

Strategies that Support a Differentiated Classroom

Mini-Strategies: *Low-prep strategies, some can be used for immediate interventions*

- ◆ Choices of books
- ◆ Homework options based on interest, readiness, or learning profile
- ◆ Use of Reading or Study Buddies
- ◆ Student or Adult Mentors
- ◆ Varied prompts for journals or other writing
- ◆ Varied computer programs
- ◆ Varying the scaffolding on the same organizer
- ◆ Flexible Seating
- ◆ Mini-Lessons or Workshops to re-teach or extend
- ◆ Interest Surveys/Student Learning Style Surveys
- ◆ Think-Pair-Share by readiness, interest, or learning profile
- ◆ Exit cards
- ◆ Audi Cards
- ◆ RAFT
- ◆ Exploration or research topics by interest, “orbitals”
- ◆ Multiple levels of Questions
- ◆ Pre-assessment - ex. “Most Difficult First”
- ◆ “Three Before Me” or Student Expert Desks

Maxi-Strategies: *High-prep, Teacher directed strategies that require significant planning*

- ◆ Multiple Texts
- ◆ Learning Menu or “Tic-Tac-Toe”/“Bingo”
- ◆ Anchor Activities
- ◆ Learning Contracts
- ◆ Varied Organizers
- ◆ Adjusting Questions
- ◆ Independent Study
- ◆ Tiered Activities
- ◆ Lectures coupled with specific graphic organizers
- ◆ Centers based on – tiers, interest, Learning Profile, etc.
- ◆ Stations
- ◆ Tape or video recorded materials
- ◆ Choice Boards
- ◆ Graduated Rubrics
- ◆ Simulations
- ◆ Problem-Based Learning
- ◆ Tiered activities and labs
- ◆ Tiered products or Alternative Assessments

Strategies that Support a Differentiated Classroom

Glossary: brief explanations or examples of selected strategies

Adjusting Questions Posing varied questions to learners based on readiness, interest, or profile

Anchor Activities On-going assignments for which students are accountable, tied to the curriculum and which students work on when they finish other assignments.

Audit Cards An assessment tool which asks students to document on a card their work at a station or center for the teacher to review

Centers Students go to different areas that contain collections of materials or activities designed to teach, reinforce, or extend different distinct skills or concepts.

Choice Board Providing students with multiple options, Students choose from a row and topic suited to their multiple intelligences or learning styles and readiness level.

Curriculum Compacting Teachers preassessing students' readiness, determining what students know and what they need to learn and then compressing the content to be learned in order to accommodate the study of an area of interest or other extension activity

Exit Cards (AKA "Tickets to Leave") Responding on a card to a few questions to determine level of students' learning or understanding and turning them in as they leave the class

Independent Study Students and teachers working together to identify problems, topics, or issues, planning a method for investigation, and agreeing on a product the student will develop

Interest Surveys Formal or informal assessments of students' interests in a particular area of study or in general

Learning Contracts and Personal Agendas Written agreements between teachers and students which outline instructions, goals, tasks, and evaluation criteria

Mini-Lessons Direct instruction of short duration on a topic or skill usually done in a small or large group, required or voluntary, based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile

Most Difficult First Doing the most difficult items first as a means of demonstrating mastery or understanding and then selecting alternative activities afterward

Multiple Texts Gaining understanding through the use of multiple texts on the same topic at different levels of difficulty and complexity

Orbital Studies Students select a topic from a larger theme in the curriculum and investigate independently

Problem-Based Learning Teacher presents the students with a complex, unclear problem. Students define the problem, use valid resources, pose a solution, and assess the solution's effectiveness.

Portfolios A compilation of students' work, representing progress over time

Reading and Study Buddies Creating pairs of students who can assist one another in reading an assignment or studying/reviewing subject matter

Stations Students go to different spots in the classroom to work on various tasks simultaneously that are all related to a single topic, concept, or skill.

Task Cards Directions for student activities recorded on cards. Students can proceed on their own as they complete the assignment

Tiered Activities Using varied levels of content to ensure that students work with the same essential ideas but at their appropriate level of challenge

"Three Before Me" Asking students to check with three other students before coming to the teacher for help, particularly when she is working with individuals or small groups

Differentiation Strategies Explanations

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/giftedprograms/instructionalstrategy.shtm>

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/senecavalleyhs/staffdev/diff-strategies.pdf>

Online Lesson Reviewing and Explaining Differentiation

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/development/resources/Differentiation%20Principles/player.html>