



# GCU



## Canyon Professional Development



An aerial, black and white photograph of a school campus. The image shows a large school building with a flat roof, a parking lot filled with cars, a track and field area, and a baseball field. In the background, there are residential houses and a city skyline under a cloudy sky. A large, semi-transparent purple circle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

*Developing a Learning Environment  
for All Learners:  
Differentiated  
Instruction in the Classroom*

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- 8 years in the field of special education
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# Session Objectives



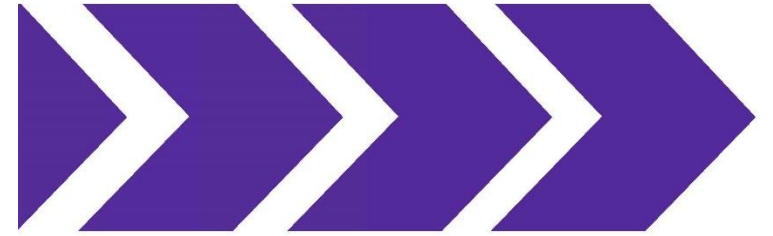
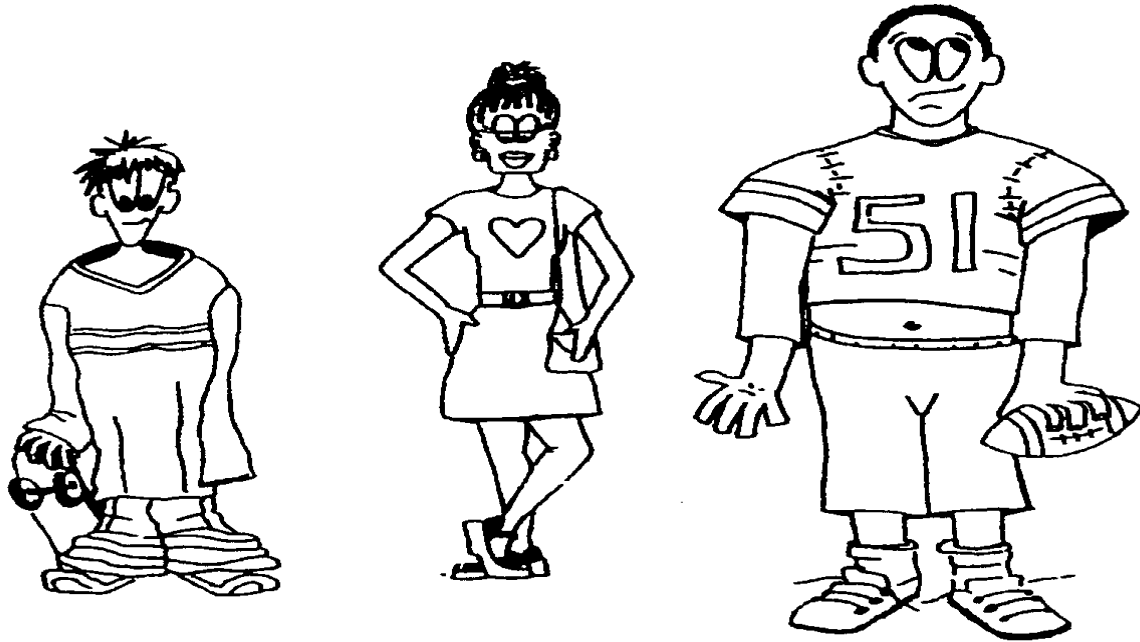
- Define Differentiated Instruction
- Things to Consider
- Principles of Differentiated Instruction
- Examples
- Strategies for Successful Implementation
- Resources



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As With Clothing, So With Lessons: One Size Does Not Fit All.

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- How would you define differentiated instruction?





Review the description of your group's diverse needs.

How would those attributes impact your success in the classroom?

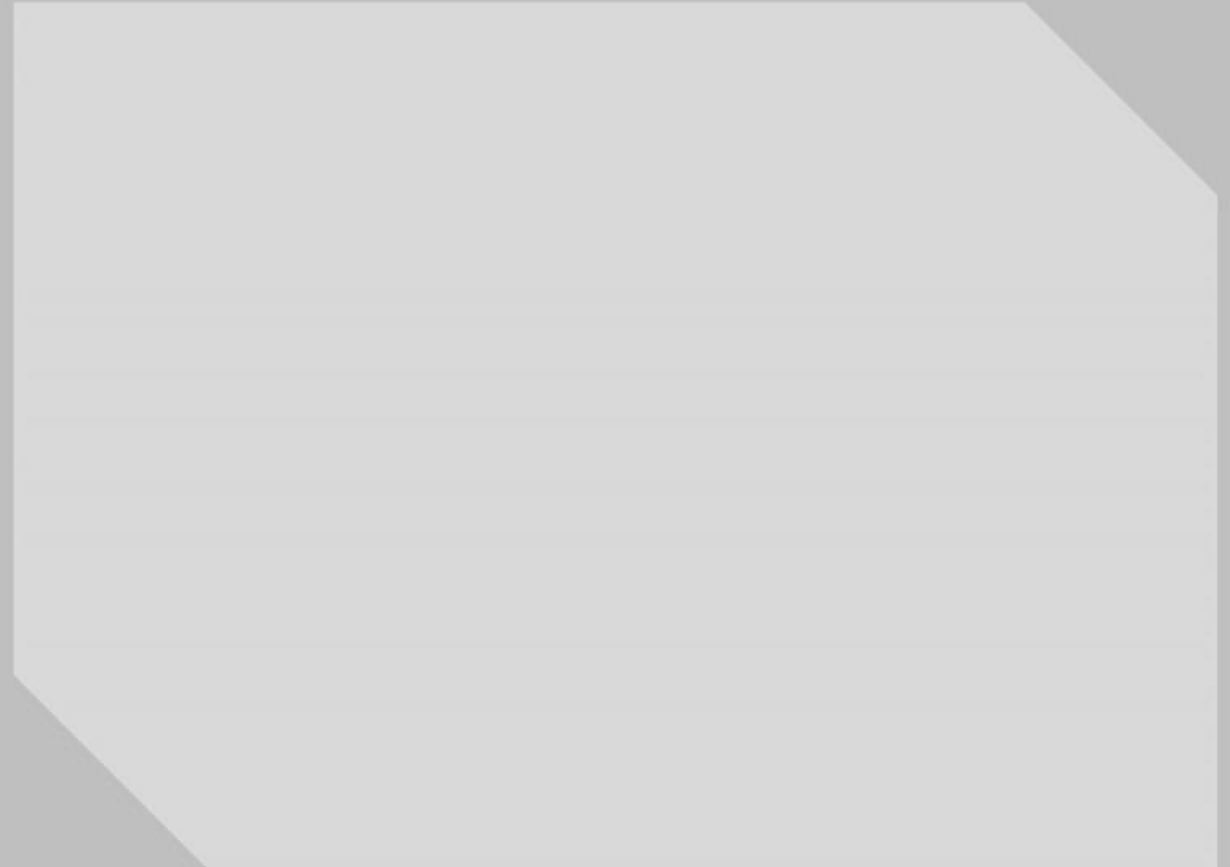
Red – Gifted students

Green – Middle/Average

Purple – Language Barriers

Blue – Students with disabilities

Orange – Behind, but does not have a disability



# Definition of Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiated instruction is an instructional theory that allows teachers to face this challenge by taking diverse student factors into account when planning and delivering instruction.
- Based on this theory, teachers can structure learning environments that address the variety of learning styles, interests, and abilities found within a classroom.

[https://www.ritenour.k12.mo.us/cms/lib/MO01910124/Centricity/Domain/69/Differentiating\\_Instruction.pdf](https://www.ritenour.k12.mo.us/cms/lib/MO01910124/Centricity/Domain/69/Differentiating_Instruction.pdf)





# Definition of Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiation means giving students multiple options for taking in information.



- Differentiating instruction means that you observe and understand the differences and similarities among students and use this information to plan instruction. (Tomlinson, 1999)



# Definition of Differentiated Instruction

## Meeting Students Where They Are



- No two students enter a classroom with identical abilities, experiences, and needs. Learning style, language proficiency, background knowledge, readiness to learn, and other factors can vary widely within a single class group.
- Regardless of their individual differences, however, students are expected to master the same concepts, principles, and skills. Helping all students succeed in their learning is an enormous challenge that requires innovative thinking.





## Principles of Differentiated Instruction:

- ❖ Ongoing, formative assessment
- ❖ Recognition of diverse learners
- ❖ Group Work
- ❖ Problem Solving
- ❖ Choice

(Tomlinson, 1999)

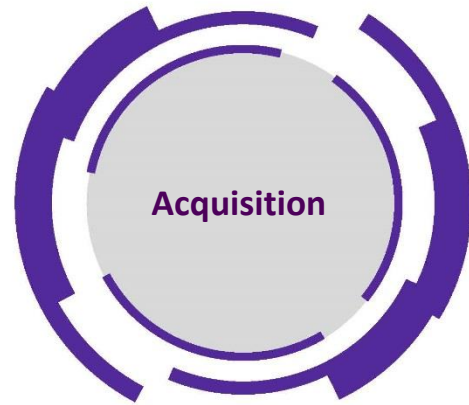
# Things to Consider



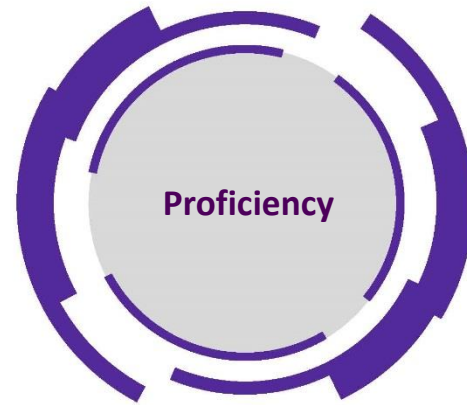
- ❖ Stages of Learning
- ❖ Learning Styles
- ❖ Data-Based Decision Making



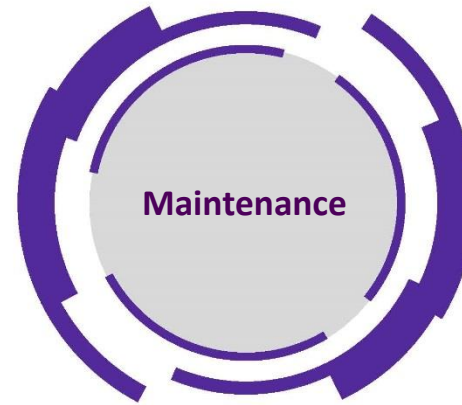
# Stages of Learning



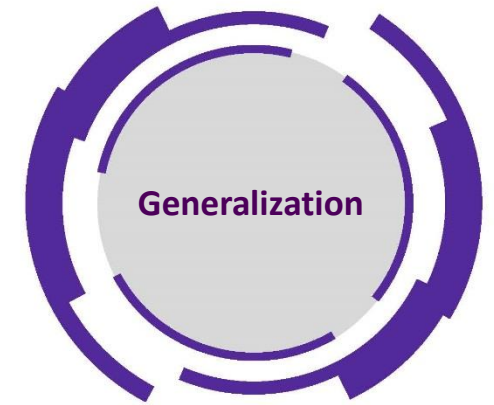
The process of acquiring a skill.



The learner responds accurately but with insufficient speed.



The learner is expected to retain both accuracy and fluency.



The learner is expected to transfer the skill to new situations or setting.



# Learning Styles

## Visual

1. I remember best by writing things down or drawing pictures.
2. I ask for directions to be repeated.
3. I like to read about something rather than hear about it.
4. I am a good speller.
5. I like to learn with posters, videos, and pictures.
6. I am good at reading maps and graphs.
7. When someone is talking, I create pictures in my mind about what they are saying.
8. After school, I like to read books.
9. I like it when my teacher uses lots of pictures when teaching.
10. I can remember something if I picture it in my head.

## Auditory

1. I remember best if I hear something.
2. It is easier for me to listen to a story on tape than to read it.
3. I understand better when I read out loud.
4. I follow spoken directions well.
5. I like to sing or hum to myself.
6. I like to talk to my friends or family.
7. Music helps me learn things better.
8. I can easily remember what people say.
9. It helps when the teacher explains posters or pictures to me.
10. I can remember more about something new if I can talk about it.

## Tactile/Kinesthetic

1. I remember best if I can make something that tells about what I am learning.
2. I would rather play sports than read.
3. I like playing card or board games to learn new things.
4. I like to write letters or write in a journal.
5. I like it when teachers let me practice something with an activity.
6. I like putting together puzzles.
7. If I have to solve a problem, it helps me to move while I think.
8. It is hard for me to sit for a long time.
9. I enjoy dancing or moving to music.
10. I like to act things out to show what I have learned.



# Data-Based Decision Making



- The process of collecting data and using it to make instructional decisions, such as which students are struggling with reading and which tier of instruction would best meet those students' academic needs.



# Data-Based Decision Making



- WHAT THE RESEARCH AND RESOURCES SAY...
- By monitoring the progress of all the students in a classroom, teachers can make instructional changes to improve their students' academic growth, including among those who are struggling with reading. (Fuchs & Fuchs, n.d.)
- By examining an individual student's progress monitoring data, educators can determine whether that student is responding adequately to the instruction he or she is receiving, and make appropriate instructional decisions accordingly. (Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs, & McKnight, 2006)
- A minimum of five data points is required to assess a student's response to instruction. (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2007; Stecker, 2007)
- By collecting progress monitoring data, educators can determine which intervention or types of instruction work best for all students in the class. (Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs, & McKnight, 2006)





# Data-Based Decision Making



- What types of data are you collecting/using to make instructional decisions?



# Data-Based Decision Making



- Benchmark Data
  - Initial
  - Throughout the school year



# Principles of Differentiated Instruction

- ❖ Ongoing, formative assessment
- ❖ Recognition of diverse learners
- ❖ Group Work
- ❖ Problem Solving
- ❖ Choice

• (Tomlinson, 1999)



# Ongoing, formative assessment



- Teachers continually assess to identify students' strengths and areas of need so they can meet students where they are and help them move forward.



# Recognition of diverse learners

**FAIR ISN'T**  
everybody getting the  
same thing.....

**FAIR IS**  
everybody getting  
what they need  
In order to be  
**SUCCESSFUL.**

- The students we teach have diverse levels of expertise and experience with reading, writing, thinking, problem solving, and speaking. Ongoing assessments enable teachers to develop differentiated lessons that meet every students' needs.



# Group Work



- Students collaborate in pairs and small groups whose membership changes as needed. Learning in groups enables students to engage in meaningful discussions and to observe and learn from one another.



# Problem Solving



- The focus in classrooms that differentiate instruction is on issues and concepts rather than “the book” or the chapter. This encourages all students to explore big ideas and expand their understanding of key concepts.



# Choice

EMPOWER  
students by  
giving them  
CHOICES.  
LEARNING ADVENTURE

- Teachers offer students choice in their reading and writing experiences and in the tasks and projects they complete. By negotiating with students, teachers can create motivating assignments that meet students' diverse needs and varied interests.





# Differentiated Instruction

## Quantity

Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or complete.

*For example:*  
Reduce the number of social studies terms a learner must learn at any one time. Add more activities or worksheets.

## Time

Adapt the time allotted and allowed for learning, task completion, or testing.

*For example:*  
Individualize a timeline for completing a task; pace learning differently (increase or decrease) for some learners.

## Level of Support

Increase the amount of personal assistance to keep the student on task or to reinforce or prompt use of specific skills. Enhance adult-student relationships; use physical space and environmental structure.

*For example:*  
Assign peer buddies, teaching assistants, peer tutors, or cross age tutors.

## Input

Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner.

*For example:*  
Use different visual aids, enlarge text, plan more concrete examples, provide hands-on activities, place students in cooperative groups, pre-teach key concepts or terms before the lesson

## Difficulty

Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work.

*For example:*  
Allow the use of a calculator to figure math problems; simplify task directions; change rules to accommodate learner needs.

## Output

Adapt how the student can respond to instruction.

*For example:*  
Instead of answering questions in writing, allow a verbal response, use a communication book for some students, allow students to show knowledge with hands on materials.

## Participation

Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task.

*For example:*  
In geography, have a student hold the globe, while others point out locations. Ask the student to lead a group. Have the student turn the pages while you are reading to the group.

## Alternate Goals


Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials. When routinely utilized, this is only for students with moderate to severe disabilities.

*For example:*  
In social studies, expect a student to be able to locate the colors of the states on a map, while other students learn to locate each state and name each capital.

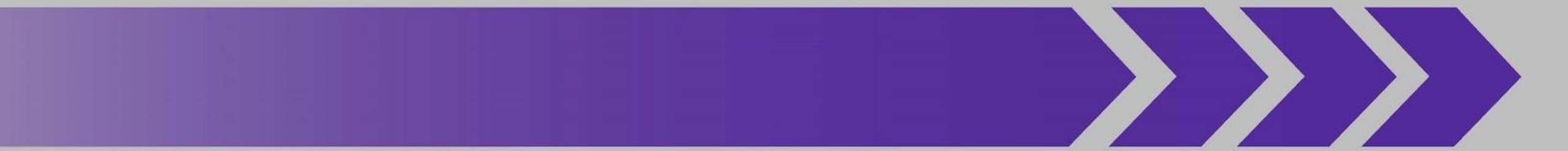
## Substitute Curriculum

Provide different instruction and materials to meet a learner's individual goals. When routinely utilized, this is only for students with moderate to severe disabilities.


*For example:*  
During a language test a student is learning toileting skills with an aide.

- 
- Matthew is a student with a visual impairment who has difficulty reading student text. His teacher photocopied the required pages of the text in larger print so Matthew can read them. What adaptation is this teacher utilizing to ensure Matthew's success?



- 
- James, is a student with Downs Syndrome. He is in a full inclusion class. Each student researched a state and created a project. James picked a state and the teacher provided him with a blank book with pages labeled for him to record the state flag, state bird, geography, etc... What adaptation did this teacher make for James?




- 
- Zach has ADHD and has serious problems staying focused and on-task. He will begin a task, but very quickly will lose his focus and become disruptive. When his behavior is pointed out to him, he can redirect his attention and continue with the task. What adaptations can his teacher make so that Zach can be successful in mastering the standard?



# Differentiated Instruction

<p><b>Quantity</b></p>	<p><b>Time</b></p>	<p><b>Level of Support</b></p>
<p><b>Input</b></p>	<p><b>Difficulty</b></p>	<p><b>Output</b></p>
<p><b>Participation</b></p>	<p><b>Alternate Goals</b></p>	<p><b>Substitute Curriculum</b></p>

An aerial, black and white photograph of a city, likely Phoenix, Arizona, showing a dense urban area with residential neighborhoods, commercial buildings, and a large stadium with a running track. A large, semi-transparent purple circle is overlaid in the center of the image. Inside this circle, the text "Examples Of Differentiation" is written in a white, sans-serif font, centered vertically and horizontally.

Examples  
Of  
Differentiation

# Tiered Assignments



- Tiered assignments are designed to instruct students on essential skills that are provided at different levels of complexity, abstractness, and open-endedness. The curricular content and objective(s) are the same, but the process and/or product are varied according to the student's level of readiness.
- Students with moderate writing skills are asked to write a four-paragraph persuasive essay in which they provide a thesis statement and use their own ideas to support it. Students with more advanced skills are asked to research the topic in more depth and use substantive arguments from their research to support their thesis.



# Compacting

- Compacting is the process of adjusting instruction to account for prior student mastery of learning objectives. Compacting involves a three-step process: (1) assess the student to determine his/her level of knowledge on the material to be studied and determine what he/she still needs to master; (2) create plans for what the student needs to know, and excuse the student from studying what he/she already knows; and (3) create plans for freed-up time to be spent in enriched or accelerated study.
- Rather than receiving additional direct instruction on writing a five-sentence paragraph, a student who already has that skill is asked to apply it to a variety of topics and is given instruction on writing a five-paragraph essay.





# Interest Centers or Interest Groups

- Interest centers (usually used with younger students) and interest groups (usually used with older students) are set up so that learning experiences are directed toward a specific learner interest. Allowing students to choose a topic can be motivating to them.
- Interest Centers - Centers can focus on specific writing skills, such as steps in the writing process, and provide examples and activities that center on a theme of interest, such as sports or movies.

Interest Groups — When writing persuasive essays, students can work in pairs on topics of interest.



# Flexible Grouping

- Students work as part of many different groups depending on the task and/or content. Sometimes students are placed in groups based on readiness, other times they are placed based on interest and/or learning profile. Groups can either be assigned by the teacher or chosen by the students. Students can be assigned purposefully to a group or assigned randomly. This strategy allows students to work with a wide variety of peers and keeps them from being labeled as advanced or struggling.
- The teacher may assign groups based on readiness for direct instruction on the writing process, and allow students to choose their own groups and methods for acquiring background information on a writing topic (i.e., watching a video or reading an article).



# Learning Contracts



- Learning contracts begin with an agreement between the teacher and the student. The teacher specifies the necessary skills expected to be learned by the student and the required components of the assignment, while the student identifies methods for completing the tasks. This strategy (1) allows students to work at an appropriate pace; (2) can target learning styles; and (3) helps students work independently, learn planning skills, and eliminate unnecessary skill practice.
- A student indicates an interest in writing a newspaper article. The student, with support from the teacher, specifies the process by which he or she will research newspaper writing and decides how to present the final product. For example, the article could be published in the school newspaper or shared during a writer's workshop.



# Choice Boards



- Choice boards are organizers that contain a variety of activities. Students can choose one or several activities to complete as they learn a skill or develop a product. Choice boards can be organized so that students are required to choose options that focus on several different skills.
- Students in an elementary school class are given a choice board that contains a list of possible poetry writing activities based on the following learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile. Examples of activities include, cutting out magazine letters to create poems, using a word processor, or dictating a poem into a tape recorder and transcribing it. Students must complete two activities from the board and must choose these activities from two different learning styles.



# Learning Stations



- Each station should use a unique method of teaching a skill or concept related to your lesson.

- Watching a video
- Creating artwork
- Reading an article
- Completing puzzles
- Listening to you teach



# Interview Students

- Asking questions about learning and studying styles can help you pinpoint the kinds of content that will meet your class's needs.

- Their favorite types of lessons
- Their favorite in-class activities
- Which projects they're most proud of
- Which kinds of exercises help them remember key lesson points



## Share Your Own Strengths and Weaknesses



- To familiarize students with the idea of differentiated learning, you may find it beneficial to **explain that not everyone builds skills and processes information the same way.**
- Talking about your own strengths and weaknesses is one way of doing this.



# Journaling



- A journal can be a tool for students to reflect on the lessons you've taught and activities you've run, **helping them process new information.**
  - Summarizing key points they've learned
  - Attempting to answer or make sense of lingering questions
  - Explaining how they can use the lessons in real-life scenarios
  - Illustrating new concepts, which can be especially helpful for data-focused math lessons





# Reflection and Goal-Setting Exercises



- Identify skills to improve and topics to explore.



# Assign Open-Ended Projects

- Give students a list of projects to find one that lets them effectively demonstrate their knowledge.

- **By both enticing and challenging students, this approach encourages them to:**
  - Work and learn at their own paces
  - Engage actively with content they must understand
  - Demonstrate their knowledge as effectively as possible



## Encourage Students to Propose Ideas for Their Projects

- A student must show how the product will meet academic standards, and be open to your revisions. If the pitch doesn't meet your standards, tell the student to refine the idea until it does. If it doesn't by a predetermined date, assign one of your set options.



## Analyze Your Differentiated Instruction Strategy on a Regular Basis

- **Analyze your strategy by reflecting on:**

- **Content** — Are you using diverse materials and teaching methods in class?
- **Processes** — Are you providing solo, small-group and large-group activities that best allow different learners to absorb your content?
- **Products** — Are you letting and helping students demonstrate their understanding of content in a variety of ways on tests, projects and assignments?





## • Suggest Resources for Differentiated Instruction

- *Developing Students' Multiple Intelligences* by Kristen Nicholson-Nelson
- *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* by Carol Ann Tomlinson
- *Differentiation in Action* by Judith Dodge
- *How the Brain Learns* by David A. Sousa
- *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms* by Carol Ann Tomlinson
- *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* by Howard Gardner
  
- <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/what-differentiated-instruction/>





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