

**DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION TO MEET DIVERSE
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Annotation: The article devoted to open the theme differentiated instruction to meet diverse student needs. Furthermore, in the article special features of differentiated instruction and its benefits for student were discussed.

Key words: *differentiated instruction strategies, Learning Environment, differentiating content, learning style, auditory learners, active planning, Flexible grouping.*

As we all know, “Differentiated instruction”—the process of identifying students’ individual learning strengths, needs, and interests and adapting lessons to match them—has become a popular approach to helping diverse students learn together. But the field of education is filled with varied and often conflicting definitions of what the practice looks like, and critics argue it requires too much training and additional work for teachers to be implemented consistently and effectively. Differentiated instruction is a way of teaching that tailors instruction to meet all students’ learning needs. Instead of teaching the entire class at one level of difficulty or using a single instructional strategy, educators can practice differentiation to give students options for taking in the information, understanding the concept, and demonstrating what they learn. As DR. CINDY ORR noted: “ It’s all about getting the information to students at a pace and a time that allows them to learn”.

Creating different lessons and activities to meet each student’s individual needs can seem daunting, but differentiated instruction strategies empower educators with efficient ways to address the needs of all students. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, an educator who has done extensive and innovative research in differentiated instruction, the four main elements of teaching that can be differentiated are:

- Content
- Process
- Product
- Learning Environment

By adjusting these four elements, students have more options for learning the material, which can help educators be more impactful in engaging and challenging students of all abilities. Educators can differentiate the content that students need to achieve the standards of learning set by the district or state[1]. Some students may be unfamiliar with the concepts in a lesson, and others may already understand the idea before the class begins. Depending on where they are starting from, students will need different activities to learn the content effectively. Grouping students by ability level and designing lessons that cover various levels of understanding can help all students move forward and achieve mastery of the material. An example of differentiating content this way is by creating reading groups. For instance, students could all read content about the Civil War, but each group could be reading a text at an appropriate reading level, according to their needs. Another way educators can differentiate instruction is by making changes to how students engage with the content based on their preferred learning style, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. Differentiating the learning process for students by learning style could be providing written material for visual learners, audiobooks for auditory learners, and interactive assignments for kinesthetic learners.

The concept of differentiated instruction has its roots in the work of Carol Ann Tomlinson, who first introduced the concept in the late 1990s. Tomlinson defines differentiated instruction as “an approach to teaching that advocates active planning for and attention to student differences in classrooms, in the context of high-quality curriculums”. In other words, differentiated instruction involves planning and delivering instruction that is tailored to the individual needs of students, while still ensuring that the curriculum is rigorous and meets the needs of all students. One of the key principles of differentiated instruction is that instruction must be flexible and responsive to the needs of individual students. This involves adapting instruction in several ways, including content, process, product, and learning environment. Content refers to the material that is taught, while process refers to the methods and strategies used to teach the material[2]. Product refers to how students demonstrate their learning, while learning environment refers to the physical and social context in which learning takes place.

Differentiated instruction involves a number of strategies for adapting instruction to meet the needs of individual students. These strategies include:

- Flexible grouping: Grouping students according to their learning needs and abilities, and adjusting groups as needed to ensure that students are working with others who are at a similar level of understanding.

- Tiered assignments: Assigning different tasks or activities to different groups of students based on their readiness level or interests.
- Learning contracts: Working with individual students to develop personalized plans for learning, including goals, activities, and assessments.
- Choice boards: Offering students a variety of options for demonstrating their learning, such as different types of projects or assessments.
- Scaffolded instruction: Providing additional support to students who need it, such as extra practice, graphic organizers, or guided notes.
- Varied assessments: Using a variety of assessment methods to evaluate student learning, such as performance tasks, projects, and portfolios.
- Technology integration: Using technology to provide personalized instruction, such as adaptive software programs that adjust to the needs of individual students.

Differentiated instruction is appropriate for virtually all general education classes and is particularly beneficial to students with an array of learning challenges. Students demonstrate varying learning abilities, academic levels, learning styles, and learning preferences and need tailored instruction to meet their unique needs[3]. Differentiated instruction recognizes the value and worth that exist in each individual; it allows students from all backgrounds and with diverse abilities to demonstrate what they know, understand, and are capable of doing. Differentiated instruction was originated by C.A. Tomlinson in 1999, basing it primarily on Howard Gardner's concept of multiple intelligences and brain-compatible research literature[4]. Teachers were encouraged to consider students' unique learning styles and differentiate educational activities to provide for their divergent learning styles by differentiating instruction in three areas: content, process, and product. In differentiating instruction, teachers proactively modify the curriculum, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and student products to address the needs of individual students and small groups of students to maximize the learning opportunity for each student in the classroom.

Differentiated instruction was primarily based on the theory of multiple intelligences by Howard Gardner and brain-compatible research. Gardner postulated eight different intelligences that are relatively independent but interacting cognitive capacities. The intelligences are verbal linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and a tentative ninth one, moral intelligence. Some students demonstrate strong intelligence in one area, whereas other may demonstrate strengths in several intelligences. It is

important, from a multiple intelligences perspective, that teachers take individual differences among students very seriously. They should gear how to teach and how to evaluate to the needs of the particular child. The bottom line is having a deep interest in children and how their minds are different from one another to help them use their minds well. Linking the multiple intelligences with a curriculum focused on understanding is an extremely powerful intellectual undertaking[5].

As a summary it should be noted that differentiated instruction is a beneficial teaching approach to address students' varying educational levels. Effective differentiation includes identifying students' readiness levels, modifying instruction, applying collaboration and autonomy in learning, and integrating teaching and practice to enhance learning. There are a number of benefits to using differentiated instruction in the classroom. One of the key benefits is that it allows teachers to meet the needs of individual students, which can lead to greater engagement and motivation. When students feel that their learning needs are being met, they are more likely to be interested in the material and more willing to participate in class. Differentiated instruction can also help to address the achievement gap, as it provides additional support and challenge to students who need it most.

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