

## Instructional Strategies That Support Differentiated Instruction

These strategies have been modified and expanded to be used with Gregory and Chapman's  
 "Six-Step Planning Model for Differentiated Learning"  
 Many of the strategies can be used in more than one area.

### ACTIVATE

Teachers will design opportunities to activate prior knowledge and pre-assess so that the teacher is more knowledgeable to begin planning the learning.

- **QUIZ**
- **SURVEYS**
- **K-W-L.:**
  - What do you **KNOW**?
  - What do you **WANT** to know?
  - What did you **LEARN**?

K	W	L
What do you know?	What would you like to know?	What did you learn?

- **Journals**
- **ARM GAUGE:** Gauging what you know about the topic: Vertical, you know a lot. Flat, you know very little.
- **BRAINSTORM**
  - **Carousel Brainstorming:** Posters with words and topics about the lessons ahead are displayed around the room. Students move to each poster and record their response to whatever's written on the poster.
  - **Exclusion Brainstorming:** The teacher writes the topic on the overhead or chalkboard followed by a series of words, some of which fit with the topic and others that do not fit with the topic. Students draw a line through the excluded words and circle those that relate to the topic. Students explain why they excluded and included certain words. This can be done prior to reading or afterwards.
- **THUMB IT:** Have students respond with the position of their thumb to get an assessment.  
 Where am I now in my understanding of \_\_\_\_\_?  
 a. Upside                                      b. Onside (sideways)                                      c. Downside  
 Know a lot about this.                      Know some                                      Know very little
- **RESPONSE CARDS:** Pre-printed, write-on or student made cards that are simultaneously held up by all students. They display responses to questions or problems presented by the teacher. They can also be used for acquire and assessment. (Stetson and Associates)
- **YES/NO CARDS:** Students make YES and NO cards. When a question is asked the students hold up YES or NO.

- 1 Ask the students if they know the following vocabulary and what they mean.
  - 2 Call out a word. Ask someone who has a YES card showing define the word.
  - 3 Ask a question from the unit they will be studying.
  - 4 Use plus (yes) and minus (no) signs for variation.
  - 5 Got it! (Yes); Not a Clue (no)
- **THINK-PAIR-SHARE:** Students think individually using art, writing, or just sitting quietly about a topic or an issue, then share their thinking with a partner. Partners then offer two or three salient points to the larger class that came from their sharing. (Wormeli)
  - **SQUARING OFF:**
    1. Place cards in corner of the room with words or phrases
    2. Students go to the corner of the room that matches their place in learning.
    3. Students go to the corner of the room that most closely matches their own learning and discuss topic and why they chose to go there. (Gregory & Chapman)
  - **BOXING:**
    1. Getting to the Heart of the Matter  
Draw a box in the center of a piece of paper. Draw a smaller box inside the first box:  
Outside Box: What do I know?  
Inside Box: What do I want to learn? Or What is my goal?
    2. Gift of Success  
Outside Box: Write on of the following:
      - What else do I know about this topic?
      - How does it fit?
      - What does this have to do with \_\_\_\_?Inside Box:
      - Draw a model, picture
      - Create Graphic Organizer to explain the topicMiddle of the Box:  
Summarize: What does that say? (Gregory)
  - **GRAFFITI FACT:** Create a “Graffiti Board of Facts” Post all the things the class knows about a topic of study
    - What we knew.
    - What we learned.
    - What we want to learn next.
  - **HUMAN CONTINUUM:** Place a long strip of masking tape across the middle of the floor, with: Agree” or “yes” taped at one end, and “Disagree” or “No” at the other end. Put a notch in the middle for those unwilling to commit to either side. Read statements about the day’s concepts aloud while students literally stand where they believe along the continuum. Ask students to defend their position. (Wormeli)

- **CONCEPT FORMATION**

1. Teacher presents examples, student's work with them, noting attributes.
2. Teacher has students define the concept to be learned.
3. More examples are critiqued in light of newly discovered concept.
4. Students are given practice activities in which they apply their understanding of the lesson format.
5. Students are evaluated through additional applications.

## **ACQUIRE**

**Decisions need to be made about what new information and skills students need to learn and how they will acquire the knowledge. Teachers also decide whether the acquisition will be in a total group setting or in small groups.**

### **FLEXIBLE GROUPING**

#### **TAPS**

➤ **Total Group**

➤ **Alone**

➤ **Partner**

➤ **Small Group**

### **GROUPING STRATEGIES**

1. **Knowledge of a Subject:** Students are grouped according to their prior experiences and knowledge about the topic. A pre-assessment is given to determine what the students know at the beginning of the study.
2. **Ability to Perform a Task or a Skill:** Students can work with materials and information that is challenging and stimulating at a personal level. Assignments differ by making adjustments consisting of varying levels of difficulty.
3. **Interest in a Specific Area of the Content:** When a learner is interested in a topic or subject, they are more likely to be engaged, learning comes easier, and attention spans are longer.
4. **Peer-to-Peer Tutoring:** Peer tutoring, peer reading, and peer journaling are examples.
5. **Cooperative Learning:** Heterogeneous groups are recommended. Those in a group are assigned specific roles for a particular task. Individual and group accountability is built in.
6. **Sharing Groups:** Students are grouped to share information, research a topic, or for review purposes.
7. **Multiage Grouping:** Groups are formed of different ages to learn from each other and work together.

- **LECTURE**

- **DIFFERENTIATED LECTURE:** Format lecture into “mini lecture” segments using these activities:

➤ **THINK/PAIR/SHARE:** Have the students silently reflect for 2 minutes on the lecture. Then, have the students pair with a partner and discuss.

➤ **OUTLINE COMPLETION:** Provide students with a partially completed outline before the lecture.

- **QUESTION/ANSWER:** Provide students with verbal and written questions.
- **NOTE SHARING:** Provide students 2-4 minutes to share their lecture notes with a peer and 2 minutes to add any missing information.
- **TWO-COLUMN NOTES:** Provide students with a template that has a “T” running down the page, breaking the page into 1/3,2/3 columns.
- **T-LIST or T-CHART**

Facts or Ideas	Thoughts and Reflections
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- **BRAINSTORM RESPONSE:** Deliver lecture segment, then provide 5 minutes for students to brainstorm and document everything they can remember from the lecture. Pair students to complete missing information. (Stetson)
- **SAY SOMETHING:**
  1. Provide information to students in written or lecture format.
  2. After 10 minutes, ask students to stop and “say something”
  3. Student’s respond using pairing with a peer, write/draw on post-it note, write in journal. (Stetson/Copeland)
- **DEMONSTRATION**
- **PRESENTATION**
- **VIDEO**
- **FIELD TRIP**
- **GUEST SPEAKER:** Have students fill out a K-W-L form ahead of time and give it to the speaker.
- **TEXT**
- **RESPONSE CARD**
- **GALLERY WALK:** Small groups of students move around a learning area and respond, as a group, to a question, statement, or problem posted on a chart. The group response is generated through brainstorming after a short period of time and is recorded on the chart using colored marker. All of the information is posted on the charts is summarized and the key concepts are reported back to the whole group. (Stetson).
- **TINY TEACH:** Used following the study of a given topic. Students are allowed one minute to teach their partner on the material, one partner instructs while the other listens and asks for clarification. The partners then switch roles. (developed through Project Adapt)
- **SQ3R:** Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review
- **PQRST:**
  - P-Preview to identify main parts
  - Q-Develop Questions to which you want to find answers
  - R-Read the material
  - S-State the central idea or theme
  - T-Test yourself by answering questions (or Teach the material to someone else)
- **3-2-1:** Teachers ask students to write three of something, two of something, then one of something.

- **JIGSAW**: Students begin in a base group of three or four and are given letters or numbers or names that will help them form expert groups. In the expert group, students are to access information or learn new material that they will in turn teach to their base group. When they return to the base group, they teach their group members what they have learned. (developed by Aronson, Slavin)
- **AGENDAS**: A personalized list of tasks that a particular student must complete in a specified time. Student agendas will have similar and dissimilar elements.(Tomlinson)
- **SPONGE ACTIVITIES**: Soak up loose time with purposeful experiences.
  - \* Develop a crossword puzzle to review the topic.
  - \* Use a computer to develop a word web
  - \* Use “Inspiration” to make an outline or graphic organizer
  - \* Three questions on the board related to today’s lesson
  - \* Graffiti posters with specific prompts around the room
  - \* Collect feedback from students
  - \* “As you put away materials, be thinking about
  - \* (As you pass out tests) The first question on the test will be..
  - \* (If finished early) What wasn’t tested on the test?
  - \* Write down an alternative title to the book.
  - \* Who would you cast in the role of \_\_\_\_\_ in this book and why?
  - \* Come up with as many words you can think of which mean the opposite of \_\_\_\_\_. (Wormeli)
- **TIC-TAC-TOE MENU**: Create a menu of possible activities. Students choose from the suggested activities and record their choices. Students bring any ideas for alternate activities to the teacher for approval. You may leave some spaces blank so students can insert their own ideas.
- **PMI**: Listing pluses, minuses, and interesting points about a topic.
- **TIERED ASSIGNMENTS**: Parallel tasks at varied levels of difficulty.
 

**Six Ways to Structure Tiered Assignments:** (Heacox)

  1. Challenge Level using Bloom’s taxonomy. The application activity asks students to pull information from a source other than their textbook. The analysis activity is for students who have already demonstrated mastery of basic content. They are asked to analyze information from the new resource and to diagram comparisons.
  2. Complexity from least complex to more complex to most complex
  3. Resources: choose materials at various reading levels and complexity of content.
  4. Outcome: Students use the same materials but have differentiated outcomes based On student readiness.
  5. Process: Students work on similar outcomes but use different processes to get Get there.
  6. Product: Students are able to show what they’ve learned in more than one way.

## Guidelines for Use

1. Select the concept(s), generalization(s), and skill(s) that will be the focus of the activities for all learners.
  2. Think about the students for whom you are planning the activity. Use multiple assessment data.
  3. Create one activity or draw upon one you've successfully used in the past.
  4. Think about or actually draw a ladder. The top rung represents students with very high skill and high complexity of understanding. The bottom rung represents students with low skill and low complexity of learning. After thinking about the students who will use the lesson, decide where the activity should be placed on the ladder.
  5. Clone the activity along the ladder to provide different degrees of difficulty. Cloning occurs when the teacher varies (1) materials (basic-advanced), (2) form of student expression (familiar-unfamiliar) and (3) range of application based on student's experience (from personal experience to removed from personal experience).
- **LEARNING CONTRACTS:** A negotiated agreement between teacher and student that gives students some freedom in acquiring skills. (Tomlinson).
  - **ORBITAL STUDIES:** Independent investigations that "orbit" or revolve around some facet of the curriculum.
  - **CUBING:** techniques that can help students consider a topic from six points of view or levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Includes six commands-one on each of its six faces. Cubes can be used to differentiate learning by readiness, student interest and learning profile. There are many different thinking commands that can go into a cube. Cubes vary in color depending on the abilities and interests of the learners.

## Levels of thinking:

1. Tell, Describe, Recall, Name, Locate, List
  2. Compare, Contrast, Example, Explain, Define, Write
  3. Connect, Make, Design, Produce, Develop
  4. Review, Discuss, Prepare, Diagram, Cartoon
  5. Propose, Suggest, Finish, Prescribe, Devise
  6. Debate, Formulate, Choose, Support, In your opinion (Gregory/Chapman).
- **GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS:** Give visual representation of facts and show relationships by comparing, contrasting, and classifying information. They help students understand data, identify main concepts, assign labels to concepts, sort details, make predictions, identify cause and effect, understand consequences, organize data, understand time lines and visualize and understand abstract content. Students may also use **Inspiration**, a computer program, to design graphic organizers.
  - **SHARE ONE, GET ONE**
  - **"I HAVE.. WHO HAS?":** Each student receives a card with an **answer** to a question followed by a **new question**. One student has a card with "Start here" in the middle

of the new question. That student begins by asking, “Who has...?” The student with the correct response calls out “I have...” and then asks the next “Who has...?”

- **PARAPHRASING:**

## **APPLY/ADJUST**

**Students need the opportunity to practice and become actively engaged with the new learning in order to understand and retain it. The teacher will decide on how the students will be grouped and what tasks they will be assigned to challenge them at the appropriate level.**

- **LEARNING CENTERS:** a collection of activities, or materials designed to teach, reinforce or extend a skill. Centers can be set up in variety of ways:
  1. topic, theme with different levels of difficulty.
  2. Interests centers for further investigation of a topic.
  3. Free inventing centers for experimenting, discovering, and inventing.
  4. Computer centers with multimedia resources.
  5. Resource centers with a wide variety of leading materials
  6. Art media table to create artifacts.
  7. Role-playing centers to demonstrate characters and sequence of events.
  8. Manipulative centers for hands-on learning
  9. Skill centers for adjustable assignments
  10. Writing centers for a variety of writing tools and paper
  11. Challenge centers for problem solving
  12. Listening centers for music or readings from both fictional and factual content
  13. Multiple intelligences center that provide students with choices. (Gregory & Chapman)
- **INDEPENDENT PROJECTS:** a process through which student and teacher identify problems or topics of interest to the student. Both student and teacher plan a method of investigating the problem or topic and identifying the type of product the student will develop. This product should address the problem and demonstrate the student’s ability to apply skills and knowledge to the problem or topic.
- **PROJECT MENUS:** A numbered list of tiered assignments
- **DOUBLE-DUTY LOG**

Facts or Ideas	Thoughts and Reflections

- **CONTRACTS:** An agreement between teacher and student. The teacher grants certain freedoms and choices about how a student will complete tasks, and the student agrees to use the freedoms appropriately. (Tomlinson)

- **COMPACTING/ENRICHMENT:** A three-step process that (1) assesses what a student knows and needs to master, (2) plans for learning what is unknown and excuses student from what is known, and (3) plans for freed-up time in enriched or accelerated activity. (Tomlinson)
- **PROBLEM BASED:** Providing students with ill structured problems that are open-ended and challenging. Students use information and processes in real-world situations to solve the problems. The problems require investigation of options and application of the content and processes that students are studying and practicing.
- **INQUIRY:** Teachers take students through a process of exploratory phase, selecting a focus, posing a question, and expressing the conclusion.
- **RESEARCH:** Students choose or are assigned topics to research.
- **INDEPENDENT STUDY:** Process through which student and teacher identify problems or topics of interest to the student.

## **ASSESS**

- **PERFORMANCE**
- **PRESENTATION**
- **DEMONSTRATION**
- **JOURNAL:** A way for a person to write freely in order to place thoughts, feelings, and ideas on paper. Some suggested formats: (Chapman & King)
  - ✓ Photo scrapbook Journals
  - ✓ Comic Journals
  - ✓ Content Journals
  - ✓ “What Are You Thinking?” Journals
  - ✓ Emotional Quotient Journals
  - ✓ Log Journals
  - ✓ Partner Journals
  - ✓ Note Journals
- **LEARNING LOG** After students read, they are given a summarization technique or writing prompt to clarify their thinking. Students write personal responses to the prompt then discuss them in small groups before the large class discussion. Instead of writing a response, students may be given other choices such as a cartoon, or a cartoon strip.
- **VARYING QUESTIONS** In class discussions and on tests teachers vary the sorts of questions posed to learners based on their readiness, interests, and learning styles.
- **MENTORSHIP/APPRENTICESHIPS** Student work with a teacher, parent volunteer, older student, or community member who can guide their growth in a particular area. May focus on design and execution of advanced projects, exploration of work settings, or a combination of goals.



- **PORTFOLIO:** Collections of student work for specific purposes based on criteria that support and provide evidence of application and understanding of the targeted skills or concepts. (Gregory & Chapman)
- **RUBRIC:** An evaluation tool developed with specific criteria. The criteria reflect the expectations for a product, such as a project, a report, or a presentation. The levels indicate the level of assistance the student needs. (Chapman & King).
- **METACOGNITION:** Teachers help students develop skills for self-assessment to understand how one learns.
- **PRODUCTS:** (there are numerous possibilities and lists) A few product ideas: calendar, comic strip, placemats, post cards, board game, radio play. There are several lists in the appendix.
- **CHECKLISTS:** A student self-monitoring tool given to students before beginning an activity.
- **CONVERSATIONS:** Ongoing, short and informal exchanges between student and teacher.
- **ANTECDOTAL RECORDS:** Observations of student actions and interactions set in a specific day, time, setting and learning context.
- **PEER ASSESSMENT:** Assessing the achievement and performance of peers based on criteria developed by the teacher or jointly with the students and their teacher.
- **SELF-ASSESSMENT:** Students evaluate themselves using an established form or set of criteria.
- **STUDENT PAPERS:** Students work collaboratively in generating information, but write an individual paper.
- **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:** Use Blooms' taxonomy to create questions that fit a higher level thinking question, which students must answer and justify.
- **EXAMINATIONS:** Students work individually to complete the tasks outlined on the examination.

- ***CHECKLISTS***: A student self-monitoring tool given to students before beginning an activity. It provides information on how students will be evaluated and what they should be doing. They can be individual or group oriented. They can serve to provide feedback to students or information to teachers in terms of student growth.
- ***PEER EVALUATION***: Peers are anonymously evaluated in a collaborative learning project.
- ***CONVERSATIONS***: ongoing, short and informal exchanges between student and teacher.
- ***ANECDOTAL RECORDS***