

Differentiating Instruction Using Tasks



Introduction

- Name
- School/District
- Position



Opening Reflection

- What does differentiation mean to you? What is the purpose of differentiation in the classroom?



What is Differentiation?

"Differentiation is just a teacher acknowledging that kids learn in different ways, and responding by doing something about that through curriculum and instruction. "

Tomlinson, 2014



What does it look like?

Brainstorm:

- What are some examples of differentiation that you use in your classroom?

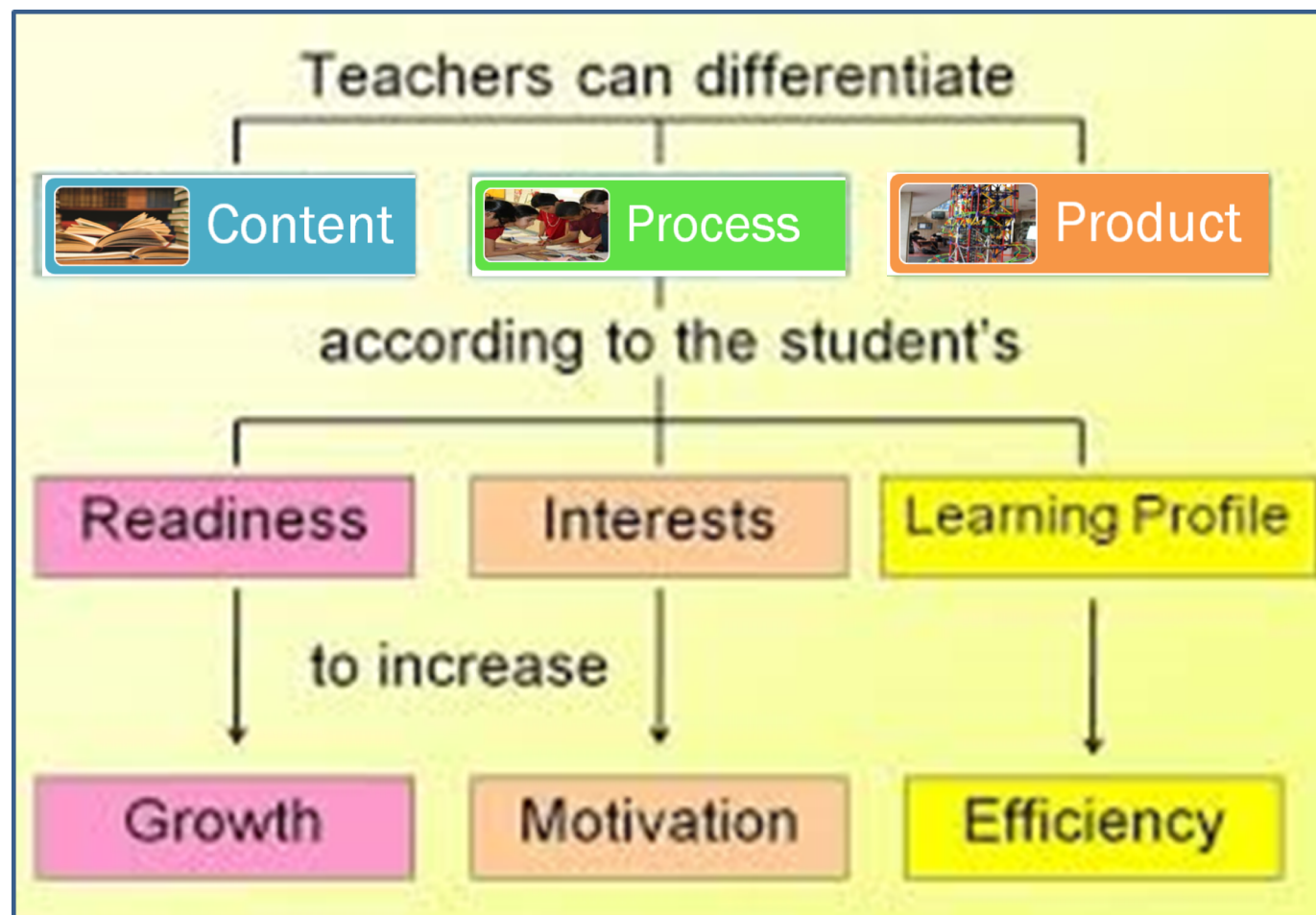


Share and Chart

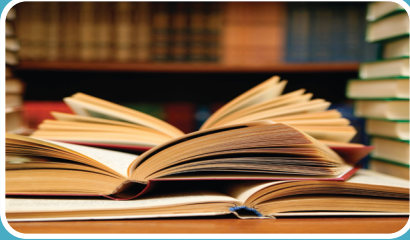
- What are some examples of differentiation that you use in your classroom?



Differentiation Concept Map



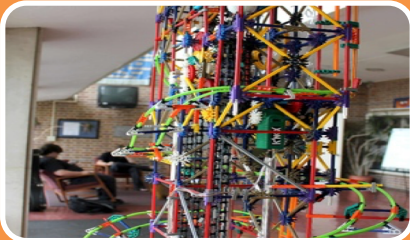
3 Ways to Differentiate



Content



Process



Product



Content

Mark each strategy with a C that differentiates in terms of the content the student sees.



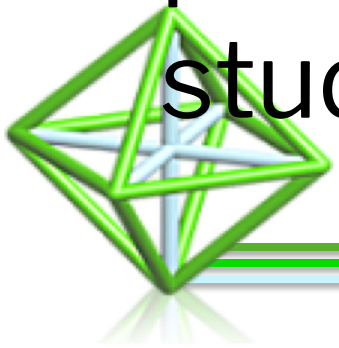
- Pre-assess
- Appropriate activities
- Student choice

What
students
learn



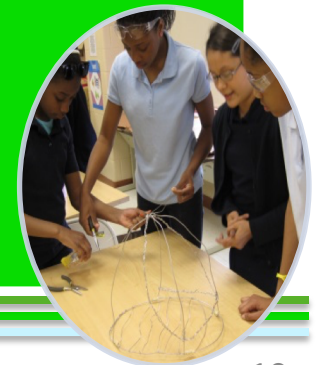
Process

Mark each strategy with a P that differentiates in terms of the process the student uses



- Refers to how students make sense or understand the information, ideas, and skills being studied
- Varies the learning process through multiple modalities and student preferences.

How students learn; the experience



Product

Mark each strategy with an X that differentiates in terms of the product the student produces.

- Tends to be tangible: reports, tests, brochures, speeches, skits
- Reflects student understanding
- Differentiates by providing challenge, variety, and choice

How students demonstrate learning



What makes “good” differentiation?

There is general agreement that to effectively differentiate instruction, the following elements are needed:

- **Big Ideas.** The focus of instruction must be on the **big ideas** being taught to ensure that they are addressed, no matter at what level (Small, 2009a; Small & Lin, 2010).
- **Prior Assessment.** Prior assessment is essential to determine what needs different students have (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Murray & Jorgensen, 2007).
- **Choice.** There must be some aspect of choice for the student, whether in content, process, or product.



Let's look at an example

Scenario: students have just learned about adding with negative integers a teacher is looking at different options to have their student's solidify their understanding.



Benefit versus Cost

- Take a different sheet each (pair up if necessary).
- Categorize the type of differentiation in this example.
- List 2-3 benefits of this differentiation move and 2-3 costs.

After 5 minutes, share at your table, discuss, and revise as you need.

For the group: *Are there any you feel don't fit nicely into one category, or which caused interesting disagreement?*



Intro: Flexible Tasks

- Read both tasks at your table.
- Split table in two and half of participants at each table work on differentiating each task.
- You can either come up with ideas and then classify them, or intentionally try to come up with 1-2 ideas per category.



Intro: Flexible Tasks

- Which type of differentiation did you find easiest (or most challenging?)
- (How) would you change the task overall to make it easier for YOU to differentiate for individual student needs?



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