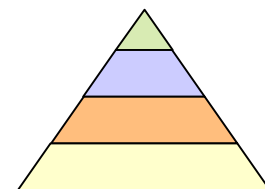




Intervention4Success Tier I

Four Ways to Differentiate Instruction

(Adapted from resource materials created by :Priscilla Theroux www.enhancedlearning.ca and Carol Tomlinson)



Differentiation of instruction can occur in the content, process, product or environment in the classroom.

Differentiating the Content/Topic :

Content can be described as the knowledge, skills and attitudes we want children to learn. It requires that students are pre-tested so the teacher can identify the students who do not require direct instruction. Students demonstrating understanding of the concept can skip the instruction step and proceed to apply the concepts to the task of solving a problem. This strategy is often referred to as "compacting the curriculum". Another way to differentiate content is simply to allow a student to accelerate their rate of progress. They can work ahead independently on some projects, i.e. they cover the content faster than their peers.

Differentiating the Process/Activities :

Varying learning activities or strategies to provide appropriate methods for students to explore concepts. It is important to give students alternative means to manipulate the ideas embedded within the concept. For example students may use graphic organizers, maps, diagrams or charts to display their comprehension of concepts covered. Varying the complexity of the graphic organizer can be very effective

in supporting the levels of cognitive processing for students of differing ability.

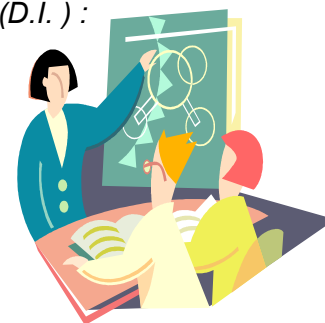
Differentiating the Product : Varying the complexity of the product that students create to demonstrate mastery of the concepts. Students working below grade level may have reduced performance expectations, while students above grade level may be asked to produce work that requires more complex or more advanced thinking. There are many sources of alternative product ideas available to teachers. However sometimes it is motivating for students to be offered choice of product.

Differentiating the Environment or Through Learning Styles :

There has been a great deal of work on learning styles reviewing manipulating the school environment. Many approaches have looked at learning styles in many different ways. The Multiple Intelligences Theory developed by Howard Gardner is a well known very helpful framework for helping teachers recognize that students have differing aptitude in different subject areas. A significant issue relating to learning styles is the paradigm shift in education in recent years. This paradigm shift is illustrated in the way that curriculum is presently de-

finied in the most recent programs of studies. Curriculum is no longer defined in terms of what a teacher will teach but rather in terms of what a student will be able to demonstrate. If we are to be held accountable for what a child learns then it is essential that we understand what he /she knew at the beginning and how to move him/her forward . Ultimately, we need to understanding how each student learns best and build on what they already know.

Differentiated Instruction (D.I.) :



According to Carol Tomlinson an expert in the area, differentiated instruction is the process of "ensuring that what a student learns, how he/she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he/she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning".