Managing the Differentiated Classroom

ASCD
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How you doin’?

Tribes, Jeanne Gibbs
We Can Differentiate!
As a result of this study, participants will:

KNOW -
  key components of a DI classroom
  implementation strategies

UNDERSTAND THAT:
  In a DI classroom, students and teachers collaborate to build and maintain a learning community, which fosters success.
  Flexible use of time, materials and grouping are hallmarks of a DI classroom that allow each learner to maximize growth.
  Differentiation becomes a “way of being” in the classroom in order to best meet the needs of all students.

BE ABLE TO DO:
  Use and/or adapt the strategies presented.
  Involve students in creating a DI classroom.
  Set goals to implement DI at your own pace.
A “Typical” Day in a D.I. Class

• predictable, not rigid, schedule
• purposeful blocks of time
• procedures defined and in place
• students assuming responsibility
• voice and choice for students
• daily/weekly goal setting and reflection
• regular community building
  (for fun and problem solving)
3 CRITICAL ELEMENTS in a DI Classroom

Flexible use of:
1) Time
2) Materials
3) Grouping
Setting up a DI Classroom

**Collaborative Front Loading**

- Procedures and routines
- Classroom agreements/cues
- Class meetings
- Home Base seating
- Anchor Activities
- Standing Partners
- Conflict Resolution
- Goal Setting
Best Practices for Standards-based Instruction

Best Practice, New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools

Student Voice and Involvement
Balanced with teacher-chosen and teacher-directed activities:

✓ Students often select inquiry topics, books, writing topics, etc.
✓ Students maintain their own records, set goals, and self-assess
✓ Some themes / inquiries are built from students’ own questions
✓ Students assume responsibility and take roles in decision making
Activating the DESIRE to Learn
Bob Sullo, ASCD 2007

William Glasser’s (1998) Choice Theory
“... suggests that we are born with specific needs that we are
genetically instructed to satisfy. In addition to the physical need
for survival, we have four basic psychological needs that must be
satisfied...”

» Belonging or connecting
» Power or competence
» Freedom
» Fun
The Need to Belong

• The need for belonging or connecting motivates us to develop relationships and cooperate with others.
• Building a spirit of connection and community is essential to creating a need-satisfying school characterized by high achievement.

Bob Sullo, Activating the Desire to Learn
Happy Gram

To:

From:
Our Job

• Structure an environment where students can satisfy their needs responsibly.
• Create lessons that allow students to CONNECT, ACHIEVE, CHOOSE AND HAVE FUN in a safe environment.
• Know your students - Know your class
  - what is the strength of their needs?
  - conduct frequent class meetings
  - provide instruction that is compatible with the personality of your learners.

Bob Sullo Activating the Desire to Learn, ASCD 2007
Marian Diamond, author of *Enriching Heredity* and *Magic Trees of the Mind*, has been studying the impact of enriched environments on the brain at the University of California at Berkeley. She says:

“So our environment, including the classroom environment, is not a neutral place. We educators are either growing dendrites or letting them wither and die. Enriched environments unmistakably influence the brain’s growth and learning. The trick is to determine what constitutes an enriched environment.”
Setting Up Classrooms to Make Kids Feel Good About Learning

According to Diamond, an enriched environment for children:
- Includes a steady source of positive support;
- Stimulates all the senses (not all at once);
- Has an atmosphere free of undue pressure and stress but suffused with a degree of pleasurable intensity;
- Presents a series of novel challenges that are neither too easy nor too difficult for the child at his or her stage of development;
- Allows social interaction for a significant percentage of activities;
- Promotes the development of a broad range of skills and interests: mental, physical, aesthetic, social and emotional;
- Gives the child an opportunity to choose many of his or her efforts and to modify them;
- Provides an enjoyable atmosphere that promotes exploration and the fun of learning;
- Allows the child to be an active participant rather than a passive observer.

“As with any successful relationship, a classroom community must be nurtured each and every day.”

Smith & Rex, 2002
Get to Know Your Kids!

- Learning profile
- Interest
- Readiness
- Share stories
- Lunch Bunch
- Celebrations - birthdays, events, accomplishments
On the first evening after school starts, sit down without any notes and make a list of all the students in your class, or in one or more of your sections. When you have to push to remember, draw a line. When you can’t remember any more, draw another line. Ask yourself why some students are “invisible.”

Do this again a week later. Think about what you have done that has brought kids above the line. See who still falls below a line. Ask yourself why.
Learner Profile Card

Gender: Stripe

Auditory, Visual, Kinesthetic Modality
Analytical, Creative, Practical

Multiple Intelligence Preference
Gardner

Array Inventory

Student’s Interests

Nanci Smith, Scottsdale, AZ
Qualities of Effective Teachers
James Stronge, ASCD. (2002)

Effective teachers:

- work with students as opposed to doing things to or for them
- allow students to participate in decision making
- pay attention to what students have to say
- demonstrate a sense of fun and a willingness to play or participate
- productive interactions involve giving students responsibility and respect; also treating secondary students as adults when appropriate
Mrs. Mutner liked to go over a few of her rules on the first day of class.
“It’s the teachers who are excited about what they’re doing that kids flock to, and it’s in schools filled with such teachers that kids are successful. You’ve got to make sure that FUN is part of the kids’ day-to-day experience. On one of Ted Sizer’s visits to The Met, our kids told him that they could never be absent because they were afraid they might miss something. Part of this is building celebration into the culture.”

The Big Picture, 2004. Dennis Littkey
The Need for FUN

• Each time we learn something new we are having fun, another universal human motivator. It is our playfulness and our sense of discovery that allows us to learn as much as we do.

• Glasser (1990) has stated that “fun is the genetic payoff for learning”.

  Bob Sullo, Activating the Desire to Learn, 2007
When teachers and kids are having fun, learning is deeper and stronger, and students maintain the keen desire to learn that characterizes early childhood learning centers. Skilled teachers create joyful classrooms that support the highest-quality academic achievement.

Bob Sullo, Activating the Desire to Learn, 2007
ALL FEEL INCLUDED

- Learning Zones
- Alternatives to hand raising
- Resident Experts / Sub days
- Mystery Messages
- Inside / Outside Circles
- Diversity is celebrated
- Messages of appreciation and thanks
- NO PUT-DOWNS!
CELEBRATIONS!

- High Fives
- Study groups
- Paper slip rewards
- Salt & sugar ratio labs
- Birthdays
- Gift of words
- Games / Energizers
- Laugh and have fun!!!!

  Judy Rex and Nanci Smith, 2002
“If kids are going to be respectful, they must feel respected. And respecting them means allowing them to make decisions about the things that affect them and, most of all, believing in their potential.”

“The amount of respect and trust that exists in a school’s culture is directly related to the amount of responsibility students are given over their environment, the equipment they use, and their learning.”

The Big Picture, 2004. Dennis Littkey
STUDENT VOICE and CHOICE are **KEYS** to successful DIFFERENTIATION

Create a student driven classroom by involving students in important decisions about learning, processes and procedures!
SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

“… A wise teacher understands that virtually everything in the classroom will work better if it “belongs to us” rather than “belonging to me”.

Positive environment
Mutually agreed-on guidelines
Clear routines
+ Plentiful support for success

Student pride and ownership

Carol Tomlinson, Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom
EXAMPLES OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

• Care of the classroom
• Class meetings: communication with respect and positive intent
• Evaluation checklists - used to review and evaluate peer interactions
• Involve students in scheduling decisions
• Engage students in assessing their own progress: checklists of skills, portfolios, exhibitions, etc.
• Help students set their own academic goals based on what they should know, understand and be able to do

Carol Tomlinson, *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom*
***Classroom Procedures***
Collaboratively Developed/Practiced

- Classroom agreements/rules
- Cues/rubrics to assess learning & behavior
- Problem solving/conflict management
- Room/seating arrangement
- Home base seating
- Moving into groups
- Materials distribution and turn in
- Anchor activities

**THE TIME SPENT PAYS OFF IN DAILY DIVIDENDS!**
Classroom Agreements

• We agree to give mutual RESPECT: to ourselves and others; to property, space and feelings.
• We agree to promote SAFETY: both physical and emotional safety is important to us; to be encouraging and helpful; no put-downs; to be tolerant and accepting of our differences.
• We agree to be ACTIVE AND EXCELLENT LEARNERS: positive attitudes; responsible, excellent role models, attentive listeners; always giving my personal best effort!

Judy Rex and Nanci Smith, 2000
As a tool for ongoing assessment, classroom cues are developed cooperatively to describe student behavior and learning activities. Both students and teachers use these cues for reflective and evaluative purposes. The students decide on the terms and a list of descriptors for 3 or 4 levels of effort and become quite proficient at self-assessment.

For example:
- **X FACTOR (EXTRAORDINARY)** represents efforts that go “above and beyond” expectations.
- **EXCELLENT** reflects personal best effort with a positive attitude.
- **GETTING BY** indicates better effort or a more positive attitude could be exhibited.
- **YOU’RE OUT** means that behavior, effort, or quality of work is not acceptable.

Judy Rex, 2000
I will not act primitive in class.
I will not act primitive in class.
I will not act primitive in class.
I will not act primitive in class.
When we manage students

...the more we “manage” students’ behavior and try to make them do what we say, the more difficult it is for them to become morally sophisticated people who think for themselves and care about others.

Alfie Kohn
Have an “On Their Side” Approach

- Align yourself with your student
- Discuss the non-negotiables
- Ask him/her for suggestions for solving the problem
- Determine the plan and consequences
- Monitor and adjust
- Celebrate success!
- Use “community circles” or round table discussions for solving group issues
- Have an “issue” box or bulletin board for communication

Bob Strachota, On Their Side
STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Students are involved in daily/weekly evaluation of their progress.

No mysteries - this is what you are doing well, this is where you need practice and support.

*Maximum growth* and *individual success* are non-negotiable facts of life!
Fairness is not everyone getting the same thing.

It is everyone getting what they need.
### Learning Zones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Too Easy</th>
<th>Just Right!</th>
<th>Too Hard</th>
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WHAT ZONE AM I IN?

Too Easy
I get it right away…
I already know how…
This is a cinch…
I’m sure to get an A…
I’m coasting…
I feel relaxed…
I’m bored…
No big effort needed…

On Target
I know some things…
I have to think…
I have to work…
I have to persist…
I hit some walls…
I’m on my toes…
I have to re-group…
I fell challenged…

Too Hard
I don’t know where to start…
I can’t figure it out…
I’m spinning my wheels…
I’m missing key skills…
I feel frustrated…
I feel angry…
This makes no sense…
My effort doesn’t pay off…

Effort leads to success…

THIS is the place to be!  THIS is the ACHIEVEMENT ZONE!
Does this sound familiar?

MR. DOYLE! MR. DOYLE!

YES, ZOE? ANOTHER QUESTION?

DID WE LEARN ANYTHING THIS MORNING? BECAUSE IF WE DID, I THINK I FORGOT IT ALREADY.

ASPIRIN...

WOW! MY MOM GETS HEADACHES EVERY AFTERNOON. TOO MAYBE YOU'RE RELATED!
Evaluation Checklist

Useful for both teacher and students in evaluating how effectively they are interacting with each other.

When You Work With Peers . . .

How do you rate in:

1. Making a positive contribution to the work of the group?
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!

2. Encouraging the contributions of others?
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!

3. Listening to the ideas of others with respect?
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!
### Evaluation Checklist

How do you rate in:

4. **Contributing to high quality?**
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!

5. **Looking for a better way (creativity)?**
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!

6. **Solving problems?**
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!

7. **Following directions?**
   - 1: Not very good
   - 2: Okay
   - 3: The Best!
## Evaluation Checklist

Useful for both teacher and students in evaluating how effectively they are interacting with each other.

How do you rate in:

8. Disagreeing agreeably?

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>Not very good</td>
<td>Okay</td>
<td>The Best!</td>
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9. Clarifying (goals, roles, directions, expectations, etc.)?

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10. Using time efficiently and effectively?

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Carol Tomlinson, *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom*, p.123
I can't imagine mastering the skills involved here without a clearer understanding of who's going to be impressed.
GOAL SETTING
Challenging – Measurable – Attainable

• Goal Bank of academic and personal quality goals is determined by students, teachers, and parents
• Daily/Weekly goals
  Usually no more than 2-3
  Individual and/or whole class
  Maintained by student and teacher
  Self-reflection on a regular basis
  Shared with parents
• Work/Study/Project Logs and Goals
  Individual or group objectives for short in class work period.
  Process journal entries indicate accomplishments, difficulties, and/or questions.
Goal Setting for ________________
First Semester 2004-2005

Look through the lists we brainstormed and circle 2 or 3 areas that you feel you most need to work on this semester.

LEARNING:
Reading  Writing  Spelling  Math
Technology  Science  Handwriting  Social Studies
Listening  Speaking  Research  Home Learning

PERSONAL QUALITIES:
Organization  Listening  Effort  Attitude
Leadership  Respect  Focus  Personal Best
Participation  Cooperation  On Task  Responsibility
Self-control  Empathy  Creative  Productive
Motivation  Curious  Helpful  Appreciation

Use your goal bank to list specific things you can do to improve in each area you circled. Be sure that they are challenging and achievable.

Based on Jeanne Gibbs, Tribes
Look through the lists we brainstormed and circle 2 or 3 areas that you feel you most need to work on this semester.

**LEARNING IN ALGEBRA:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Notation</th>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Demonstration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Graphing</td>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Calculations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math Properties</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Homework</td>
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**PERSONAL QUALITIES:**

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Use your goal bank to list specific things you can do to improve in each area you circled. Be sure that they are challenging and achievable.

Based on Jeanne Gibbs, *Tribes*
Learning goal: Reading comprehension
I can make predictions before and while I am reading.
I can retell the story to a partner or someone at home.
I will make connections while I am reading.
I will use highlighter tape to identify the main ideas.

Personal Quality goal: Organization
I will put my papers in my binder.
I will bring all necessary supplies to class.
I will keep a calendar of assignments, tests and due dates.
I will use a “To Do” list at school and at home.
Goal Bank for ______________
First Semester 2004-2005

Learning goal: Justification
I can explain why each of my steps when solving a problem is correct and valid.
I can justify why my answer is reasonable.
I can use multiple representations to justify my process.

Personal Quality goal: Organization
I will put my papers in my folders or study skills notebook.
I will write down home learning and get my supplies before I leave school.
I will clean my cubby on Mondays and Fridays.
I will use a “To Do” list at school and at home.
HOW ARE YOU DOING?

Learning goal: ________________________________________________

Personal quality goal: _________________________________________

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Learning goal</th>
<th>Classroom Cue:</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
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______________’s To Do List for ____________________________

_______ Read the white board or have someone help me read it.
_______ Check in my home learning.
_______ Do my morning work.
_______ Sit close and listen during learning time.
_______ Ask questions when I don’t understand something.
_______ Get busy right away and finish my work.
_______ Put things away in my notebook or folder.
_______ Write down my home learning and get my materials to do it.
_______ Do my home learning and show my parents.
_______ Bring my home learning back to school.

My goal for tomorrow is ____________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Signed __________________________ Date _______________________
Parent signature _______________________________________________
Goal Setting for ____________________

Date ______________

My goal(s) for today is (are) ____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Here’s what I will do to accomplish my goal(s):

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Here’s how I did today:
Name _____________________  Date ________________

Today I am going to work on ____________________________________________

This is what I will do to improve: ______________________________________

This is what I accomplished: __________________________________________

My effort was:

You're Out  Getting By  Extraordinary  X Factor!!

because ____________________________________________________________
WEEKLY EVALUATION – How did you do?

Name ______________________________     Week of  _________________

Home Learning:                                  M      T      W      TH      F
Turned in on time

Quality

Class Agreements:
Respect
Did you respect rules,
property, & feelings?

Appreciation
Did you notice others?
No put downs.

X Factor Learner
Did you give a personal
best effort?
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

• Students accept ownership for behavior and responsibility for consequences.
• Clear expectations are developed collaboratively – IN ADVANCE!
• Behavior plans or contracts – What are you doing?
• “I” messages, peer mediation
• Conferences, community circles, sticky notes
• Have an “On Their Side” attitude. Find out why the behavior occurred.
3 STRIKES "YOU'RE OUT" Plan

Strike 1
What did you do?

What are the rules?

What will you do now?

Strike 2
What did you do?

What are the rules?

What will you do now?

Strike 3
What did you do?

What are the rules?

What will you do now?
Personal Responsibility Plan for ________________________________

Date ________________

What were you doing?

What are the rules/agreements?

What happens when you don’t follow the rules?

Is this what you want to have happen?

Do you want to work on solving your problem?

What is your plan? How will you practice?

Teacher’s part of the plan so you have an opportunity to practice:

Student signature

Teacher signature

Parent signature

Effective teachers understand that the learning environment they create in their classrooms may be the single most important make-or-break element in helping students become the best they can be. This is a matter of the heart.

Tomlinson, 2003, p. 5
COMMUNICATION
The Home/School Connection

Beginning the Year:

• Parent Orientation - ailment cards, learning profiles and surveys

• Parent Handbook: D.I. philosophy and rationale, procedures, flexible schedule, office hours, goal setting, conflict resolution, wish lists, etc.

• Parent letter to teacher regarding their student as a learner.
COMMUNICATION
The Home/School Connection

Throughout the Year:

• Take Home notebooks /calendars
• Home Learning /Homework
• “What in Our World is Going On?” bulletin board
• Classroom web page/homework hotline
• Key Words/classroom news
COMMUNICATION
The Home/School Connection

Shared learning and assessment:

• Projects - signed contracts
• Celebrations of Learning
• Anecdotal records
• Goal setting/rubrics
• Portfolios. Student-led conferences
Ask Yourself About Your Classroom Community…

- How do we begin and end our time together?

- In what ways do students assume ownership of the classroom?

- How do we understand and celebrate our similarities? Our differences?
Ask Yourself About Your Classroom Community...

- How do I know that each student feels included in the community? What action do I take to ensure this?

- How do I interact with students? How do students interact with each other?

- What are indicators that the classroom is a “safe” environment physically, emotionally and intellectually?
Ask Yourself About Your Classroom Community...

- How are problems solved and conflicts resolved?
- What happens when student behavior reflects a breakdown in the community?
- How do I give affirmation to students’ strengths? How do I respond to deficits?
Ask Yourself About Your Classroom Community…

- How are expectations communicated and evaluated?
- How do students assume responsibility for their own learning and behavior?
- How do I promote teamwork?
Ask Yourself About Your Classroom Community…

- In what ways do students take risks with their learning?

- Is this a place where my students and I collaborate to work hard and have fun together?
Key Principles of a Differentiated Classroom

- **Flexibility** is the hallmark of a differentiated classroom.

Organized Flexibility
Procedures defined and practiced!

- Anchor activities
- White board messages
- Stackers, wall-folders, etc. by class
- Signals
- Name sticks
- Question chips
- Expert “Yellow Pages”
- Task Cards, tape recorders, etc.

- Classroom supplies and arrangement
- Turn in folders
- Exit Cards
- Calendars
- Flexible seating: practice changing groupings and home base
- Where to get notes, RICE (Recall, Imagine, Check, Expert of the Day), 3 before Me

Judy Rex and Nanci Smith, 2002
Anchor Activities
A task to which a student automatically moves when an assigned task is finished,

TRAITS OF EFFECTIVE ANCHOR ACTIVITIES:

Important—related to key knowledge, understanding, and skill,
Interesting—appeals to student curiosity, interest, learning preference,
Allow Choice—students can select from a range of options
Clear Routines and Expectations—students know what they are to do, how to do it, how to keep records, etc.
Seldom Graded—teachers should examine the work as they move around the room. Students may turn in work for feedback. Students may get a grade for working effectively, but seldom for the work itself. The motivation is interest and/or improved achievement.
Anchor Activities
What Do I Do If I Finish Early?

• Read – comics, letters, books, encyclopedia, poetry, etc.
• Write – a letter, poetry in your Writer’s Notebook, a story, a comic, etc.
• Practice your cursive or calligraphy
• Keyboarding
• Help someone else
• Create math story problems or puzzles
• Work on independent study of your choice

• Play a math or language game
• Find out how to say your spelling words in another language
• Practice ACT / SAT cards
• Solve a challenge puzzle with write it up
• Practice anything!
• Get a jump on homework
• Use your imagination and creativity to challenge yourself!
Beginning Anchor Activities…

• Teach one key anchor activity to the whole class very carefully. Later, it can serve as a point of departure for other anchors.
• Explain the rationale. Let students know you intend the activities to be helpful and/or interesting to them. Help them understand why it’s important for them to work productively.
• Make sure directions are clear and accessible, materials readily available, and working conditions support success.
• Think about starting with one or two anchor options and expanding the options as students become proficient with the first ones.
• Monitor student effectiveness with anchors and analyze the way they are working with your students.
• Encourage your students to propose anchor options.
• Remember that anchor activities need to stem from and be part of building a positive community of learners.
**DIFFERENTIATION** is the lens you look through when using any materials, programs or instructional strategies.

If you have high quality curriculum and materials, then it isn’t so much **WHAT** you use as it is **HOW** you use it to meet the varying readiness, interests and learning profiles of your students.

Textbooks and other district provided materials can be used as additional resources to get us where we need to go.

**TEACH KIDS NOT PROGRAMS!**
Handling Materials

- Assign jobs to different students (materials handler, table captain)
- As a teacher ask yourself, “Is this something I have to do myself, or can the students learn to do it?”
- Remember that you have to teach children how to become responsible for their own things.
- Have set procedures of where to hand in papers and how to pass out papers.
The Paper Trail…

• Color-coded work folders or stackers
• Portfolios – goals, work in progress, tests, finished pieces, reflections, quarterly assessment portfolios
• Baskets for each curricular area or class period
• Filing Cabinet, rolling files, crates
• Clipboard with index cards for each student
• Record keeping calendars for students / class
• Student reflections and self-evaluations

Key to these organizational patterns is that the children have access to their own work and know how to file and/or find what they need to accomplish a task.
Homework or . . .
Home Learning (H.L.)

✓ Learning doesn’t stop when students walk out the door!
✓ Should be an extension of what was undertaken in class
✓ Home learning is for practice and transfer
✓ Readiness, interest, and/or learning profile may be used to differentiate H.L. activities
✓ Another option – choose a learning activity from a collaboratively developed list, record.
✓ Students assume responsibility for checking & turning in. Teacher assumes responsibility for feedback regarding quality & understanding.
✓ Students become life-long learners while taking responsibility for their own learning.
✓ Celebrate success!
Name _________________________ Date ___________

CHOOSE AND RECORD

For Home Learning I chose to ______________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Here are some things I noticed, practiced and/or learned:

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Homework Checkers

This is a process for checking multiple homework assignments simultaneously in a classroom so that the teacher feels free to differentiate homework as necessary to address particular student learning needs.

1. The teacher checks to make sure each student has completed assigned homework
3. Students who have not completed the assignment work in a designated area of the room to complete the assignment (teacher floats to provide guidance/feedback).
5. Students who completed the HW work in groups of 4 to check all 4 sets for agreement/disagreement
7. All students mark each answer for agreement/disagreement as well as explanations of why an answer is wrong and how to correct.
5. Students sign indicating agreement, staple set of 4 together, turn in
6. Teacher spot checks, “grades” one per set.
Flexible use of:

3) Grouping
   - learning profile/interest
   - tiered readiness groups
   - think/pair/share
   - jigsaw
   - partnerships
What’s the point of differentiating in these different ways?

- Readiness
- Interest
- Learning Profile

Growth
Motivation
Efficiency
Working Conditions for Alternate Activities

If you are working on alternate activities while others in the class are busy with more teacher-directed activities, you are expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Stay on task at all times with the alternate activities you have chosen.
2. Don’t talk to the teacher while he or she is teaching.
3. When you need help, and the teacher is busy, ask someone else who is also working on the alternative activities.
4. If no one else can help you, continue to try the activity until the teacher is available, or move on to another activity until the teacher is free.
5. Use “6-inch voices” when talking to each other about the alternative activities. (These are voices that can be heard no more than 6 inches away.)
6. Never brag about your opportunities to work on the alternative activities.
7. If you must go in and out of the room, do so soundlessly.
8. If you are going to work in another location, stay on task there, and follow the directions of the adult in charge.
9. Don’t bother anyone else.
10. Don’t call attention to yourself.

I agree to the conditions described above, and know that if I don’t follow them, I may lose the opportunity to continue with the alternate activities and may have to rejoin the class for teacher-directed instruction.

___________________     __________________
Teacher’s signature            Student’s signature        (Winebrenner ’97)
Giving Directions

• If the whole class is doing the same activity then give the directions to the whole group.
• Do not give multiple task directions to the whole class.
• For small group work, tape directions so students can listen to them repeatedly
• Use task cards to give directions to small groups.
• A general rule is that once the teacher has given directions the students can’t interrupt while he/she is working with a small group
  – Ask Me Visors
  – Question Chips
Sample Reading Arrangements in a Differentiated Primary Classroom

Guided Reading (small group)
- Text matched to current readiness

Self-Selected Reading (individual)
- Books selected from choices at independent reading level

Literature Circles (small group)
- Focused discussion of shared books of interest to students

One-on-One w/the Teacher (individual)
- For assessment and adult attention

Browsing Boxes (individual)
- By readiness or interest

Research Club (small group)
- Student choice to find out more about topics of interest

Shared Reading (pairs/individuals)

Reading Aloud (whole class)
- Teacher to student language board unison

Work Board Reading (small group)
- Heterogeneous Varied Tasks Rotate

- Teacher to student language board unison

Adapted from Guided Reading by Pinnell and Fountas
Pre-Assigned “Standing” Groups

- 10 O’Clock Groups
  - Interest/Strength-Pairs

- 11 O’Clock Groups
  - Mixed Readiness Quads

- 1 O’Clock Groups
  - Interest/Strength-Based Quads

- 2 O’Clock Groups
  - Student - Selected Triads
Pre-Assigned “Standing” Groups

Text Teams
- Similar Readiness
- Reading Pairs

Synthesis Squads
- Sets of 4 with visual, performance, writing, metaphorical (etc.) preferences

Teacher Talkers
- Groups of 5-7 with similar learning needs with whom the teacher will meet to extend and support growth

Think Tanks
- Mixed Readiness
- Writing Generator
- Groups of 4 or 5

Dip Sticks
- Groups of six with varied profiles used by teacher to do “dip stick”, cross-section checks of progress, understanding

Peer Partners
- Student selected
- Groups 3 or 4
Assigning Groups

- Clothes pins with student’s names to assign them to a particular task
- Color code children to certain groups (a transparency with students names in color works well)
- Table tents with numbers correlated to group lists on the overhead
- Cubing allows you to assign groups by interest or readiness level
10 Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom

1. Have a strong rationale for differentiating instruction based on student readiness, interest and learning profile.
2. Begin differentiating at a pace that is comfortable for you.
3. Time differentiated activities for student success.
4. Use an “anchor activity” to free you up to focus your attention on your students.
5. Create and deliver instructions carefully.
10 Strategies for Managing a Differentiated Classroom

6. Have a “home base” for students.
7. Be sure students have a plan for getting help when you are busy with another student or group.
8. Give your students as much responsibility for their learning as possible.
9. Engage your students in talking about classroom procedures and group processes.
10. Use flexible grouping.
Students in a differentiated classroom do not need to work the system . . . . . because the system works for them!
SUGGESTED RESOURCES


SUGGESTED RESOURCES


