

APPENDIX B.1

Ways To Differentiate Instruction

1.) Content

Fundamental lesson content should cover the standards of learning set by the school district or state educational standards. Some students in a class may be completely unfamiliar with the concepts in a lesson, some students may have partial mastery, and some students may already be familiar with the content before the lesson begins.

Examples of differentiating activities:

- * Match vocabulary words to definitions.
- * Read a passage of text and answer related questions.
- * Think of a situation that happened to a character in the story and a different outcome.
- * Differentiate fact from opinion in the story.
- * Identify an author's position and provide evidence to support this viewpoint.
- * Create a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the lesson.

2.) Process

Each student has a preferred learning style, and successful differentiation includes delivering the material to each style: visual, auditory and kinesthetic and through words. Not all students require the same amount of support from the teacher, and students could choose to work in pairs, small groups or individually. While some students may benefit from one-on-one interaction with a teacher or classroom aide, others may be able to progress by themselves. Teachers can enhance student learning by offering support based on individual needs.

Examples of differentiating the process:

- * Provide textbooks for visual and word learners.
- * Allow auditory learners to listen to audio books.
- * Give kinesthetic learners the opportunity to complete an interactive assignment outline.

3.) Product

The product is what the student creates at the end of the lesson to demonstrate the mastery of the content. This can be in the form of tests, projects, reports or other activities. Teachers may assign students to complete activities that show mastery of an educational concept in a way the student prefers, based on learning style.

Examples of differentiating the end product:

- * Read and write learners write a book report.
- * Visual learners create a graphic organizer of the story.
- * Auditory learners give an oral report.
- * Kinesthetic learners build a diorama illustrating the story.

4.) Learning environment

The conditions for optimal learning include both physical and psychological elements. A flexible classroom layout is key, incorporating various types of furniture and arrangements to support both individual and group work. Psychologically speaking, teachers should use classroom management techniques that support a safe and supportive learning environment.

Examples of differentiating the environment:

- * Break some students into reading groups to discuss the assignment.
- * Allow students to read individually if preferred.
- * Research shows differentiated instruction is effective for high-ability students as well as students with mild to severe disabilities.
- * When students are given more options on how they can learn material, they take on more responsibility for their own learning.
- * Students appear to be more engaged in learning, and there are reportedly fewer discipline problems in classrooms where teachers provide differentiated lessons.
- * Differentiated instruction requires more work during lesson planning, and many teachers struggle to find the extra time in their schedule.
- * The learning curve can be steep and some schools lack professional development resources.