

Differentiated Instructional Strategies

Differentiated instruction is used to meet the needs of individual learners, provide them with the appropriate level of challenge, and give them the necessary support for the attainment of learning goals. Research supports being responsive to each learner rather than teaching the same way to all learners. A differentiated classroom provides varied experiences in what students need to learn (content), how students learn (process), and/or how students demonstrate what they have learned (product). Differentiation strategies should be selected pending the curriculum taught and the needs of students.

- Engage students in setting personal learning goals (1)
- Use learning contracts to help students realize they are responsible for their learning (2)
- Assess needs of students by using diagnostic assessments to determine readiness levels in order to match skills appropriately to the students (3)
- Compact content by eliminating teaching or student practice if content or a skill has been previously mastered (4)
- Give an interest inventory to determine topics that motivate or interest students (5)
- Work with the student to plan a method of investigating the topic of interest and decide upon the outcome or the independent study (6)
- Determine the learning style preferences of individual students (7)
- Use multiple learning styles to present content or skills, to help students learn, and to allow students to show what they have learned (8)
- Provide opportunities for students to build upon their preferred learning styles (9)
- Provide precise guidelines for working in groups which are taught prior to the group work and are consistently reinforced (10)
- Support group efforts by modeling and practicing how to mediate conflicts within a group (11) C3 Teach a variety of time management skills so students manage time effectively (12)
- Ensure that all students find a way to contribute to the success of working as a group (13)
- Reinforce skills of note taking, summarizing, research strategies, and collaboration (14)
- Prompt high-level thinking and responses for all students (15)
- Vary the types and/or complexity of questions asked (16)
- Use wait time before allowing students to respond to a question (17)
- Encourage multiple responses for a question (18)
- Encourage students to build upon the responses given by themselves and other students (19)
- Allow students think time or an opportunity to talk to a partner prior to responding or writing down a response (20)

- Ask students to rank the list of responses, based on effectiveness or other criteria (21)**
- Use technology as a viable means to support classroom experiences and to address multiple learning needs (22)**
- Provide opportunities for student choice in enrichment or accelerated study of a topic (23)**
- Design meaningful activities for students to work on independently at the beginning of class or when students have completed assignments (24)**
- Encourage and allow students to undertake projects that interest them as part of regular classroom work (25)**
- Provide independent research projects for students who are ready for that level of challenge (26)**
- Use timelines to help students remain on target and prevent procrastination (27)**
- Have a student keep a log or journal to document the process of a project (28)**
- Vary assessment strategies for students to demonstrate what they have learned, to guide instructional decisions, and to focus on learning goals of the students (29)**
- Involve students in self-assessment and reflective thinking about their growth in learning (30)**
- Have students evaluate if they are performing their personal best (31)**
- Establish and communicate clear criteria for success to the students in advance of any project, product, or learning experience (e.g., rubric, checklist) (32)**
- Use multiple types of student products that reflect a range of learning styles from which students choose to present their learning (e.g., skit, book response, debate, panel discussion, advertisement, song) (33)**
- Vary the classroom areas available for learning (e.g., quiet area, lots of space) (34)**
- Provide flexibility in grouping and regrouping students (35)**
- Provide a variety of group formats for learning depending on how the student works best (e.g., individually, with a partner, in a small group, or in a large group) (36)**
- Engage students in varied opportunities of working with other students who are similar and dissimilar in interests, styles of learning, and readiness levels (37)**
- Allow students to work in groups assigned by the teacher, groups chosen at random, as well as groups chosen by the students (38)**
- Use a variety of resource materials that reflect different levels of complexity and different learning modalities (39)**
- Provide students with choices in the different ways to access the material to be learned (e.g., learning station, computer) (40)**
- Promote content integration where students connect prior knowledge to newly learned information (41)**