

# DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION TO MEET LEARNER NEEDS

## WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION?

*Differentiated instruction* is addressing the diversity of learners' needs, interests, abilities, and experiences when planning and delivering instruction.

<http://neuhaus.org/videos/differentiating-instruction-meet-learner-needs/>

## HOW TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION?

Differentiated instruction begins with an inventory of learner profiles. Learn how to determine Learner Profiles in <http://neuhaus.org/videos/determining-learner-profiles-inform-instruction/>. Next, the teacher thinks about:

- What will I teach to whom?
- How will I teach it to them?
- How will I know it is effective?
- What will I do next?

## WHAT WILL I TEACH TO WHOM?

The concept, skill, or strategy to be taught matches a learning standard and/or learner needs.

## HOW WILL I TEACH IT TO THEM?

The teacher engages learners in four different kinds of work:

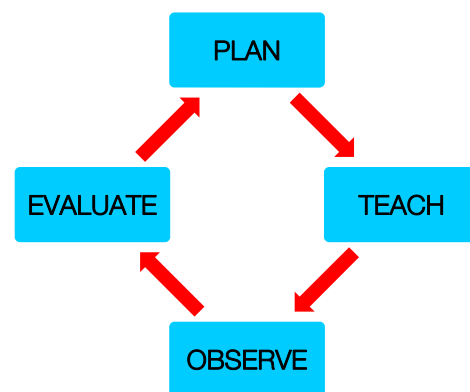
- **Focused** – whole group; this work *instructs*
- **Guided** – small groups; this work *clarifies* new learning by addressing learner needs
- **Collaborative** – pairs or triads; this work *reinforces* new learning
- **Independent** – learner at his or her own pace; this work *demonstrates* understanding

## HOW WILL YOU KNOW THEY KNOW IT?

The teacher evaluates independent work in terms of the instructional goal and learner needs. A sample rubric for evaluating learners' independent work is attached.

## WHAT WILL I DO NEXT?

Differentiated instruction is a continuous cycle: plan, teach, observe, evaluate performance, and plan again to meet the needs of each learner.



## THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. **Simplify planning** – teach the same lesson topic for focused whole group work and differentiate it in a variety of ways for guided, collaborative, and independent work
2. **Simplify preparation** – extend the complexity or specificity of guided small group work using the same or similar basic materials in different ways
3. **Simplify delivery** – plan ahead, prepare materials and supplies, and stack materials according to when they will be used
4. **Simplify meeting learning needs** – focus more planning time on guided small groups and on planning more challenge for learners who work well independently
5. **Simplify your teaching** – make sure all instructions are explicit and complete

Checking for Understanding
<u>Turn and Talk</u> Learners turn and talk to a partner to answer a question or confirm understanding.
<u>Thumbs-up/Thumbs-down</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In answer to a question, learners display a thumbs-up to confirm understanding.</li><li>• Learners display a thumbs-down to signal confusion.</li></ul>
<u>One-Minute Writes</u> Learners write for one minute to answer a question or summarize their understanding and then share their understanding with a partner.

## REFLECTIVE THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

Most learners enjoy interaction and learn from each other. Encourage reflective thought and discussion among learners.

### THINK-PAIR-SHARE (KAGAN, 1989)

- Learners think about a question for a minute.
- Pairs of learners share their answers.
- Learners share their answers with the group.

## SUMMARY FRAMES

Summary frames help learners organize their thoughts and engage in discussions:

### COMPARE

- Both the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ are/have \_\_\_\_\_.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ are similar because \_\_\_\_\_.

### CONTRAST

- The \_\_\_\_\_ is/has \_\_\_\_\_ but the \_\_\_\_\_ is/has \_\_\_\_\_.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ are different because \_\_\_\_\_.

DESCRIBE

- The \_\_\_\_\_ (who or what) is \_\_\_\_\_, and it/he/she is \_\_\_\_\_.

PREDICT

- The \_I think \_\_\_\_\_ (this will happen).

*And most importantly, encourage and respect each learner for his or her unique contribution to the class, and have fun doing it!*

RUBRIC EXAMPLE

FORMAL LETTER-WRITING EVALUATION RUBRIC			
Requirements	3	2	1
<b>Parts of the letter</b>	All parts are present	Missing one part	Missing more than one part
<b>Inflection: -ed</b>	Suffix -ed is used correctly	Suffix -ed is used correctly in some instances	Suffix -ed is not used correctly in most instances
<b>Grammatical Structure</b>	Sentence follow correct grammatical structure	One to two sentences need rewriting	More than two sentences need rewriting
<b>Use of Formal Language</b>	Appropriate formal language used	Uses one to two informal words in business letter	Uses more than two informal words in business letter
<b>Spelling: Doubling Rule</b>	Doubling rule is used to spell -ed words correctly	One to two words using doubling rule spelled incorrectly	More than two doubling rule words spelled incorrectly

CONSTRUCTING A RUBRIC

These are some key terms for constructing rubrics that differentiate levels of accomplishment.

KEY TERMS FOR CONSTRUCTING A RUBRIC			
Requirements	3	2	1
<b>Requirement</b>	all, always, no mistakes, complete/whole, continuously	some, frequently, 1 or 2 mistakes, several	missing most, not used, not seen, more than 2 mistakes, none, omitted