Differentiated Instruction: Teaching with Student Differences in Mind

In *Differentiated Instruction: Teaching with Student Differences in Mind,* you will learn how teachers in a differentiated classroom plan for differentiation for readiness, interest, and learning profile, using multiple instructional strategies. You will also see how many of the components of differentiation previously discussed in this suite of courses come together to ensure solid planning and execution of high-quality differentiation.

By the end of this course, through video examples, in-depth readings and reflections, and practical applications, you'll be ready to start planning for specific differentiated tasks in your teaching practice. You will also be familiar with some key strategies that support differentiation.

More specifically, as a result of the course, you will

- Learn to identify, evaluate, and design respectful differentiated activities based on differences in student readiness, interest, and learning profile.

- Use a variety of techniques and strategies in differentiating your instruction.

- Make a plan for flexible grouping over time in your classroom.

In the spirit of differentiation, please feel free to choose the sequence of the course modules and module elements in the way that suits your readiness, interests, and learning profile.

Essential Questions and Key Objectives

The following table includes the essential questions that each module of this course is based on, as well as the key objectives—what you will know, understand, and be able to do (KUD) after completing each of the course modules.

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Module 1: Designing Respectful Differentiated Instruction	
Essential Questions	• How are respectful tasks different from tasks that are not respectful? • In what ways are clear learning goals (KUDs) related to respectful
Know	• The role of KUDs in respectful differentiation. • Attributes of respectful tasks within the DI model.
Understand	• All students deserve to work on tasks that are designed using high-quality curriculum focusing on understanding and are highly engaging to the learner. • KUDs act as a kind of glue that holds differentiated tasks together and ensures that all students have access to the highest-quality curriculum.
Do	• Evaluate the respectfulness of differentiated tasks over time using established criteria.

Module 2: Interest-Based Instructional Strategies	
Essential Questions	• When should teachers differentiate for student interest? • How do different teaching strategies help a teacher respond to student interest?
Know	• Specific strategies to support differentiation of content, process, and product for interest. • How to make instructional decisions based on interest. • How to use the RAFT strategy.
Understand	• Interest-based instruction can help students see the connection between learning and their lives. • When teachers use interest data to design instruction, it increases motivation to learn.
Do	• Identify and evaluate tasks differentiated for interest. • Use formal and informal data to design respectful differentiation for interest.

Module 3: Instructional Strategies Based on Learning Profile	
Essential Questions	• When should teachers differentiate for student learning profile? • How do different teaching strategies help a teacher respond to a student's learning profile?
Know	• Specific strategies to support differentiation of content, process, and product for learning profile. • How to make instructional decisions based on learning profile. • How to use Sternberg intelligences to differentiate.
Understand	• When students are allowed to work in comfortable ways, they are likely more efficient in their learning. • There are multiple factors that shape a student's learning profile. • Students need opportunities to work in ways that utilize a variety of learning preferences.
Do	• Identify and evaluate tasks differentiated for learning profile. • Use formal and informal data to design respectful differentiation for learning profile.
Module 4: Readiness-Based Instructional Strategies (Part I)	
Essential Questions	• When should teachers differentiate for student readiness? • How do different teaching strategies help a teacher respond to a student's readiness needs?
Know	• Specific strategies to support readiness differentiation. • How to make instructional decisions based on readiness.
Understand	• Differentiation for readiness is designed to maximize student growth. Students cannot grow if what they are asked to learn is way too easy or way too hard.
Do	• Identify and evaluate tasks differentiated for readiness. • Use formal and informal data to design respectful differentiation for readiness.

Module 5: Readiness-Based Instructional Strategies (Part II)	
Essential Question	• How can tasks be adjusted to become more challenging?
Know	• What the Equalizer is. • How the Equalizer can help teachers design high-quality tiered lessons.
Understand	• There are multiple ways to vary the level of challenge of tiered tasks.
Do	• Analyze and design a tiered activity using the Equalizer.
Module 6: Flexible Grouping and Making Solid Instructional Decisions	
Essential Questions	• How do different grouping options support student learning? • How do different instructional strategies teachers use in the classroom support different learner needs?
Know	• The definition and role of flexible grouping. • Criteria for making decisions about differentiation.
Understand	• Effective teachers thoughtfully choose the grouping option they use at various times throughout a unit of study to maximize student growth and to build community in the classroom. • Over time in a differentiated classroom, students must work in a variety of configurations with a variety of peers for a variety of purposes.
Do	• Make a plan to incorporate a variety of instructional strategies and flexible grouping options over time.

Course Syllabus

Module 1	**Designing Respectful Differentiated Instruction**
	Module Welcome
	• Video: What Are Respectful Tasks?
	• Reading: Respectful Differentiation
	• Video: Designing Respectful Tasks
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Designing Respectful Differentiation
	• Post-Module Reflection
Module 2	**Interest-Based Instructional Strategies**
	Module Welcome
	• Reading: Interest-Based Differentiation
	• Video: The RAFT Strategy
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Differentiation for Interest
	• Post-Module Reflection
Module 3	**Instructional Strategies Based on Learning Profile**
	Module Welcome
	• Video: What Is a Learning Profile?
	• Reading: Differentiation for Learning Profile
	• Video: Sternberg Intelligences
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Differentiation for Student Learning Profile
	• Post-Module Reflection

Module 4	**Readiness-Based Instructional Strategies (Part I)**
	Module Welcome
	• Video: Readiness Differentiation
	• Reading: Differentiation for Readiness
	• Video: Readiness Differentiation in Action
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Differentiation for Student Readiness
	• Post-Module Reflection
Module 5	**Readiness-Based Instructional Strategies (Part II)**
	Module Welcome
	• Reading: The Equalizer
	• Video: Using the Equalizer
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Analyzing a Tiered Activity
	• Post-Module Reflection
Module 6	**Flexible Grouping and Making Solid Instructional Decisions**
	Module Welcome
	• Video: Flexible Grouping
	• Reading: The Role of Flexible Grouping in Respectful Differentiation
	• Video: Flexible Grouping in Action
	• Video: Choosing the Right Instructional Strategies
	• Knowledge Check
	• Application: Mapping Out a Plan for DI
	• Post-Module Reflection

Resources

Texts

Strickland, C. (2007). Tools for high-quality differentiated instruction: An ASCD action tool. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C. A. (Developer). (1996). Differentiating instruction for mixed-ability classrooms: An ASCD professional development kit, Folder 6, Activity 1, 1–6. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms. 2nd edition. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2003). Fulfilling the promise of the differentiated classroom. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C.A., & Imbeau, M. B. (2010). Leading and managing a differentiated classroom. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Video

ASCD (1997). Differentiating instruction: Creating multiple paths for learning. [Video Program]. Alexandria, VA: Author.

ASCD (2003). Instructional strategies for the differentiated classroom: Intelligence preferences [DVD]. Alexandria, VA: Author.

ASCD (2004). Instructional strategies for the differentiated classroom: RAFT assignments [DVD]. Alexandria, VA: Author.

ASCD (2008). Differentiated Instruction in Action: Elementary School [DVD]. Alexandria, VA.

Tomlinson. C. A. (Speaker). (2011). Interview by Nataliya Schetchikova [DVD]. Unpublished interview.