

Accessible by Design

Online Learning / Create a Learner Persona

Activity Overview:

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4. Template

LEARNER PERSONA



Learner Persona

... is a fictional, research-based profile that represents your ideal or target learner.

It helps you design with empathy by understanding your learners' goals, challenges, access needs, and motivations.

In this course, your persona will guide your decisions about pacing, content, accessibility, and engagement.

● WHY THEY MATTER

- Connect HCD principles to real learners with specific needs
- Provide focus for UDL strategies tailored to diverse learning styles
- Highlight accessibility considerations for specific abilities and contexts
- Transform theoretical frameworks into practical design decisions
- Create empathy for different learners throughout the design process

● KEY COMPONENTS

- Demographic details (age, occupation, education level)
- Goals and motivations (why are they taking your course?)
- Challenges and pain points (what might hold them back?)
- Learning preferences (how do they learn best?)
- Technology context (devices, connectivity, technical comfort)
- Accessibility considerations (specific needs or accommodations)



ALEX MAYHEM, 33

Occupation: Senior Product Designer

Location: New Haven, CT

Education: M.S. Human-Computer Interaction

Family: Married with one young child

Interests: Getting tattoos, learning obscure facts, and playing music with his brother

GOALS / MOTIVATIONS

- Strengthen skills in accessible, user-centered design
- Confidently apply UDL and WCAG in course development
- Align design work with ethical, inclusive practices
- Build repeatable frameworks that scale across teams

NEEDS / FRUSTRATIONS

- Avoids oversimplified or inaccessible content
- Needs clean course structure and clarity
- Notices design flaws many others miss

ENVIRONMENT

- Accesses course at night from a desktop at home
- Occasionally uses a tablet in co-working spaces
- Prefers quiet, structured learning settings

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

- Uses modern browsers, screen readers, and design tools
- Comfortable with keyboard navigation
- Likely to evaluate platform accessibility by default

BEHAVIORS

- Highly analytical; seeks patterns and deeper meaning
- Engages across disciplines
- Processes content deeply before applying it

LEARNING STYLE

- Self-paced and independent
- Prefers clear structure and modular content
- Internalizes first, applies later

PREFERRED CONTENT FORMATS

- Concise, actionable content with minimal fluff
- Visual frameworks, annotated walkthroughs, and templates
- Captions, transcripts, and screen-readable materials
- On-demand videos for replay and bookmarking

Activity Details:

LEARNER PERSONA



INSTRUCTIONS

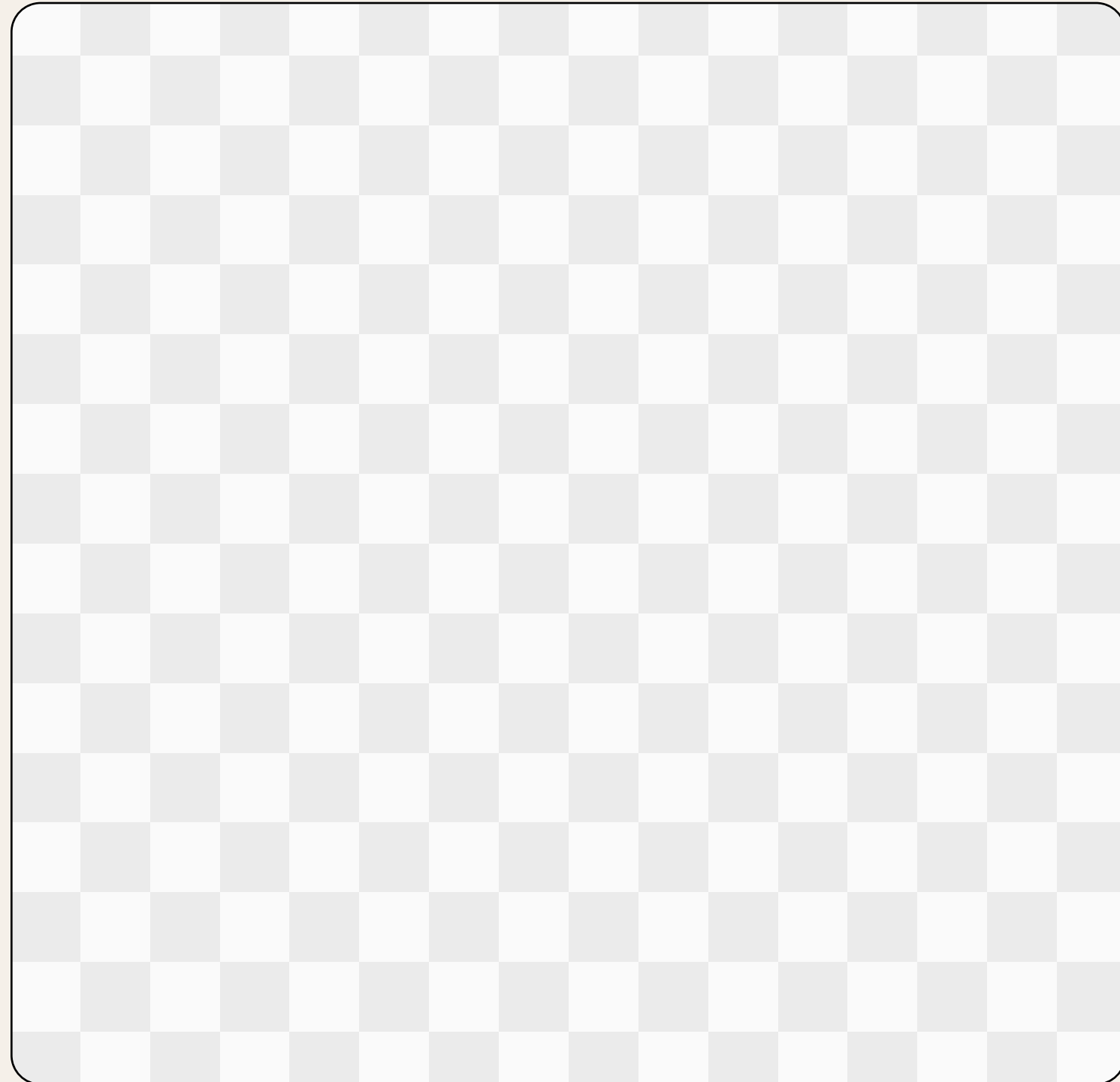
1. Download and complete the provided Learner Persona template.
2. Share your completed persona in the course Padlet if you like.
3. In your post, include a short description of the course you're designing (1–2 sentences).

CREATE A PERSONA

- Be specific and detailed, but realistic
- Base your persona on research or experience, not assumptions
- Focus on characteristics relevant to your course topic
- Include both strengths and challenges
- Consider diverse learning needs and contexts

APPLY INSIGHTS

- Use your persona to evaluate potential course design decisions
- Regularly reference the persona during the design process
- Consider creating multiple personas to represent diverse learners
- Revise your persona(s) as you learn more about your actual learners



GOALS / MOTIVATIONS

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PREFERRED CONTENT FORMATS

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Location:

Education:

Family:

Interests: