



Differentiated Instruction in Today's Classroom:

Promoting Equity in Education

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VISION

At Jackson Public Schools, we prepare scholars to achieve globally, to contribute locally, and to be fulfilled individually.

MISSION

At Jackson Public Schools, we develop scholars through world-class learning experiences to attain an exceptional knowledge base, critical and relevant skill sets, and the necessary dispositions for great success.



Jackson Public School District

CORE VALUES

At Jackson Public Schools, we believe in the importance of:

- EQUITY
- RELATIONSHIPS
- EXCELLENCE
- RELEVANCE
- GROWTH MINDSET
- POSITIVE & RESPECTFUL CULTURE



Excellence for All

JPS Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Jackson Public School District has designed a series of commitments to our scholars and families that will guide our district's decisions and actions. We invite and encourage your feedback and sincere partnership as we work together to transform lives through excellent education.

Commitment #1: A Strong Start

Commitment #2: Innovative Teaching and Learning

Commitment #3: Talented and Empowered Teams

Commitment #4: Joyful Learning Environments

Commitment #5: Culture of Accountability and Excellence



Session Norms



- Silence your cell phones.
- Check and/or reply to emails during the scheduled breaks.
- Be an active participant.
- Do not hesitate to ask questions.



Session Goals

In this session, we will:

- Define differentiated instruction
- Explain the theoretical basis of differentiated instruction
- Explore the variables of curriculum and learning environment
- Discuss misconceptions related to the widely used educational term
- Share research-based instructional strategies for academically inclusive classrooms



Activity: Comparing Classrooms

Differentiated
Classroom



Traditional
Classroom

Working at your table, sort the attributes into the proper categories for Differentiated Classroom and Traditional Classroom.



Activity: Comparing Classrooms

Traditional Classroom

- Assessment is at the end of the learning to see “who got it”
- A single definition of excellence exists
- Whole-class instruction dominates
- A single text prevails
- A single form of assessment is used

Differentiated Classroom

- Assessment is ongoing and diagnostic to understand how to make instruction more responsive to the learner’s needs
- Excellence is defined in large measure by individual growth from a starting point
- Many instructional arrangements are used
- Multiple materials are provided
- Students are assessed in multiple ways



What is Differentiated Instruction?



Differentiated Instruction Defined

Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences. Whether teachers differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction. Teachers should modify their instruction to meet students' varying readiness levels, learning preferences, and interests.

- Carol Ann Tomlinson



How Does the Research Support Differentiated Instruction?

Differentiated Instruction is the result of a synthesis of a number of educational theories and practices.

- Brain research indicates that learning occurs when the learner experiences moderate challenge and relaxed alertness-readiness.
- Psychological research reveals that when interest is tapped, learners are more likely to find learning rewarding and become more autonomous as a learner. Instruction is most effective when the learner experiences neither boredom or anxiety and when the learner is neither over- nor under-challenged.



Key Characteristics of Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiated Instruction is proactive.
- It is more qualitative than quantitative.
- Differentiated Instruction is rooted in assessment.
- It provides multiple approaches to content, process, product and affect/learning environment.
- Differentiated Instruction is student centered.
- It is a blend of whole-class, group, and individual instruction.
- Differentiated Instruction is organic.



DIFFERENTIATION IS

AN IDEA AS OLD AS EFFECTIVE TEACHING	Lessons designed around PATTERNS OF STUDENT NEED	USE OF WHOLE-GROUP, SMALL-GROUP & INDIVIDUAL TASKS BASED ON CONTENT AND STUDENT NEEDS
VALUING and PLANNING for DIVERSITY in HETEROGENEOUS SETTINGS	Necessary for success with standards for a <i>broad range of learners</i>	PURPOSEFUL USE OF FLEXIBLE GROUPING
A STUDENT-FOCUSED WAY OF THINKING ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING	TEACHING UP	AT THE CORE OF QUALITY TEACHING
ASCD LEARNING TEACHING LEADING	Designed to ADDRESS LEARNING & AFFECTIVE NEEDS that <i>all</i> students have	

→ → → Learn more about the book at www.ascd.org/differentiatedclassroom.
Source: Used with permission from Carol Ann Tomlinson, author of *The Differentiated Classroom*, 2nd Edition.

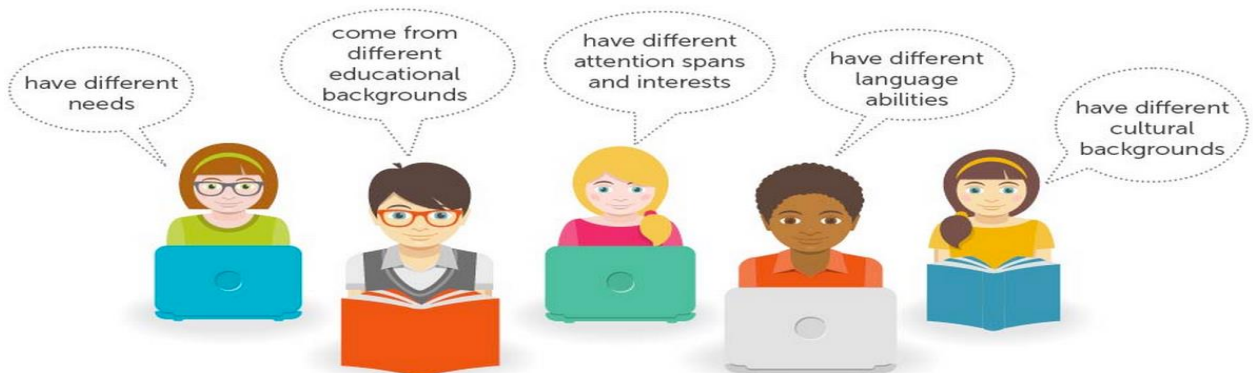
DIFFERENTIATION IS NOT

TRACKING OR GROUPING STUDENTS INTO CLASSES BY "ABILITY"	INCOMPATIBLE with STANDARDS
BLUEBIRDS, BUZZARDS & WOMBATS (ability grouping within a classroom)	DUMBING DOWN teaching for some students
Mostly for students identified as GIFTED	A SET OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION	Something <i>extra</i> on top of good teaching
	MOSTLY FOR STUDENTS WITH IDENTIFIED LEARNING CHALLENGES
	IEPs FOR ALL
ASCD LEARNING TEACHING LEADING	A SYNONYM FOR GROUP WORK

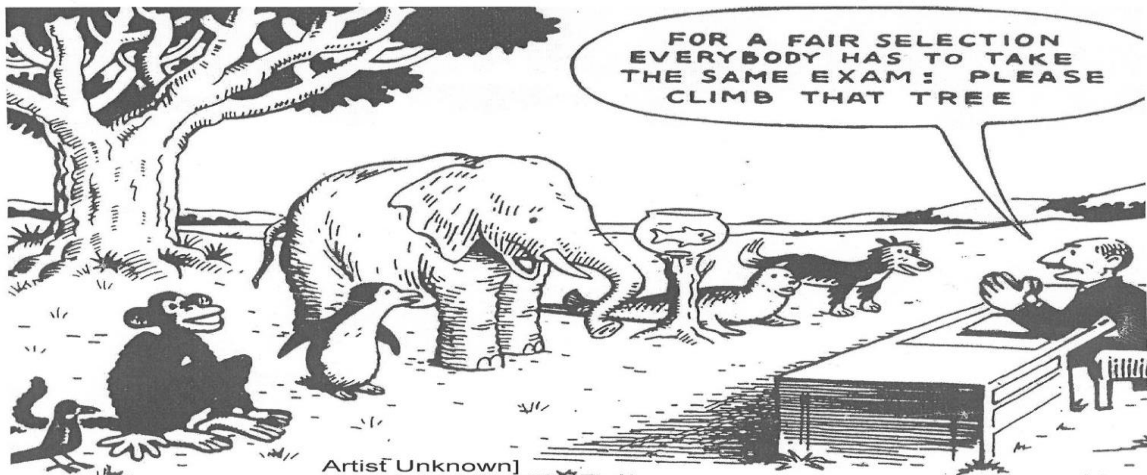
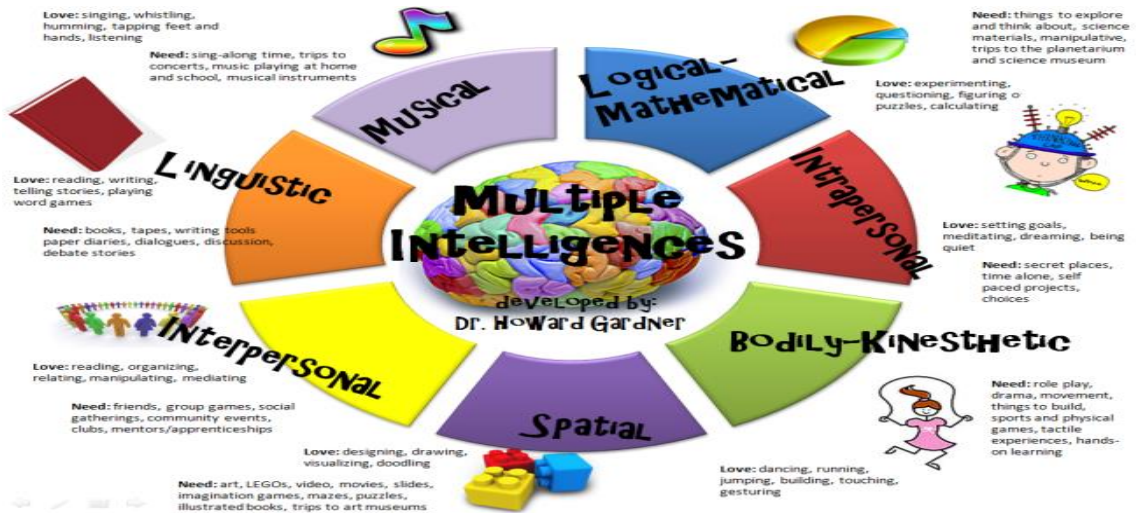
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Why Differentiate?

Classrooms are filled with students who:



Who are the Learners in Your Class?



Principles of Differentiation

- An environment that encourages and supports learning
- Quality curriculum
- Assessment that informs teaching and learning
- Instruction that responds to student variance
- Leads students and manages routines

Source: From *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of all Learners* (2nd ed., p. 20), by Tomlinson, C.A., 2014



Here's the Big Idea!



When learning tasks are consistently too hard, students become anxious and frustrated. When tasks are consistently too easy, boredom results. Both boredom and anxiety inhibit a student's motivation to learn, and eventually impact achievement.



How to Differentiate Instruction



Turn and Talk

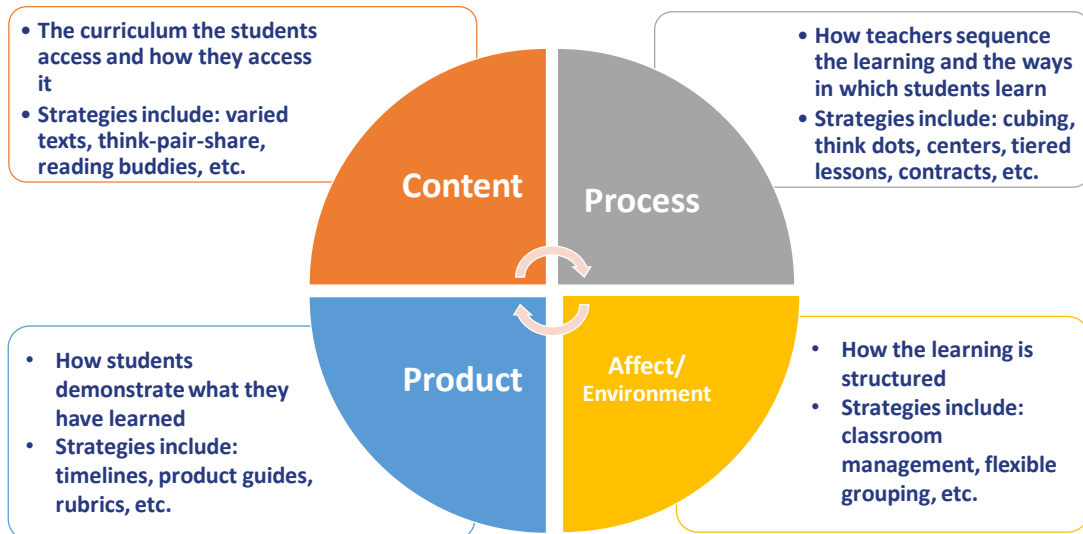


Locate a shoulder partner and discuss the following:

- How do you ensure that all learners access the curriculum in their preferred learning style?
- What grouping techniques do you utilize?
- How often do students practice skills in student-led centers?
- How do you leverage students' strengths?
- What role does technology play in your instructional approach?
- What steps do you take to plan a tiered activity?



Teachers Can Differentiate Through:



Teachers Can Differentiate According to the Student's...

READINESS

A student's proximity to specified learning goals

Strategies:

- Tiered activities
- Tiered products
- Compacting
- Learning contracts
- Alternative tasks/assessments

INTERESTS

Passions, affinities, kinships that motivate learning

Strategies

- Interest groups
- Interest centers
- Enrichment clusters
- Group investigations
- Choice boards
- Multiple Intelligence options

LEARNING PROFILE

Preferred approaches to learning

Strategies

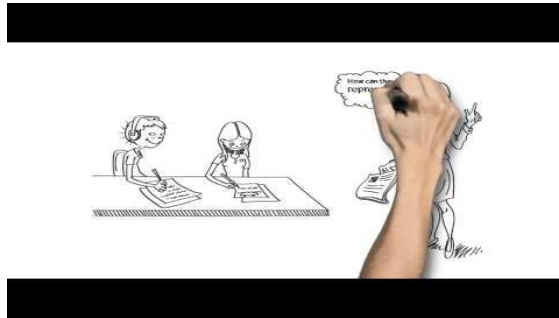
- Multi-ability cooperative tasks
- Multiple Intelligence options
- Triarchic options
- 4-MAT

Source: From *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of all Learners* (2nd ed., p. 20), by Tomlinson, C.A., 2014



Video

Let's see what Differentiated Instruction means for you and your scholars...



<https://youtu.be/vrmgquUplo8>



Activity: Differentiation in Action



Locate the scenario of traditional instruction on the table. Working in groups, create a differentiated activity. Be prepared to share.



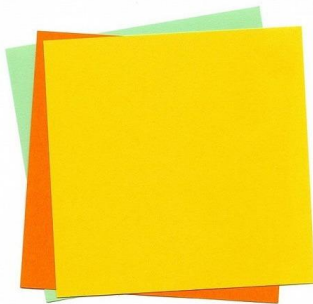
LOOK-FORS in a Differentiated Classroom



- Learning experiences are based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile.
- Assessment of student needs is ongoing, and tasks are adjusted based on assessment data.
- All students participate in respectful work.
- The teacher is primarily a coordinator of time, space, and activities rather than primarily a provider of group information.
- Students work in a variety of group configurations.
- Flexible grouping is evident.
- Time use is flexible in response to student needs.
- The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to help target instruction to student needs.
- Clearly established criteria are used to help support student success.
- Student strengths are emphasized.



Exit Ticket



- On a yellow sticky note, jot down differentiation strategies you have tried.
- On an orange sticky note, share your challenges to differentiating instruction.
- On a green sticky note, write any questions you have about differentiation.
- Place your sticky notes on the anchor chart in the appropriate columns



References

- www.ascd.org/differentiatedclassroom
- Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of mind: the theory of multiple intelligences.
- <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/what-differentiated-instruction>
- Tomlinson, C.A. (2001). How to differentiate in mixed ability classrooms.
- Tomlinson, C.A., (2014). The differentiated classroom: responding to the needs of all learners.



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