Strategies to Differentiate Instruction in Writing and Reading
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Questions
- What is differentiated instruction?
- Why do we need to differentiate instruction for learners of English?
- How can we assess for differentiation?
  - How can we differentiate
    - Language
    - Content
    - Process
    - Product
- What will we apply from this session?

1. What is Differentiation?
   Treating students with different strengths and needs differently
   - Recognizing students’ differences
   - Providing respectful, appropriately challenging tasks
   - Offering multilevel input and requests for output Using flexible grouping
   - Carrying out ongoing assessment and adjustment

2. Why Differentiate?
   Differentiation Needs for All Learners
   Principles of learning for all show need for differentiation:
   - Intelligence is variable
   - Approaches to learning (styles, modes, interests) are variable
   - The brain seeks meaningful patterns
   - Teens learn best with appropriate challenge
   Increased sources of differentiation for English language learners
   - Language background
   - English proficiency
   - Educational background
   - Literacy level
   - Cultural background

3. How can we assess for differentiation?
   - Moving From thinking of learners as falling along the Bell Curve To the belief that all children can learn
   ELL Standards for Differentiation
   - Standards-Based Instruction Can Support Differentiation
     1. Lessons are designed to begin with what students know and are able to do.
        - Different outcomes are expected for each student
     2. Example: CA ELD standards scaffold learning for students.
        - Each proficiency level requires a different student product
   What Do Standards Do?
Standards are performance expectations and not instructional activities. They do not dictate the method of instruction or the order of presentation. The standards for each proficiency level represent the exit point for that level.

4. How can we Differentiate?
- Language – both input and expected output
- Content offered to students
- Language and literacy levels, cognitive challenge...
- Process of using content (including levels of scaffolding)
- Products expected from students


Demonstration: How to Make a Book
- Compare the two sets of instructions.
- What helps to make input comprehensible?

Adapt and adjust oral language
- Check comprehension and adjust teaching: paying attention to what is learned, not only what is taught.
- Use gestures and realia
- Articulate Clearly
- Use more direct sentence structure
- Adjust vocabulary; highlight key ideas and vocabulary
- Face students
- Use gestures and realia.
- Increase wait-time
- Stop to paraphrase often; Explain or rephrase idioms and figurative language

Differentiating Questioning with QAR

The Camel Dances by Arnold Lobel

The Camel had her heart set on becoming a ballet dancer. "To make every movement a thing of grace and beauty," said the Camel. That is my one and only desire." Again and again she practiced her pirouettes, her relevés, and her arabesques. She repeated the five basic positions a hundred times each day. She worked for long months under the hot desert sun. Her feet were blistered, and her body ached with fatigue, but not once did she think of stopping.

At last the camel said, "Now I am a dancer." She announced a recital and danced before an invited group of camel friends and critics. When her dance was over, she made a deep bow.

There was no applause.

"I must tell you frankly," said a member of the audience, "as a critic and a spokesman for this group, that you are lumpy and humpy. You are baggy and bumpy. You are, like the rest of us, simply a camel. You are not and never will be a ballet dancer!"
Chuckling and laughing, the audience moved away across the sand. "How very wrong they are!" said the Camel. "I have worked hard. There can be no doubt that I am a splendid dancer. I will dance and dance just for myself."

That is what she did. It gave her many years of pleasure.

**Question-Answer Relationships (QAR)**

- "Right there" questions: What was the camel’s goal?
- "Think and Search" questions: What steps did the camel take to reach her goal?
- "Author and You" questions: Why did the author choose to tell this story with animals instead of people?
- "On your Own" questions: Is it more important to do what you’re good at or what you love?

**4b. Differentiating Content**

**Pre-assessment**

- Tasks based on needs
- Student choice
- Alternate resources

**Criteria for Selecting Appropriate Content Materials**

- Cognitive Load - How much decontextualized, factual, and academic knowledge is there? Is the text appropriate for the students' age?
- Cultural Load - How much culture-specific knowledge is there?
- Language Load - How complex are the language structures and vocabulary?

**Cognitive Considerations**

- How complex or detailed is the background knowledge the students must have to understand this text?
- How much of the information is new and unfamiliar to students?
- Is this important and appropriate for students to learn at this age?

**Cultural Considerations**

- Is there specific cultural information the student must know to understand this text?
- Is it important cultural knowledge?
- Is it universal cultural knowledge or is it specific to one cultural group?

**Examples of Differentiated Content Material: Literature**

**Graphic Organizers**

- provide access to higher level thinking and content structures/schema
- Focus attention on key words, relationships, and ideas
- Make text more accessible by dividing it into small chunks and associating it with graphics

**Interactive Text with scaffolding: Interactive Readers**

- Background
- Genre/schema info
- Reading strategy
- Reading focus
• Vocabulary support
• Integrated grammar focus
• Marking guidance

Adapted Selection
• Selection is rewritten at appropriate level for ELLs
• Genre may change, e.g., selection is turned into Reader’s Theatre play.

Alternative Selection
• Learners use a different text that relates to theme of instruction, but provides accessible input, e.g.,
  o a trade picture book,
  o audio or video selection
  o “Newcomer Book”.

4c. Differentiating Process

Managing Different Groups: Cooperative Learning
• Provides practice and negotiation of meaning through purposeful language and communication
• Students learn from one another, and from teaching one another

Starter strategies:

Think-Pair-Share
This structure can be used for a wide variety of activities
• Pose a challenge or question
• Give learners time to think (or jot notes) about it
• Pair students and have them share their responses to the question
• Have pairs join a second pair. Each person shares his/her partner’s ideas with the group.
• Alternatively, select a few students to share their ideas with the full group.

Numbered Heads Together

4d. Differentiating Product

Differentiating Writing Product Expectations
• Managing, using, and assessing skills that have been taught and learned
  o E.g., learners highlight skills they are responsible for on an editing checklist.

EDITING CHECKLIST #3: Grammar and Language Use
Name ___________________________ Date ________
Title of piece edited ___________________________

Grammar and Language Use
1. All of my sentences are complete. Each one has a subject and a main verb.
2. My piece contains: all present time verbs _____ all past time verbs _____ both present and past time verbs. _____
3. If I used both present and past time verbs: When I changed from present to past, I used a time expression to tell the reader I was changing. An example is: ________

4. I used pronouns she, her, or hers for women and girls and he, him, or his for men and boys.
   Two examples: _______________ ____________________

5. I used singular pronouns for one person or thing and plural pronouns for more than one person or thing.
   Two examples: _______________ ____________________

References & Resources