



SMART-UDL

**Students Mastering English with Advanced Resources and Technology via
UDL**

ENGLISH AT HOME

A Parent's Guide

Supporting English learning at home through Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Project number	2025-1-SE01-KA220-SCH-000363437
Programme	Erasmus+ KA220-SCH - Cooperation Partnerships in School Education
Work package	WP2 - Needs Analysis, Language Learning Difficulties Report, Educational Material Framework

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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1. Welcome

Dear Parents and Families,

English learning can continue in small, natural ways outside school. You do not need advanced English to support your child. Interest, encouragement, simple routines and a calm learning environment can provide useful additional practice.

A simple principle

A short daily routine of around 10–15 minutes can provide useful additional practice. The goal is regular, positive contact with English—not long or stressful study sessions.

2. About SMART-UDL

SMART-UDL (Students Mastering English with Advanced Resources and Technology via UDL) is an Erasmus+ KA220-SCH cooperation partnership. The project develops inclusive, technology-supported English learning resources for students aged 8–14, with particular attention to learner variability, accessibility, motivation and participation.

The project application foresees “English at Home: A Parent’s Guide” as a practical resource that helps families reinforce English learning through simple strategies and activities.

3. Purpose of This Guide

- Help families support English learning without requiring high English proficiency.
- Provide short, practical and low-pressure activities that can be adapted to different homes and learners.
- Offer UDL-based options so children can access, practise and express learning in different ways.
- Strengthen communication between families and schools.
- Connect home practice with SMART-UDL materials and the e-platform where appropriate and available.

4. What Is UDL?

In SMART-UDL, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is used to respond to learner variability. Instead of expecting every child to learn in the same way, UDL provides multiple ways to engage, access information and demonstrate learning.

UDL principle	At home, this can mean...
Engagement	Offer choice, relevance, games, praise and low-pressure participation.
Representation	Use words, pictures, audio, video, objects, subtitles and repeated explanations.
Action & Expression	Let children respond by speaking, drawing, acting, writing, pointing, recording or creating.

Important

UDL is not about fixed “learning styles”. It is about offering flexible options because needs, confidence, pace and context can change from one learner and situation to another.

5. What Families Told Us

This guide is informed by the SMART-UDL family survey carried out with 92 families in Sweden, Türkiye and Latvia. The survey describes the participating project contexts; it is not intended to represent all families in these countries.

Indicator	Survey finding	What this means for the guide
Daily English use at home	Sweden 75% Türkiye 30% Latvia 32%	Home exposure varies; provide flexible short routines.
English films/videos	Sweden 80% Türkiye 74% Latvia 86%	Build on media families already use.
Digital device/internet access	Sweden 95% Türkiye 65% Latvia 71%	Offer digital and non-digital alternatives.
Parent knowledge sufficient to help	Sweden 90% Türkiye 22% Latvia 32%	Use plain language and activities that do not require fluent English.
Parent priorities	More speaking, interactive methods and stronger parent-teacher communication	Keep activities practical, social and easy to explain.

What the survey supports

Families do not start from the same position. This guide therefore offers choices: digital or offline, spoken or visual, short or extended, independent or family-supported.

6. Your Role as a Parent

- Show interest in what your child is learning.
- Encourage short, regular practice instead of long study sessions.
- Create a calm space when possible, while recognising that not every family has the same home conditions.
- Praise effort, participation and communication—not only correct grammar.
- Ask your child to teach you a few new words; the parent does not need to be the English expert.
- Share concerns or useful observations with the teacher.

7. Three UDL Ways to Support Learning at Home

7.1 Multiple Ways to Access Information (Representation)

- Watch short age-appropriate English videos with subtitles when useful.
- Use pictures, real objects, labels and simple drawings.
- Use bilingual books or home-language explanations to support understanding.
- Replay audio or video and slow the pace when possible.
- Use SMART-UDL digital materials when they are available and suitable for the child.

7.2 Multiple Ways to Practise and Show Learning (Action & Expression)

- Say a word or short sentence.
- Draw or match vocabulary.
- Act out a short dialogue.
- Record a private voice message for practice.
- Create simple flashcards or a mini poster.
- Use a digital storytelling tool where appropriate.

7.3 Multiple Ways to Stay Engaged (Engagement)

- Let the child choose between two activities.
- Keep practice short and achievable.
- Use games, music, movement and topics the child enjoys.
- Set small goals and notice progress.
- Avoid turning home practice into a test.

8. 10-Minute Activity Bank

Theme	10-minute activity	UDL choice
1. Appearance – Mirror Game	Name two or three features: hair, eyes, tall/short.	Say, point, draw or create an avatar where available.
2. Environment – Recycling Sort	Sort paper, plastic and glass while saying the English words.	Use real objects or picture cards.
3. Daily Routines – Morning Sequence	Put three routine actions in order: wake up, eat, brush teeth.	Use drawings, printed pictures or digital cards.
4. Television – Show Critic	Watch a short clip and choose “like / not for me”.	Name one character, feeling or action.
5. Feelings – Emoji Match	Match happy, sad, tired, excited to faces.	Point, mime or say “I feel ...”.
6. Hobbies – Mini Talent Show	Show or describe a hobby for 30 seconds.	Speak, draw or make a private recording if comfortable.
7. Food & Health – Healthy Plate	Name one or two foods during a meal.	Sort foods with paper cards or a digital drag-and-drop activity if available.
8. Travelling – Map Explorer	Use a map to practise left, right, stop and go.	Use a paper map or a virtual tour where available.
9. Family – Family Tree	Practise “This is my ...”.	Use drawings or fictional characters if the child prefers privacy.
10. Jobs – When I Grow Up	Choose a job card and name it.	Say or write “I want to be a ...”.
11. Household Items – Scavenger Hunt	Find a chair, book, spoon or pen.	Match the real object with a word or picture.
12. Wild Animals – Animal Mime	Mime an animal and guess its name.	Add habitat words if the child is ready.
13. Sports – Action Challenge	Act out run, jump, catch, kick.	Say one preference: “I like ...”.
14. Tourism – Postcard Maker	Choose a place and make a simple postcard.	Draw, type or write “Hello from ...”.
15. Culture & Tradition – Festival Card	Talk about a local tradition, food or celebration.	Use a drawing, photo of an object, or short sentence.
16. School – Backpack Check	Name three school items.	Match items with verbs such as read, write, draw.

9. Three-Week Sample Home Plan

Week	Suggested themes	Family focus
Week 1	Appearance, Feelings, Daily Routines, Hobbies, School	Build confidence with familiar personal topics.
Week 2	Environment, Food & Health, Household Items, Family, Jobs	Use objects and routines already present at home.
Week 3	Travelling, Wild Animals, Sports, Tourism, Culture & Tradition, Television	Connect English with movement, media and the wider world.

Flexible use

You do not need to complete every theme or follow this order. Choose the activities that fit your child, time, resources and school topics.

10. Supporting Children Who Need Extra Support

- Break tasks into smaller steps.
- Use pictures, icons, real objects and audio.
- Repeat slowly without pressure.
- Allow more time to respond.
- Offer movement and hands-on practice.
- Use larger print or audio alternatives when helpful.
- Let the child draw, point or act instead of writing when that better matches the task goal.

If a child has an identified support plan or specific educational need, family activities should complement—not replace—the guidance provided by the school and relevant professionals.

11. Supporting Shy or Anxious Children

- Start with private or one-to-one practice.
- Use pair practice before speaking in a larger group.
- Avoid correcting every mistake.
- Praise willingness to try.
- Let the child choose a non-speaking option first and move gradually toward oral practice.
- Treat mistakes as a normal part of learning.

12. Supporting Multilingual and Newly Arrived Learners

- Allow the home language to support meaning and confidence.
- Compare useful words across languages.
- Use bilingual books or subtitles when available.
- Let the child explain an English word in the home language before using it in English.
- Value the languages already spoken by the family.

13. Parent-Teacher Cooperation

- Ask what topic or language focus is being studied this week.

- Share what works well or causes difficulty at home.
- Use agreed school communication channels.
- Join parent workshops when offered.
- Tell the teacher if access to devices, internet or quiet study space is difficult so that alternatives can be considered.

14. Using Digital Tools and the SMART-UDL Platform Safely

Digital tools can support vocabulary, pronunciation, stories, videos, games and repeated practice. Use only age-appropriate resources and follow school guidance. SMART-UDL platform features may evolve during the project; use the materials and links that are actually available in the current version of the platform.

- Prefer short active tasks over long passive screen time.
- Use free or school-provided resources where possible.
- Choose mobile-friendly or downloadable alternatives if internet access is limited.
- Do not enter unnecessary personal data into third-party tools.
- Keep voice, photo or video recordings private unless sharing is specifically required by the school and appropriate consent is in place.
- Do not upload identifiable images or recordings of children to the project platform unless the school has authorised the activity and the required parental consent/data-protection conditions are met.

15. Monitoring Progress

Look for small changes over time rather than expecting rapid improvement. Useful signs of progress can include:

- greater willingness to use English words or short sentences
- remembering vocabulary more easily
- less hesitation during simple speaking tasks
- better understanding of familiar listening material
- greater independence in using learning resources
- more positive engagement with English activities

16. Encouraging a Growth Mindset

- “I can learn English step by step.”
- “Making mistakes helps me learn.”
- “I can try another way.”
- “I am improving with practice.”

Use these as encouraging messages, not as tests or slogans the child must repeat.

17. Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to speak English well to help my child?

No. You can support routines, encouragement, access to resources and communication with the teacher even if your English is limited.

How long should home practice be?

Short and regular practice is usually easier to sustain. Around 10–15 minutes can be a useful starting point, but the activity should fit the child and family routine.

My child mixes languages. Is that a problem?

The guide treats the home language as a support for meaning. If you have concerns about language development, discuss them with the child's teacher or relevant professional.

My child does not want to speak. What should I do?

Reduce pressure. Start with listening, pointing, drawing, pair practice or private recording and move gradually toward speaking.

Should I upload photos or videos to the platform?

Only when the school has specifically requested or authorised it and the required consent and data-protection conditions are in place. Private practice is always an option.

18. Message to Families

Every small action can help

You do not need to recreate the classroom at home. A short conversation, a video with subtitles, a word game, a drawing or a few minutes of shared practice can make English feel more familiar and approachable.

Supporting Project Evidence

- SMART-UDL WP2 – Family Needs and Home Support: Detailed Survey Results and Analysis (92 families; Sweden, Türkiye and Latvia).
- SMART-UDL WP2 – Needs Analysis Report (integrated student, teacher and family evidence).
- Approved SMART-UDL Erasmus+ KA220-SCH application, including the planned output “English at Home: A Parent’s Guide”.

This guide translates the needs identified in those project sources into practical family activities. It does not claim that the survey findings are statistically representative of all families in the participating countries.

SMART-UDL Project Team



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