



## Differentiated Instruction

Video Note Taking Guide

Mark Walker



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## Course Objectives



Participants will gain awareness level knowledge about:

- the various concepts and features of differentiated instruction
- the levels of curriculum differentiation
- the key characteristics of scaffolding
- the guidelines for successfully differentiating instruction in the classroom.

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## WHY ARE WE HERE?



*"If there is anything we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves."*

Carl Jung

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### Two Prerequisites to Bringing about Change:



- Knowing the technical requirements = practical, logical, and real
  - based on knowledge.
- Understanding the attitude and motivational demands of bringing it about = personal, psychological and emotional/reactive
  - based on insight.

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### Secret



If there is any one secret to an enduring great teacher, it is the ability to manage *continuity* and *change* at the same time – a discipline that must be consciously practiced.

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### The Timing of Change is Critical



A Teacher's success in bringing about change in their students will happen only if the timing is right.

- The wrong decision at the wrong time = disaster.
- The wrong decision at the right time = mistake.
- The right decision at the wrong time = rejection.
- The right decision at the right time = success.

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**Differentiate** 

**Differentiate**  
**(Verb) To:**  
 “mark as different, a distinctive feature or attribute or characteristic; become different during development; develop in a way most suited to the environment; become distinct and acquire a different character.”

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**Differentiation: Differentiated Instruction** 

Differentiation is a teaching concept in which the classroom teacher plans for the diverse needs of students. The teacher must consider such differences as the students’:

- Learning styles, skill levels, and rates
- Learning difficulties
- Language proficiency
- Background experiences and knowledge
- Interests
- Motivation
- Ability to attend
- Social and emotional development
- Various intelligences
- Levels of abstraction
- Physical needs

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**Research** 

**Brain Research confirms what experienced teachers have always known:**

- No two children are alike.
- No two children learn in the same identical way.
- An enriched environment for one student is not necessarily enriched for another.
- In the classroom, children should be taught to think for themselves.

Marian Diamond: Professor of Neuroanatomy at Berkeley  
[http://www.ascd.org/cms/objects/ascdframeset/index.cfm?publication=http://www.ascd.org/publications/ed\\_lead/199811/darcangelo.htm](http://www.ascd.org/cms/objects/ascdframeset/index.cfm?publication=http://www.ascd.org/publications/ed_lead/199811/darcangelo.htm)

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**Research** 

*Brain research suggests three broad and interrelated principles that point clearly to the need for differentiated classrooms, that is, classrooms responsive to students:*

- Varying language readiness levels,
- Varying interests, and
- Varying learning profiles.

<http://www.ascd.org/pd/idea/diffinstr/tomlinson.html>  
*How the Brain Learns, Carol Ann Tomlinson and M. Layne Kalbfleisch*

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**Language Readiness Factors:** 

← **Typical**                      **Atypical** →

- Attention
- Audio
- Cognitive
- Cultural
- Developmental
- ESL/Second Language
- Fine Motor
- Gross Motor
- Kinesthetic/Tactile
- Language
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Phonics
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
  - Speech
- Social/Behavioral
- Visual

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**How Many Different Learning Levels/Factors Are Involved In Teaching? In Your Teaching? How Do You Know?** 

**Instruction involves a proper understanding of:**

- Development
  - Assessment
    - Aptitude/Learning Styles
      - Curriculum

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## Differentiated Instruction is Based on the Following Beliefs



- Students differ in their learning profiles
- Classrooms in which students are active learners, decision makers and problem solvers are more natural and effective than those in which students are served a “one-size-fits-all” curriculum and treated as passive recipients of information.
- “Covering information” takes a backseat to making meaning out of important ideas.

From [How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms](#) by Carol Ann Tomlinson

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## Key Characteristic of a Differentiated Classroom



An obvious feature of the differentiated classroom is that it is “*student centered.*” Shifting the emphasis from the “teacher and instruction” focus to the “student and learning” focus means redefining the role of the teacher.

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## The Key



The Key to a differentiated classroom is that all students are regularly offered CHOICES and students are matched with tasks *compatible* with their *individual learner profiles*.

Curriculum should be differentiated in three areas:

1. Content:  
Multiple option for taking in information
2. Process:  
Multiple options for making sense of the ideas
3. Product:  
Multiple options for expressing what they know

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## Three Principles



- Learning environments must feel *emotionally safe* for learning to take place.
- To learn, students must experience *appropriate levels* of challenge.
- Each brain needs to *make its own meaning* of ideas and skills.

<http://www.ascd.org/pdi/demo/diffinstr/tomlinson.html>  
How the Brain Learns, Carol Ann Tomlinson and M. Layne Kalbfleisch

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## In a Differentiated Program/Classroom:



Not Differentiated

Fully Differentiated

Reactive  
Fixed  
Closed

Proactive  
Fluid  
Open

- Use of computers/Programs
  - Assessment & Diagnosis
    - Adjusting Questions
    - Learning Contracts
    - Flexible Grouping
      - Tiered Activities
      - Anchor Activities
      - Independent Study
    - Differentiated Centers
  - Curriculum Compacting
- Use of the Internet/Learning centers
  - Graduated Task- Product-Rubrics
- Use of Multiple Texts and Supplementary Materials

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Instructional and Management Practices, Jody Smith  
[www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/iel](http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/iel)

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## Four Ways to differentiate Instruction:



1. Differentiating the content/topic
2. Differentiating the process/activities
3. Differentiating the product
4. Differentiating by manipulating the environment or through accommodating individual learning styles

[www.enhancelearning.ca](http://www.enhancelearning.ca)

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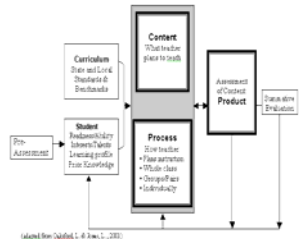
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## Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction



Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction  
Learning Cycle and Decision Factors Used in



Adapted from Ouellet, L. & Jones, L., 2003.

Learning Cycle and Decision Factors Used in Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction

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## In a Differentiated Program/Classroom:



- Differences are studied as a basis of planning.
- Student differences shape curriculum.
- Pre-assessment is typical and frequent.
- Multiple learning materials are available.
- Multiple options for students are offered.
- Students make sense of information.
- Emphasis on concepts and connections is made.
- There is variable pacing.
- Students aid in setting goals and standards.
- Varied grading criteria are used.
- Excellence as an individual effort is honored.

From *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms* by Carol Ann Tomlinson

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## Scaffolding: Key Characteristics



The key characteristics for effective scaffolding (providing the supports needed for a student to succeed in work that is slightly beyond his/her comfort zone) include:

- Provide clear directions
- Clarify the purpose for instruction by asking essential questions
- Keep students on task
- Provide clear expectations for quality
- Point students to worthy sources for help and information
- Reduce uncertainty, surprise and disappointment to maximize learning efficiency
- Deliver efficiency by requiring hard work, but not wasted work

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### Strategies and Tools:



As a teacher, you can use numerous strategies and tools to differentiate instruction. Regardless of the specific combination of techniques you might choose, there are several key characteristics or elements that form the foundation of effective differentiated learning environments:

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### Strategies and Tools (cont.)



- Teachers and students accept and respect one another's similarities and differences.
- Assessment is an ongoing diagnostic activity that guides instruction.
- Learning tasks are planned and adjusted based on assessment data.
- All students participate in respectful work – work that is challenging, meaningful, interesting, and engaging.

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### Strategies and Tools (cont.)



- The teacher is primarily a coordinator of time, space, and activities rather than a provider of information. The aim is to help students become self-reliant learners.
- Students and teachers collaborate in setting goals.
- Students work in a variety of group configurations, as well as independently. Flexible grouping is evident.
- Time is used flexibly in the sense that pacing is varied based on students' needs.

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### Strategies and Tools (cont.)



- Students often have choices about topics they wish to study, ways they want to work, and how they want to demonstrate their learning.
- The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to help target instruction to student needs.
- Students are assessed in multiple ways, and each student's progress is measured, at least in part, from where that student begins.

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### Guidelines that make Differentiation Possible for Teachers to Attain:



- **Clarify key concepts and generalizations** to ensure that all learners gain powerful understandings that serve as the foundation for the future learning.
- **Use assessment as a teaching tool to extend versus merely measure instruction.** Assessment should occur before, during, and following the instructional episode.

<http://www.cast.org/pas/index.cfm?i=2676>

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### Guidelines, cont.



- **Emphasize critical and creative thinking** as a goal in lesson design. The tasks, activities, and procedures for students should require that students understand and apply meaning.
- **Engaging all learners is essential.**
- **Provide a balance between teacher-assigned and student-selected tasks.** Teachers should assure that students have choices in their learning.

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