEME IS EVERYTHING

The theme is the hook that catches student interest and engagement. This may seem tough to accomplish given the diversity within a classroom is so broad, however, it’s not an impossible task!

Available Now:
The following six themes, as presented below, are available in the pages to follow.

Coming Soon:
The following six themes, as presented below, are in development. They will be available through www.smurtilive.ca for the 2019/2020 academic school year.
It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: The Humanitarian Project

A Humanitarian is defined as a “person promoting human welfare and social reform.” We will be using Charity Navigator: https://www.charitynavigator.org as a reference point to see how recognized these organizations are.

Choose one Humanitarian organization/charity to present on. The list provided below is not an exhaustive list. If you have an organization/charity, bring it forward and let’s discuss it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF America</th>
<th>KIVA</th>
<th>Charity: Water</th>
<th>Dream Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctors Without Borders, USA</td>
<td>Wounded Warrior Project</td>
<td>The Clinton Foundation</td>
<td>International Rescue House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALSAC - St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital</td>
<td>National Organization for Rare Disorders</td>
<td>Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research</td>
<td>Fisher Center for Alzheimer’s Research Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Wellness Centre</td>
<td>Christopher &amp; Dana Reeve Foundation</td>
<td>AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition</td>
<td>The ALS Association, National Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Hope International</td>
<td>Ronald McDonald House</td>
<td>Save The Children</td>
<td>Project Sunshine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-A-Wish Foundation</td>
<td>The Rainbow Connection</td>
<td>Children’s Burn Foundation</td>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Foundation</td>
<td>Emergency Floor</td>
<td>Books for Africa</td>
<td>Direct Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Bridges</td>
<td>MedShare</td>
<td>Feeding America</td>
<td>City of Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heifer International</td>
<td>Alpha 1 Foundation</td>
<td>A21 Campaign</td>
<td>Direct Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
<td>The 52nd Street Project</td>
<td>Bill and Melinda Gates</td>
<td>Union Gospel Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Renew</td>
<td>MCC</td>
<td>Ryan’s Well</td>
<td>Litre of Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Justice Mission</td>
<td>The Children’s Health Fund</td>
<td>Tim Tebow Foundation (Night to Shine)</td>
<td>Dana-Farber Cancer Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Vision</td>
<td>Traveling Stories</td>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>AIDS United</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: **Dreamers Into Reality**
Choose one **Inspirational Individual** to present on. The list provided is not exhaustive. If you have an individual you would like to present on, come to talk to me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aung Sang Suu Kyi</th>
<th>Michelle Obama</th>
<th>Joan of Arc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amelia Earhart</td>
<td>Patrick Henry Hughes</td>
<td>Tim Tebow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackie Robinson</td>
<td>Oskar Schindler</td>
<td>Jessica Cox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oprah Winfrey</td>
<td>Mother Teresa</td>
<td>Betty Makoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Addams</td>
<td>C.S. Lewis</td>
<td>Rosa Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron “Wheelz” Fotheringham</td>
<td>Rick Hansen</td>
<td>Bethany Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanny Crosby</td>
<td>JK Rowling</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>Stevie Wonder</td>
<td>Sean Swarner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Wilberforce</td>
<td>Albert Einstein</td>
<td>Narayanan Krishan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Franks</td>
<td>Bill Gates</td>
<td>Hellen Keller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Johnson</td>
<td>Maya Angelou</td>
<td>Michael Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Jobs</td>
<td>Stephen Hawking</td>
<td>Nelson Mandela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Makosinski</td>
<td>Florence Nightingale</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elif Bilgin</td>
<td>Iqbal Masih</td>
<td>Malala Yousafzai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Charles</td>
<td>Dwayne Johnson</td>
<td>Ellen DeGeneres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Rogers</td>
<td>Nick Vujicic</td>
<td>Chris Hadfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Fox</td>
<td>Wayne Gretzky</td>
<td>Viola Desmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordi Downie</td>
<td>Nellie McClung</td>
<td>Sir Fredrick Banting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: The Exploration Initiative

Choose one Country to present on.

| NORTH AMERICA: | Canada, USA, Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Bahamas, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, St Kitts & Nevis, Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago |
| SOUTHERN AMERICA: | Suriname, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Equador, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile |
| EUROPE: | Iceland, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Wales, England, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Macedonia, Albania |
| ASIA: | Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Indonesia Timor-Leste, Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Japan |
It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: **ANIMALS: Wild & Weird**

Pick ONE animal to present on. Each animal is categorized by region. This list is not exhaustive, if you have something else in mind, let’s discuss it!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Animals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARCTIC</strong></td>
<td>Husky, Reindeer, Harp Seal, Narwhal, Polar Bear, Arctic tern, Polar cod, Walrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NORTH &amp; CENTRAL AMERICA</strong></td>
<td>American beaver, Gray wolf, Bald eagle, Puma, Luna moth, Coyote, American bison, Sockeye salmon, Brown bear, Ruby-throated hummingbird, Western black widow spider, Monarch butterfly, Red-eyed tree frog, Western diamond-backed rattlesnake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOUTH AMERICA</strong></td>
<td>Guianan red howler monkey, Nine-banded armadillo, Llama, Green anaconda, Goliath bird-eating spider, Maned wolf, Toco toucan, Common vampire bat, Jaguar, Cattle, Maned three-toed sloth, Galapagos tortoise, Horse,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EUROPE</strong></td>
<td>Tawny Owl, Pigeon, Eurasian red squirrel, House fly, Golden eagle, Wildcat, Donkey, Earthworm, European badger, Wild boar, European rabbit, European honey bee, Emperor dragonfly, Black rat, Red fox, Alpine chamois,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFRICA</strong></td>
<td>African savannah elephant, White-backed vulture, Common hippopotamus, African lion, Chimpanzee, Cheetah, Leopard, Desert locust, Nile crocodile, White rhinoceros, Plains zebra, African dung beetle, Greater flamingo, Reticulated giraffe, Mountain gorilla, African malaria mosquito, Ring-tailed lemur, Serengeti white-bearded wildebeest, Panther chameleon,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASIA</strong></td>
<td>Palau, Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Tahiti &amp; French Polynesia,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCEANIA</strong></td>
<td>Little spotted kiwi, Red Kangaroo, Leadbeater’s possum, Common emu, Merino sheep, Grey-headed flying fox, Duck-billed platypus, Tasmanian devil, Koala,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANARTICA</strong></td>
<td>Orca, Hourglass dolphin, Black-browned albatross, Emperor penguin, Southern elephant seal, Antarctic krill,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OCEANS</strong></td>
<td>Blue whale, Giant squid, Common octopus, Sea otter, Leatherback turtle, Great white shark, Lion’s mane jellyfish, Long-snouted seahorse, Staghorn coral, Common starfish, Sperm whale, Atlantic horseshoe crab, Textile cone, Clown anemonefish, Red lionfish, Long-spined porcupinefish, Silver-lipped pearl oyster,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SMURTI LIVE

It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: The Global Project

Pick ONE global goal to present on.

More than one student will be permitted to present on a global goal as each goal has several specific targets as shown in the image below.
It’s showtime! It’s that time of year where we bring our skills front and centre. It’s time to choose your topic.

Name: _________________________

You will receive the project outline, grading rubric, and presentation tips next week. For now, it’s time to explore!

This year’s theme is called: **Going Beyond The Edge Of Earth**

Pick ONE space topic to present on. Additional topics can be found from [www.space.com](http://www.space.com)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Big Bang Theory</th>
<th>The Expanding Universe</th>
<th>Light-years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Big Crunch</td>
<td>Star Birth</td>
<td>Types of Stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supernovae</td>
<td>Star Death</td>
<td>The Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>Asteroids</td>
<td>Jupiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturn</td>
<td>Uranus</td>
<td>Neptune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comets</td>
<td>The Milky Way</td>
<td>Galaxies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Holes</td>
<td>Optical Telescopes</td>
<td>Radio Telescopes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Telescopes</td>
<td>Rocket Science</td>
<td>Space Probes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Station</td>
<td>NASA</td>
<td>Apollo Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon Phases</td>
<td>Solar Eclipse</td>
<td>Exo-Planets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mars Rover</td>
<td>Space Weather</td>
<td>Dwarf Planets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE RESEARCH GUIDE

Knowing your topic well is very important. The key to success is being confident with the research you have conducted. It’s not uncommon for students to want to rush to build their power point before they finish their research. The excitement is clear! That being said, the power point is only meant to amplify the information you already possess. So, this should actually be the very last step, even after you have created the outline for your speaking notes/scripts. The most successful presentations are the ones where students are comfortable with the information they are presenting on.

1. DISCOVER YOUR CHOICE
   Choosing your topic is the first step! It should spark an interest. Choosing 2 to 3 options is always a good idea.

2. GENERAL RESEARCH
   Sometimes when you research an initial interest, the spark of inquiry can increase/decrease. Before you commit to a topic, do some general research.

3. REFINE RESEARCH
   Now it’s time to dig deep.

4. DRAFT SPEAKING POINTS
   Once you have accumulated enough notes, something you and your teacher will have to determine if you can begin to draft your speaking points/script.
   Using the writing technique of P.E.E.L (Point, Explain, Expand, Link) can have an incredibly positive impact on the planning process of your presentation. Like writing, you need a topic sentence/point; further your explanation/point; support your explanation/point with evidence; and link/conclude your topic/point/statement.

5. PRACTICE SPEAKING
   No one is perfect and it’s not uncommon to have to practice your speech multiple times. Sometimes it’s changing key words/phrases and sometimes it’s entire sections of notes. This, like writing, is a process.

6. DETERMINE VISUAL AIDS

7. DRAFT PRESENTATION TOOLS

8. REFINE AND ADJUST
   Fine tuning and detail! As you practice your presentation with the use of the visual aids, you can adjust slides or your speech as needed. Practicing using a timer will help you focuses your speaking points.
Theme Variance:

Every theme will require you to conduct research in a different way. One avenue to consider is having students contact people/organizations to gain a better understanding of their topic/subject. An example of this the theme: “The Humanitarian Project,” where students look into various organizations. Now, most of the information can be found on their website, however, sometimes additional inquiry is necessary as well as building a connection with said organization.

Teaching students how to contact these organizations initially seemed like a simple task. However, in my own trials, crafting an email was a skill set I had not taught them. So initially, the drafts of emails were poorly written. This was a great learning experience for myself as it was an area of the smurtiLIVE process I had not thought of. After refining the process – I’ve broken down a step-by-step guide of how to send an email to a person/organization.
Sending an EMAIL to help with INQUIRY

1. Decide what you want to discover
   Free style writing - Like brainstorming ideas for a paragraph - Have students right down all of their inquiries on a sheet of paper so you, as the facilitator, can have a better understanding of what type of questions your students can ask, as well as how deep their inquiry is.

2. See what you can find first
   It’s important to remember that most organizations do their best to provide their supporters with sufficient information about their work. That being said, sometimes our inquiry questions can go beyond what is posted on their social media platform. Students will be eager to fire off an email because they want a response! However, it’s important we respect the effort these organizations put into posting information about their work. When answers for student inquiries can’t be found, then it gives reason for students to contact these organizations.

3. Write a draft of your email
   Spelling, Grammar, and General Coherence in any form of writing is important! Make sure you provide examples of how to format an email. It’s the same format as writing a letter, just in a digital form!
   Be sure to include the following:
   - Properly addressing the individual/organization
   - Introducing yourself (Name, Grade, Region)
   - Purpose of sending email (A research project)
   - Questions
   - Who to contact (Teacher name and email)
   - Thank you
   - Sign Off

4. Proof read & Show your teacher
   Nobody is perfect! Even teachers send emails with spelling errors. It’s important we try and edit our work as much as possible. A common occurrence for students in middle school is to write once – send immediately. When really, we want to encourage students to check multiple times – send once.

5. Keep a professional line of communication
All subsequent email responses should fall in line with steps 3 & 4

Below are three sample emails that were sent out to three different humanitarian organizations: Emergency Floor, BC Cancer Foundation, and KIVA.

Below are three examples of emails where these organizations responded back.

It’s important to note that students are required to attach (CC) their teacher in the email to help keep track of communication. Some organizations have an inquiry section on their website which doesn’t allow for multiple emails to be attached. In cases such as this, I ask students to forward their response.

Hi Anna,

Thanks so much for your email and for your enthusiasm about this!

We’re so happy to hear that you’re interested in learning more about our organization for your school project. Kiva U has a lot of tools to help students who are interested in learning about poverty, microfinance, Kiva and other related topics. And the Kiva U website (kiva.org/kiva) is a great place to start.

You can also learn more about Kiva on our website here: kiva.org/about

kiva.org/partners

To answer your question about the inspiration for Kiva, here’s a quote written by our co-founder: https://www.ted.com/talks/kealan_parry_why_it_matters_to_pay_it_fwd.pdf

We do have a program in the U.S. that provides loans to those unable to receive financing from traditional funding sources.

Hello Keegan,

Thank you for choosing the BC Cancer Foundation for your project! Below is some information that will help answer the questions you’ve listed. You may also find our website, www.bccancerfoundation.com, very useful in providing any further information you may be looking for.

The BC Cancer Foundation is the fundraising partner of BC Cancer. Every dollar we raise stays right here at BC Cancer to advance research and enhance care for the people of B.C.

At the BC Cancer Foundation we believe that with the help of our generous donors BC CAN make a difference in the lives of all British Columbians. We know that one in two people in our province will face cancer in their lifetime and we’re working to break down cancer piece by piece, in the labs and clinics.

The BC Cancer Foundation was founded in 1955 by a committee of business and community leaders, including Vancouver Island’s Robert L. Graydon, as an independent society to provide cancer care and treatment throughout the province—when B.C. had the worst cancer outcomes.

Hi Keegan,

My name is Alhaji and I am in grade 7 in Surrey BC. I am doing a Humanitarian project. My teacher Mr. Murti has recommended this charity from his friend Josh Nixon. I have some questions to ask you which will help with my project.

Here are my questions:

1. Who started the Emergency Floor organization?
2. What came in your guy’s mind to start this organization?
3. What is the history of Emergency Floor organization?
4. What was the goal of this organization when you guys started it?
5. Which country are you guys in and which state in that country?
6. Do you guys only help people in America or other countries like Africa etc.?
7. How many people work for emergency floor organization in Total you guys?
8. What is your guys budget for the emergency floor organization?
Keeping Track

Taking careful notes and documenting your sources is a very important aspect of research. There is going to be an abundance of information you discover, some of which you will use and some you won’t. It’s important to track where you’re finding information because interruptions (i.e. computer failure & out of time) can occur at any moment. Using a track sheet enables you to build a bibliography. This will help you plan your next steps accordingly.

“A bibliography is a list of all of the sources you have used (whether referenced or not) in the process of researching your work. In general, a bibliography should include:

- The authors’ names
- The titles of works
- The name and locations of the companies that published your copies of the sources
- The dates your copies were published
- The page numbers of your sources (if they are part of multi-source volumes)”

Citation MLA:

Sample:
- This section provides a record of the sources a student used and how frequent they visited their resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage/Books/Websites/Date Visited</th>
<th>Date: March 14, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p. 34–36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Date: March 15, 2019

THE SPEAKING GUIDE

Speaking. Why is it so hard?

Our goal is to help students set their speech apart from everyday conversations by understanding the mechanics of communication in general. We already know that words have power and can be used to build someone up or break them down. How many times have you mediated an argument between two or more students? How many times have you experienced the “he said; she said” story. There is no real structure to the way we speak to one another on a daily basis. This revelation came about when I had to interview an educator about their story, we had to record the session and then scribe it word for word. I was blown away by the structure and grammatical errors that riddled our conversation. Two adults, two academic professionals, riddled with “ums, errs, and ah.”

smurtiLIVE puts an emphasis on setting a clear purpose to communicate an idea in a short amount of time. Every minute counts. That’s what’s at the heart of smurtiLIVE, showing our students how to make every minute count by exploring specific mechanics of public speaking.
Teacher Notes: Before You Start

Different Tools to Consider

1. **Connect Your Talk** - We want students to make connections, to use critical thinking skills and be able to expand their worldview in a safe place. You want to give the gift of ideas and thoughts. Some tools to help make a connection:
   a. Making Eye Contact
   b. Being Vulnerable
   c. Use Humour
   d. Use A Story
   e. Know Your Audience.

2. **Narrate Your Talk** - A story or a parable with a purpose can make a strong connection with your audience. The power of storytelling goes back to the very beginning of our human existence.

3. **Explain Your Talk** - The desire is to share a powerful idea. This can’t happen until you’ve learned the skill set of ‘explanation.’ It’s about introducing new ideas while challenging what is set in stone.

4. **Persuade Your Talk** - Taking an established viewpoint/idea/thought and trying to get your audience to jump on board.
   a. Use Humour to inform the audience - we will get through this together
   b. Anecdotes are useful in showing your audience why you are passionate about this topic
   c. Clear examples - an image can speak a thousand words and offer another perspective to a topic.

5. **Reveal Your Talk** - JUST tell us. We want to know.

We want students to make connections, to use critical thinking skills, and to be able to expand their worldview. If we can show empathy and be honest about our own fears about public speaking, they will see that what they feel is not something out of the ordinary, but simply a human feeling we all experience.

**Student Notes:**
Breaking it down for students in simple language

Now, let’s not forget who our audience is! Students aged 11-14 years old. Below you will find a breakdown of the Public Speaking Process. The PowerPoint: “What is Public Speaking?” Can be found on the website: www.smurtilive.ca under “Resources”

STEP ONE: Understanding the Speech

1) **Topic:** You won’t always have this opportunity because sometimes you will be assigned a topic, but if you have a chance to pick one, do your best to choose a topic that is of interest to you. If you are unfamiliar with the topic, the idea should leave some resonating feeling, run with it!

2) **Thoughts:** Like writing a paragraph, you want a rough idea of what your speech should look like. So, it’s always good to brainstorm! Write down facts/opinions/ideas that stand out to you. In addition to whatever other expectations your teacher has, ask yourself this question: “What would interest me about this topic?”

3) **Audience:** Ask yourself this question: “Who is this talk for?” You really have one target audience, your peers. Your teacher will have already given you a list of expectations. It’s your audience you have to draw in. Ideas and facts range from being general information to powerful moments. Keep in mind, listing off facts one after another can get boring. Focusing on a select few and elaborate, this creates a lasting impression.

When we want to accomplish anything, we need to first get into the mindset of seeing success. Imagine the feeling when you finish. Listen to music that encourages you. Drink room temperature water. Don’t forget to breath.
STEP TWO: Building the Speech

1) **Writing**: “Don’t forget the Beginning, Middle and End!” You may have heard this phrase before in writing. It applies to your speech as well. Speaking and Writing are so closely connected! The only real difference is that during a speech, you are verbally sharing your work, whereas in writing, your audience is reading your work. The key to this speech is to write as much of it as you can in your own words. When you do this, you are practicing saying your speech and it truly becomes a reflection of what you know.

   a. **Beginning**: This is your introductory moment! Make an “entrance” - Your intro should be short in length, but leave your audience with a general idea about what you are going to be talking about. Make your personality apart of it. Don’t start with “Hi, my name is Simon… or … Today I am going to talk to you about” - It’s boring! Not you, just the method. Start with a fact, a quote, a statistic, a parable, something to grab your audience’s attention.

   b. **Middle**: This will be the bulk of your speech. Write your points in paragraph form, this will help organize your main points. If you have a time limit, write down as many points as you can and determine which ones should stay and which ones should go. This is arguably one of the hardest parts (aside from the actual speaking) for many students because originally, every point they write down is important. Having a time limit helps you really refine and sort out points from “what I WANT others to know” to “what others NEED to know.”

   c. **End**: Your conclusion is a series of sentences that re-state your main idea, connects your points together, and often leaves your audience thinking about the impactful message of your speech. Make sure you look at your audience for the conclusion, especially the last line. Make it catchy and memorable.

Writing a speech is not exclusive to this list. If you have your own methods and experiences, feel free to try it out. Having multiple methods of speech preparation doesn’t represent being unorganized, rather, it shows you are diversifying your practice since you recognize how diverse your audience is.
STEP THREE: Performing the Speech

1) **Ways to Remember:** Using index cards or cutting pieces of paper to make “mini notes” can be helpful. The purpose isn’t to write your whole speech down in small sections, but to use phrases, numbers, and words to act as triggers for your memory. Practice your speech right before bed! Having your speech in your mind as the last thing you did before you fall asleep can help you remember content much quicker.

2) **Talking Tips:** If you were to record your speech and play it back to yourself, you would hear lots of “ah, ums, uh.” Sounds that show how nervous you really are. So, take your time! Sometimes the adrenaline of our body is on its highest note, so students usually want to rush through the speech to just get it all done. Speak at a medium pace, giving credit to each word/sentence you spent so much time crafting.

3) **Sounding Natural:** Use “pauses and stresses.” A pause is when you take a brief break between points you are making, to give yourself an opportunity to conclude a thought. Stresses are used to emphasize a point: An example of using a pause and stresses: “You won’t believe what I saw…. (pause)…she had (stresses) A TALKING PARROT! Be yourself! Use words that are familiar, don’t try using a different voice. Let your voice shine as is.

4) **Take your time & Practice:** Practice your speech as much as you can! You can do this in steps to help build your confidence. First, speak out loud to yourself. Second, speak in front a mirror (your first audience member is yourself). Third, speak in front of someone you trust, a friend or even a pet! Fourth, record yourself talking so you can hear what you sound like and see what you might need to adjust. Finally, ask for feedback from others. Sometimes a new set of ears can reveal something we can’t hear.

5) **Stage Presence:** If your speaking about something funny/happy, make sure your expression matches your point! The last thing you want to do is talk about a sad moment and have a nervous smile. Only use gestures you normally use, don’t try and add “new” moves to something you are not comfortable doing. Stand straight and tall, slouching shows your audience that you’re already disinterested. If you have a podium or something to lean on, stay away! Don’t hide. Moving around once in a while is good, but pacing back and forth can have a negative effect on your audience’s ability to pay attention. Lastly, don’t plant yourself like a tree and stand still, be comfortable with movement and speech.
THE ASSESSMENT

Assessment can be a challenging task in itself. Student growth is dependent on a teacher’s ability to effectively communicate strengths and areas that need improvement. The method can be a daunting task, but by using a rubric, you are able to identify specific areas a student has excelled in and areas that require more work and attention. The B.C. Proficiency scale is designed to assess students individually. We have this pre-existing mindset of comparing students’ scores and success to others, however, as we re-discover the diversity that truly exists in our classroom, we need to renew the method in which we assess students during their elementary school years.

When you introduce smurtiLIVE - Give students the rubric right away!

Public Speaking Observation Sheet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.C Proficiency Scale</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Extending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For some students, I use a numerical means of assessment, when necessary. This is where you really have to know who your students are and how they whether they respond to feedback in a constructive or critical way. The 1–3–5 Assessment Rubric allows for flexibility (2, 4, 6) and addresses specific areas where students are celebrated in areas of strength and other areas where they are encouraged to spend more time on. The final summative assessment is based on the B.C. Proficiency Scale: Emerging, Developing, Proficient, and Extending.

In the following pages you will find 3 samples of the grading rubric and 1 sample of a grading rubric for non-verbal students who participate in the research process.
### Alternative Assessment Rubric with Numeracy Scale

Below you will find a rubric with numerical ratings.
Final assessment can be given as a single proficient ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States Purpose</td>
<td>The purpose is not clear and does not capture the attention of the audience</td>
<td>The purpose is apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is clear and captures the attention of the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes Content</td>
<td>Little to no focus on central idea or topic. Little organization. Audience is not aware of purpose and cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>The organization of the content is congruent; transitions are evident</td>
<td>Clear focus on central idea or topic. Naturally connects entire presentation: intro, main body, and conclusion are fluid and natural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate stories &amp; examples</td>
<td>Stories or examples are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Stories and examples relate to the topic/content</td>
<td>Relevant examples or stories work to interest the audience and further pushes the main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizes the main idea(s)</td>
<td>The speech/presentation ends without a clear summary</td>
<td>Concludes and summaries the main ideas</td>
<td>Conclusion unites the important parts of the presentation and encourages future discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Language</td>
<td>Eye contact with audience is lacking. Gestures are missing. The speaker depends on notes.</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures are natural and fluid</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures demonstrate the speaker’s energy and interest, guiding the listener through the presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>The vocabulary is awkward or inappropriate for the topic, making the speaker difficult to understand</td>
<td>The vocabulary provides clarity and avoids confusion</td>
<td>The vocabulary is descriptive and accurate, engaging the listener through imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Vocal filters are present throughout presentation. Speed and volume are inappropriate for the presentation</td>
<td>The speaker uses adequate speed and volume throughout the presentation.</td>
<td>The speaker manipulates tone, speed, and volume, using these tools to emphasize important ideas and hold the listener’s attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace/Awareness</td>
<td>The presentation is uninteresting</td>
<td>The speaker’s word choices, explanations, and enthusiasm are appropriate for the topic and for each point: appropriate aids are incorporated</td>
<td>The choice of language, examples, and aids work together to heighten the listener’s interest and connection to the topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, for this presentation, you are:

- Emerging
- Developing
- Proficient
- Extending
Below you will find a rubric with a proficiency ranking (no numerical values) as a **Quick-Scale** assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Extending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>States Purpose</strong></td>
<td>The purpose is not clear and does not capture the attention of the audience</td>
<td>The purpose is apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is clear and captures the attention of the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizes Content</strong></td>
<td>Little to no focus on central idea or topic. Little organization. Audience is not aware of purpose and cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>The organization of the content is congruent; transitions are evident</td>
<td>Clear focus on central idea or topic. Naturally connects entire presentation: intro, main body, and conclusion are fluid and natural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate stories &amp; examples</strong></td>
<td>Stories or examples are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Stories and examples relate to the topic/content</td>
<td>Relevant examples or stories work to interest the audience and further pushes the main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summarizes the main idea(s)</strong></td>
<td>The speech/presentation ends without a clear summary</td>
<td>Concludes and summaries the main ideas</td>
<td>Conclusion unites the important parts of the presentation and encourages future discussion</td>
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<table>
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<th>Delivery:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Extending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body Language</strong></td>
<td>Eye contact with audience is lacking. Gestures are missing. The speaker depends on notes</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures are natural and fluid</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures demonstrate the speaker’s energy and interest, guiding the listener through the presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity</strong></td>
<td>The vocabulary is awkward or inappropriate for the topic. Making the speaker difficult to understand</td>
<td>The vocabulary provides clarity and avoids confusion</td>
<td>The vocabulary is descriptive and accurate, engaging the listener through imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice</strong></td>
<td>Vocal filters are present throughout presentation. Speed and volume are inappropriate for the presentation</td>
<td>The speaker uses adequate speed and volume throughout the presentation.</td>
<td>The speaker manipulates tone, speed, and volume, using these tools to emphasize important ideas and hold the listener’s attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pace &amp; Awareness</strong></td>
<td>The presentation is uninteresting</td>
<td>The speaker’s word choices, explanations, and enthusiasm are appropriate for the topic and for each point: appropriate aids are incorporated</td>
<td>The choice of language, examples, and aids work together to heighten the listener’s interest and connection to the topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below you will find a rubric with a proficiency ranking (no numerical values) and a comment section for additional observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Extending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>States Purpose</td>
<td>The purpose is not apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is somewhat apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is clear and captures the attention of the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes Content</td>
<td>No focus on central idea or topic. No organization. Audience is not aware of purpose and cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>Little focus on central idea or topic. Little organization. Audience is aware of purpose however, cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>The organization of the content is congruent; transitions are evident</td>
<td>Clear focus on central idea or topic. Naturally connects entire presentation: intro, main body, and conclusion are fluid and natural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate stories &amp; examples</td>
<td>Stories or examples are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Some stories or examples are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Stories and examples relate to the topic/content</td>
<td>Relevant examples or stories work to interest the audience and further pushes the main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizes the main idea(s)</td>
<td>The speech/presentation ends without a clear summary</td>
<td>The speech/presentation ends with a summary</td>
<td>Concludes and summaries the main ideas</td>
<td>Conclusion unites the important parts of the presentation and encourages future discussion</td>
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<th>Extending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Language</td>
<td>No eye contact with audience. Gestures are not appropriate for event.</td>
<td>Eye contact with audience is lacking. Gestures are missing. The speaker depends on notes</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures are natural and fluid</td>
<td>Eye contact, interaction with aids, and physical gestures demonstrate the speaker’s energy and interest, guiding the listener through the presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>Several moments of inaudible dialogue</td>
<td>The vocabulary is awkward or inappropriate for the topic, making the speaker difficult to understand</td>
<td>The vocabulary provides clarity and avoids confusion</td>
<td>The vocabulary is descriptive and accurate, engaging the listener through imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Speed and volume are consistently fluctuating. Long pauses interrupt fluency of speech or thought</td>
<td>Vocal filters are present throughout presentation. Speed and volume are inappropriate for the presentation</td>
<td>The speaker uses adequate speed and volume throughout the presentation.</td>
<td>The speaker manipulates tone, speed, and volume, using these tools to emphasize important ideas and hold the listener’s attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace &amp; Awareness</td>
<td>The presentation is uninteresting. Uneven in presentation. No flow.</td>
<td>Is able to finish speech from start to end. Student finishes presentation.</td>
<td>The speaker’s word choices, explanations, and enthusiasm are appropriate for the topic and for each point; appropriate aids are incorporated</td>
<td>The choice of language, examples, and aids work together to heighten the listener’s interest and connection to the topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Sometimes you will have students in your class who can’t verbally present. These may be students with physical disabilities or it may even be a crippling fear for some. This is where knowing your student and how far you can take them is important. We still want to involve these students in some capacity. They can submit their public speaking topic in the form of a written report, a detailed power point presentation, a poster board or all of the above. Followed by a casual one on one conversation about their experience. They will still have to carry out the same research methods as the other students, the only difference is that they won’t be physically presenting their speech. They can still learn a lot from this process!

**Method of Presentation:** Circle One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>States Purpose</td>
<td>The purpose is not apparent</td>
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<td>The purpose is apparent</td>
<td>The purpose is clear and captures the attention of the audience</td>
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<td>Organizes Content</td>
<td>No focus on central idea or topic. No organization. Audience is not aware of purpose and cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>Little focus on central idea or topic. Little organization. Audience is aware of purpose however, cannot identify structure.</td>
<td>The organization of the content is congruent</td>
<td>Clear focus on central idea or topic. There is a natural connection to the entire presentation: intro, main body, and conclusion are fluid and natural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate stories &amp; examples &amp; images</td>
<td>Stories, examples, and images are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Some stories, examples, and images are missing or unrelated to the topic</td>
<td>Stories, examples, images relate to the topic/content</td>
<td>Relevant examples, stories and images work to interest the audience and further pushes the main idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizes the main idea(s)</td>
<td>The method used ends without a clear summary</td>
<td>The method ends with a summary</td>
<td>The method used concludes and summarizes the main ideas</td>
<td>The method used concludes and summarizes the main ideas and points in a detailed thought-provoking way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Your technology aid is exactly what it sounds like. It’s meant to assist your oral presentation. The combination of clear powerful images/slides can take your points to the next level. They can become representations of key points and ideas, when used correctly.

Examples! They are life savers in trying to explain how something should look like when you teach students. Providing students with just descriptions can be difficult to get your point across - It wasn’t until I did a specific lesson on power point where the “OH, I get it!” phrase started pouring out from my students.

This resource is available from the smurtilive website: www.smurtilive.ca
1. **Know your topic** - Before you jump into building your PowerPoint (technology aid) make sure you do the research! Be comfortable with the information first. The best presentations are the ones where students rely on the information they’ve learned as opposed to relying on a slide.

2. **Use key phrases about your topic** - Good presenters use key phrases and only include the most important/necessary information. Topics can be vast, but narrow your choice down to 3-4 solid points.

3. **Avoid using too much text on the slide** - The slide show’s primary focus is meant to aid the oral aspect of your presentation. Use simple language and limit points to 3-4 per slide instead of writing small paragraphs.

4. **Purposeful Slides** - Sometimes you can use 6 slides and sometimes you can use 22 slides or a 4-minute presentation. Rapid fire slides (images to support a point while you are talking) to Stand Still slides (images that represent key points).

5. **Font** - Choose a font that is simple to read such as Arial, Impact, Century Gothic, Myriad Pro (just to name a few). Minimum size font should be 18pt. Use the whole screen. It’s okay to go past 115 pt. font. Remember, you are not writing a paragraph, you are making a statement.

6. **Contrast your colours** - For the text and background, dark text on a light background or light text against a dark background will make your statements and information standout.

7. **Use animations & transitions sparingly** - The reality is many students love transitions because of its cool visual look! As they are entertaining, you don’t want it to take away from your voice. Always remember, a slide show is a tool you use to enhance your oral presentation. Simple transitions and PNG images (images without backgrounds) can help you create neat clear-cut slides.
The presentation aspect. This is what makes smurtiLIVE different from other in-class presentations. The theatrics and showmanship of creating an atmosphere, help amplify the experience. Over the past 3 years, I have never presented smurtiLIVE in the same way. When we first started, we were doing Ted Talk Jr, then Ted Talk, simplified to TED and then we reinvented ourselves to smurtiLIVE. Now I base our setup on the theme we are doing. I guess you can say I was still trying to create an identity for my public speaking guide and I’m happy to say that I’ve found it.

As you can see below, our stage has evolved throughout the years. Every year I learn a new concept or skill in either lighting, technology, and even construction. It’s all about trying something new. This is what makes the smurtiLIVE event interesting for myself as well!

What does this mean for you? You have to play around and experiment with the process. There were some years where I involved students in the set-up process and there were some years I kept it an absolute secret until the day of in an attempt to create a genuine moment of surprise.

There are so many opportunities to bring students in and really develop strong collaboration skills. It makes them feel like they are part of the process and they are constantly learning. Running power cords, building curtain walls/light walls, positioning projectors and TVs, connecting wires and cables, using spatial reasoning for seating and set. There are SO many opportunities for students to learn.

I personally preferred to keep it as a secret until the big reveal. I loved seeing their faces when they walked in to find their classroom/common space had been completely transformed into a big event centre. It was a labour of
love on my part and it was something I honestly enjoyed. I love all things presentation from lights to sound to set design, you can almost say it’s a personal hobby of mine. While students worked hard on their research, speech and power point building, overcoming speaking fears, this acted as a representation that I was learning right alongside them. There were so many times where I kept myself up late thinking of the set design, knowing that I would probably be the only one who noticed my perceived imperfections. I never gave up and I never settled and that in itself became a teaching moment. A moment that I could remind students that I am human, I am imperfect, and I am constantly a lifelong learner.

I used Instagram, DIY Blogs, Pinterest, TED videos and so many more outlets as my sources of inspiration. I also have experience working with stage and lighting crews for music/conference events in which I draw a lot of my creative flow from that. On the page to follow, I’ll break down certain set pieces I’ve built in the past and how you can build your own for a smurtiLIVE presentation.

www.smurtilive.ca is where you will find the most up to date information!

Crafting Letters/Words

There’s something about giant letters that screams professional and fun. Okay, that might just be me, but they really do help create a fun presentation environment. Here are few different ways of how I was able to create this effect. Use what you have and get creative!
• GIANT Foam Letters - I used Dollar store foam poster size boards, coloured duct tape from department stores, and some small pieces of 2X4 lumber to create the TED letters. For tools, I used scissors, box cutter knife, large rulers, and a pencil that kept breaking at each point. They were simple, light, and easy to craft. Also, in terms of storage, I could place them/stack them anywhere in the classroom.

• GIANT Wooden Letters - I used a template for creating giant letters from the first smurtiLIVE event from Pinterest. It was a step-by-step guide of building letters A-Z. All of these letters were built using a saw, 2X4’s and Kreg Screws! Once you get used to making the cuts and piecing it all together, the process becomes very easy! Keep in mind, these are big letters that have some weight to it, think about storage options or go with the one and done option! Here’s the link: http://www.betterwhenbuilt.com/diy-wood-letters/

• FLAT Wooden Letters - With our most recent smurtiLIVE, I wanted to create something a bit lighter to move around the classroom and I wanted to practice my wood cutting skills at the same time. For the larger smurtiLIVE letters I used pre-cut strips of plywood from Homedepot. For tools, I used a ruler, measuring tape, a drill bit that made holes and jigsaw to cut out the exterior. You can use wood glue and small screws to attach the letters to a backdrop, however, I have little patience for things that need to dry! So, I invested in a hot glue gun that used wood-glue sticks!

• FLAT SMALL Wooden Letters - This was a super extra detail I wanted to add to my set design. I love wood working so I invested in a small wood bandsaw. When I saw the price & availability of MDF wood letters, I knew I could make my own. I have years of experience with a bandsaw, but little experience cutting out small letters - that’s where YouTube saved me. Lots of tutorials out there! Check it out.

The Backdrop

Black Curtain - There are SO many different ways you can create a backdrop using different types of curtain. I’ve been fortunate to use backdrop materials from the production company I worked for. That being said,
I know not everyone has that avenue to explore. Luckily, I’ve found other cost-effective ways to achieve this. Also, you DON’T have to use black. You can use any colour you like!

- PVC Pipe and store-bought curtains/drapes. You can use PVC pipes, flat wooden bases and drapes from Walmart. It’s very easy to assemble and dismantle. Bed sheets/spreads give you a wider area to cover while 4-6 individual curtains/drapes allow you to create smaller sections. One option for the PVC pipe is to create a standing display: 2 vertical pipes and 1 horizontal pipe with 2 elbow joints and 2 wooden base plates with weights. You can use bricks or even text books to weigh down the base! The second option is to use a single piece of PVC pole horizontal: 1 horizontal pipe, 2 pieces of chain/rope cut at similar lengths (length will vary based on need), 2 screw hooks (optional). Tie or wrap the drapes around the pole and just hang it from the ceiling!

- The Paper Option: Black bulletin board paper works as well. You know, those giant rolls of colour paper! I haven’t used this option personally, but I’ve seen many people use this as this is a resource their school already has 😊

- Photography Backdrops – You can find cheap (insert your idea/suggestion of cheap) professional grade back sets on Amazon (Amazon Prime is a teacher’s best friend). They are super easy to set up and store and you can use them for so many other projects and displays. They usually consist of 2 tripod stands and 1 cross bar. You can get almost any colored backdrop from flat colours to wood panels. Do some exploring. NEWEER is a great brand to invest in for photography and backdrop sets. You can purchase 8 feet wide/ 6 feet high backdrop support for around $50. There are so many different package options, make sure to check it out.

The LIGHTS

Lighting is a must! Those classroom florescent lights are boring and it’s something the students sees every day. Lighting helps create a warm atmosphere in the classroom. This is the one that can get a little pricey if you don’t know when to stop and say “no more.” Unfortunately, I don’t have that will power (power, get
it? Lights need power?? Okay, moving on). There are ways I’ve been able to simulate a professional lighting rig using patio lights, Amazon Prime and my friends at IKEA.

- **PATIO STRING LIGHTS** - I love patio string lights because you can create so many different designs without having to run dozens of independent light cords. I invested in 2 – 50 feet string light sets from Costco. You can get these string lights in a variety of lengths from 10 ft to even 30 ft. Pretty much any department store sells these, the best time to buy is summer as these are readily in stock, off season, they can become pretty expensive. Patio string lights get better each year, and with the huge push towards LED, you won’t have to worry about blowing any circuits in your classroom (yes, this has happened to me, good thing the secretaries and administration like me, right?).

- **String Lights Loose** - For our third Ted Talk, I strung these lights from the ceiling and even hung them on the black back drop, it was super simple to set up and take down. They created a warm glow.

- **String Lights Structured** - For our first smurtiLIVE, I wanted more of a controlled look for the backdrop. To create one panel of lights I used 6 – 2X2’s, cut them to length, screws, zap straps, a drill to make holes (evenly spaced) I duplicated the process for the other side of the stage.

- **Lamp Post/Hanging Lights** - This year I wanted to up my production level and create a stage that doubled as a filming studio. In the most recent smurtiLIVE, I used basic lamp posts from IKEA, that could be adjusted to any length and simply took the cover off to expose the light bulb. I used independent light cords to hang in various places to create more of an abstract look.

**Lighting Tip:** When you light a stage, you need lights in front and behind your speaker. This helps eliminate shadows that may end up in your video/picture. Angle the lights facing down so it’s not right in their face!

**EXTRA: The media element**

I love all things cinema. I get excited for movie trailers because they help create a sense of anticipation and wonder. It all began with a time lapse. I wanted to see the set up from a different set of eyes, so for the very first TED event I recorded the
set up with my iPhone on time lapse mode. It’s become a yearly tradition now where my students wait for that time lapse video to drop. It’s become a wonderful way to show my students that I am constantly learning how to edit videos, using lighting for video, and just film making skills in general.

I get excited releasing 1-minute trailers on my teacher Instagram account and in my classroom to build the hype. Sometimes it’s either showing footage from the last event to unveiling a new theme we are going to do. To get an idea of what this looks like, check out some of the trailers I’ve made on my social media platforms:

- INSTAGRAM: @thesmurtiteacher
  https://www.instagram.com/thesmurtiteacher/ - Here you’ll have to scan a bit to find the smurtiLIVE promos as this is my general teaching portfolio
- VIMEO: https://vimeo.com/smurti - Here you will find past trailers of theme reveals and even three full length smurtiLIVE presentations from our 2019 theme on Humanitarian work. Below are two samples of how I filmed these presentations.

  Image Left - Straight to camera for Media Sharing
  Image Right - General perspective for Assessment Sharing
Appendix B – smurtiLIVE Website
The following are screenshots of the smurtiLIVE website. The website will enable me to keep my resources up to date with different features, new additions and new insight. www.smurtiLIVE.ca
The section “smurtiLIVE” will feature photos and videos. The videos range from communicating learning, introducing themes, and showing educators the process of building a smurtiLIVE event.

**WHAT IS SMURTILIVE?**

A public speaking unit designed to bring enthusiasm and confidence in building oral speaking skills amongst students. This resource is designed for students in Middle School ranging from grades six to eight. Bringing the elements of showmanship and creativity, this public speaking events makes students feel like they’re on the big stage.

The theme for smurtiLIVE 2019 is called the Humanitarian project. You can see a sample of our event here:
For the full presentation, follow the link in the video.

**THE THEME IS EVERYTHING**

The theme is arguably one of the most important aspects of implementing a public speaking unit. It has to spark interest, which then drives passion. The theme for smurtiLIVE 2018 was entitled “Dreamers into Reality.” This theme was primarily focused on inspirational individuals who changed the world in some capacity. Driven by a dream to make the world a better place.

This year’s theme was entitled: “The Humanitarian Project”
Click “Resources” in the tab above to download the student guide to get
A NAME THAT CHANGES

When I started this public speaking guide, I was incredibly inspired by TED Talks.

Now, we are here with smurtiLIVE. I am a huge fan of set design. I love making new sets each year because it gives me an opportunity to learn a new skill and reinvent myself.
The section “Resources” will give educators access to the teacher guide and the various themes that go along with a smurtiLIVE event. They will be released accordingly as each new theme is developed to completion.

COMING SOON: TEACHER GUIDE

Themes, Guides, & PowerPoints will be available to the general public by June 2019

COMING SOON: SMURTI LIVE THEMES - JUNE 2019

- ANIMALS: WILD & WEIRD
- THE GLOBAL PROJECT
- THE HUMANITARIAN PROJECT
- THE EXPLORATION Initiative
- GOING BEYOND THE EDGE OF EARTH
- DREAMERS INTO REALITY
COMING SOON: SMURTI LIVE THEMES - SEPTEMBER 2019

AUTHORS & WRITERS FROM LINK TO PAPER

In Search of CULTURE

THE CONSERVATION PROJECT

SCIENCE

DISCOVERIES That Changed The World

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATIONS

A STEP INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

PASSION MUSIC

CULTURE

MUSICIAN WHO TANGLED THE BAR

COMING SOON: TEACHING TOOLS: POWER POINT

[Images of presentations tools]
The final section entitled “My Story” helps me share my journey and what I have learned from my experience (both failures and success) in the classroom.

**MY STORY**

My name is Simon Murti and I am an elementary school teacher in British Columbia, Canada. I currently teach seventh grade in the Surrey School District.

- In 2013 I earned my Bachelor of Arts with a Major in History from Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). It was in my final year where I had made the decision to pursue a career in education.
- In 2014 I enrolled in the professional development program at Simon Fraser University (SFU) where I received my Bachelor of Education.
- In 2017, after spending a few years in the classroom, I decided to enrol in Vancouver Island University (VIU) to pursue a Master of Education.

We all have a story. Your story is being written everyday. Below, you’ll find my story.

**WHERE WE STARTED**

**BEFORE SMURTLIVE: 2017**

Changing the game forever... for myself. This was my first year working in the public sector and I was nervous. I had spent two years working at a private school, right after my practicum ended, so I really didn’t know what to expect. I had been a teacher on call right from September and it wasn’t until February where I got to plant my feet in a classroom. That’s where I came across a lovable bunch of fifth grade students. It wasn’t easy jumping into a classroom mid-year and just going with the flow, but I knew I had to do that to survive. As I started to adjust to routines and schedules, students were working on a number of ongoing assignments, one of which was Genius Hour. After watching a few Genius Hour presentations, I absolutely loved the topics they were presenting on, however, something was missing. The communication aspect stood out to me the most. Over the summer I had started a teacher Instagram account because I wanted to see what other educators were doing across the world. I came across one teacher who did TED talks with his grade 3 class! I thought that was pretty awesome and I also thought to myself, “if third grade students can do this, so can fifth grade students.” So, after their final Genius Hour, I announced to the class that we were going to be putting on our own TED talk event. Little did they know how extravagant and extra it was actually going to be. I knew what I wanted to do, but at the same time, I had no real idea of how to pull it off. There were a lot of bumps along the way and their definitely could have been more step-by-step instructions, but I was literally going with the flow. I’m so glad I did. Event day came. I changed the venue from our classroom and asked our wonderful librarian if I could use the library. I set up lights, curtains, screens, and even made custom unauthorized TED letters. I’m crafter my nature. I still remember their reaction when they walked in that room. It was priceless. “You did ALL of this for us?” – STILL my favourite memory to this day. I set the bar that day but I had no idea where this whole thing was going. I was just going with the flow.
FROM TED TO SMURTI: 2018

New year, new grade, same TED event ... or so I thought. At this point I was still a term contract teacher so I had no idea if I would return to the same school. Lucky me, I did. However, it was the year of firsts for me. My first year teaching a combined class of sixth and seventh grade students and my first-year teaching seventh grade in general! I was nervous ... actually, that's an understatement as I felt more clueless and overwhelmed from the start. Ya, let's go with that. Oh, did I mention that this was also the year where I started my graduate studies in Masters of Special Education? As if I didn't have enough on my plate.  

Looking back, I had no idea how I pulled that year off, but I knew I had a special group of kids that pushed me to be the best version of myself. I had planned to do more TED talks this year. The first TED event went off with a hit! I shared the success we experienced with other teachers and they wanted to know how to do their own. So I set out to create a TED talk resource guide and I wanted it to be a free resource for educators. Before I would go that route, I knew it would be a good idea to ask the TED organization for permission to distributing a resource with their name on it. I didn't think it would be an issue, I was trying to teach middle school-aged students how to speak with confidence in a public in an engaging way. The engaging way was using the TED name, something they've all seen on Youtube, you know, that platform where kids can spend hours of their time on. All in the name of progress and education. COPYRIGHT & TRADEMARK. The first of many roadblocks. That being said, I honestly knew that there were logistics to be aware of. I couldn't use the font, colour, or name, because understandably they were trademarked. They were very kind, encouraging, and even offered other programs that they started that I could look into. That started to feel the way I wanted to accomplish. When all was said and done, it still wasn't what I wanted to set out to accomplish. My students knew I wanted to create a resource guide and do more TED events. But when I walked into my classroom, my emotions just couldn't be masked with a smile that day. I was honest with them, like I usually am, I told them what happened. There were a few disappointed faces, but one student spoke up and said "Let's just do our own thing." In that moment, the spark of creativity and passion hit me like a ton of bricks. It was a great reminder of why I started this whole thing, it was for the kids, not for myself or any other person, the kids. So, we set out to create the first ever smurtiLIVE event. We were pretty close to calling it smurtiTALK, but the kids made a wise decision and voted for smurtiLIVE. I'm glad they did. It was around the same time where I had finally found my graduate studies focus: public speaking for kids.
Appendix C – Power Point Teaching Tools
This resource will be available from the website: www.smurtilive.ca
The following is Power Point dedicated to “Public Speaking Tips”:

1. Building Your Speech
   - Public speaking is an individual’s ability to effectively communicate information to an audience of people. The ability to articulate and use the mechanics of speech to share, inspire, challenge, and extend information.
   - smurtiLIVE puts an emphasis on setting a clear purpose to communicate an idea in a short amount of time. Every minute counts.

2. Today’s Discussion
   - Outline
   - Understanding Your Speech
   - Endure Your Speech
   - Performing Your Speech

3. What is Public Speaking?
   - More than Words
   - Topic
   - You won’t always have this opportunity because sometimes, you will be assigned a topic, but if you have a choice to pick one, do your best to choose a topic that is of interest to you. If you are unfamiliar with the topic, the idea should leave some interesting feeling run with it.

4. Step One:
   - Understanding Your Speech
   - Thoughts
   - Like writing a paragraph, you need a rough idea of what your speech should look like. So, it’s always good to brainstorm your main ideas that stand out to you. In addition to whatever other expectations your teacher has, ask yourself this question: “What would I want to achieve with this topic?”

5. Audience
   - Audience
   - Ask yourself this question: “Who is this talk for?” You need to have the target audience in mind. Your teacher will have given you a list of expectations, so you don’t have to worry about that. Is your audience: you have to close it. Ideas and facts range from being general information to powerful moments. Keep in mind, listing off facts one after another can get boring. Focusing on a talent few and elaborating creates a lasting impression.
STEP TWO:

WRITING MEMORIZE

This is the bulk of your speech. Write your points in paragraph form. This will help organize your main points. If you have a time limit, write down your main points so you can determine which ones should stay and which ones should go. This is arguably one of the hardest parts (outside from the actual speaking) for many students because originally they write down all important points, then limit their points to important. Having a time limit helps you really refine and sort out points from “what I WANT listeners to know” to “what others NEED to know.”

WRITING END

This will be the end of your speech. Write your points in paragraph form. This will help organize your main points. If you have a time limit, write down your main points so you can determine which ones should stay and which ones should go. This is arguably one of the hardest parts (outside from the actual speaking) for many students because originally they write down all important points, then limit their points to important. Having a time limit helps you really refine and sort out points from “what I WANT listeners to know” to “what others NEED to know.”

STEP THREE:

WAYS TO REMEMBER

Using flashcards or pieces of paper to make “Kelly writer” can be helpful. The purpose isn’t to write your whole speech down in small sections, but to use prompts, numbers, and words as triggers for your memory. Practice your speech right before/after thinking your speech in your mind as the last thing you did before you fell asleep can help you remember context much quicker!

TALKING TIPS

If you were to record your speech and play it back to yourself, you would hear all your stutters, monotonous tones, etc. “Sounds that show how nervous you really are.” So, talk your time. Sometimes the gestures of our body is on its highest note, so students would want to run through the speech to just get it done. Speak at a medium pace, giving credit to each word. Remember you spent so much time crafting!
**STEP THREE:**

**SOUNDING NATURAL**

1. Use "pauses and stresses." A pause is when you take a brief break between points you are making to give yourself an opportunity to reevaluate a talk. Stresses are used to emphasize a point. An example of using a pause and stress:

   "You won't believe what I saw... (pause)...I saw (stress)...

   Be yourself. Use words that are familiar, don't try sounding a different voice. Let your voice shine as it is.

**STEP THREE:**

**TAKE YOUR TIME & PRACTICE**

Practice your speech as much as you can. You can do this in steps to build your confidence. First, speak out loud to yourself. Second, speak in front of a mirror (your first audience member is yourself). Third, speak in front of someone you trust, a friend or even a pet. Fourth, record yourself talking so you can hear what you said like how you would need to adjust. Finally, ask for feedback from others. Sometimes a new set of ears can reveal something we can't hear.
This resource will be available from the website: www.smurtilive.ca
The following is Power Point dedicated to “Building a Power Point”:

1. **Building A Power Point**

2. Creating an ORIGINAL presentation that will CAPTIVATE your audience

3. **#1**
   - Regular & Standard is BORING
   - It's been done before. Move on.

4. Example of a common slide.
   - The first 5 templates a student sees in a Power Point is usually their default.
   - Working with pre-made patterns.
   - Terrible Transitions that take FOREVER.
   - Worrisome as well. Just BORING. UGH.
   - Naively PACKED with information that no one is actually reading.
   - Pictures that have nothing to do with the content other than being "cool".

5. **#2**
   - Try Different Combinations & CREATE
   - Don't limit your creativity to a template. Let those ideas flow.

6. COLOURS BOLD SIMPLICITY
   - Captivates
   - Focuses
   - Engages

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6. COLOURS BOLD SIMPLICITY
   - Captivates
   - Focuses
   - Engages
#3
Let Your Slides BREATHE

Too much clutter can make your audience lose interest.

#4
The right FONT & IMAGE can bring your presentation to LIFE

Sharp edges say: “Look at me.” PNG & high resolution images are key.

#5
The right PHOTO can ENHANCE

The right can act as powerful memory cue to help your audience retain information.