RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

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UDL 101 in the Early Childhood Environment
IN this ISSUE

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WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION?

Carol Ann Tomlinson, Ed.D.

its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction. Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile: (1) content -- what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information; (2) process -- activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content; (3) products -- culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit; and (4) learning environment -- the way the classroom works and feels.

Content. Examples of differentiating content [ . . . ] include the following:

(1) giving students options (task lists written by the teacher and containing both in-common work for the whole class and work that addresses individual needs of learners) to be completed either during specified agenda time or as students complete other work early;

(2) providing materials that match varied readiness, interest, or learning profile;

(3) using spelling or vocabulary lists at readiness levels of students;

(4) allowing students to work alone or in small groups on their products; and

(5) giving students options of how to express required learning (e.g., create a puppet show, write a letter, or develop a mural with labels);

(6) meeting with small groups of advanced learners.

Process. Examples of differentiating process or activities [ . . . ] include the following:

(1) using tiered activities through which all learners work with the same important understandings and skills, but proceed with different levels of support, challenge, or complexity;

(2) using rubrics that match and extend students’ varied skill levels;

(3) allowing students to work alone or in small groups on their products; and

(4) encouraging students to create their own product assignments as long as the assignments contain required elements.

Learning Environment. Examples of differentiating learning environment [ . . . ] include:

(1) making sure there are places in the room to work quietly and without distraction, as well as places that invite student collaboration;

(2) providing material that reflect a variety of cultures and home settings;

(3) setting out clear guidelines for independent work that matches individual needs;

(4) developing routines that allow students to get help when teachers are busy with other students and cannot help them immediately; and

(5) helping students understand that some learners need to move around to learn, while others do better sitting quietly (Tomlinson, 1995, 1999; Winebrenner, 1992, 1996).

Products. Examples of differentiating products [ . . . ] include the following:

(1) giving students options of how to express required learning (e.g., create a puppet show, write a letter, or develop a mural with labels);

(2) using rubrics that match and extend students’ varied skill levels;

(3) allowing students to work alone or in small groups on their products; and

(4) encouraging students to create their own product assignments as long as the assignments contain required elements.

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For example, teachers can differentiate instruction so that all students work with a variety of peers over a period of days. Sometimes students work with like-readiness peers, sometimes with mixed-readiness groups, sometimes with students who have similar interests, sometimes with students who have different interests, sometimes with peers who learn as they do, sometimes randomly, and often with the class as a whole. In addition, teachers can assign students to work groups, and sometimes students will select their own work groups. Flexible grouping allows students to see themselves in a variety of contexts and aids the teacher in “auditioning” students in different settings and with different kinds of work (Tomlinson, 1995, 1999).

One challenge for teachers leading a differentiated classroom is the need to reflect constantly on the quality of what is being differentiated. Developing three avenues to an ill-defined outcome is of little use. Offering four ways to express trivia is a waste of planning time and is unlikely to produce impressive results for learners.

There is no recipe for differentiation. Rather, it is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that values the individual and can be translated into classroom practice in many ways. Still, the following broad principles and characteristics are useful in establishing a defensible differentiated classroom:

• Assessment is ongoing and tightly linked to instruction. Teachers are hunters and gatherers of information about their students and how those students are learning at a given point. Whatever the teachers can glean about student readiness, interest, and learning helps the teachers plan next steps in instruction. Teachers work hard to ensure “respectful activities” for all students. Each student’s work should be equally interesting, equally appealing, and equally focused on essential understandings and skills. There should not be a group of students that frequently does “dull drill” and another that generally does “fluff.” Rather, everyone is continually working with tasks that students and teachers perceive to be worthwhile and valuable.

• Flexible grouping is a hallmark of the class. Teachers plan extended periods of instruction so that all students work with a variety of peers over a period of days. Sometimes students work with like-readiness peers, sometimes with mixed-readiness groups, sometimes with students who have similar interests, sometimes with students who have different interests, sometimes with peers who learn as they do, sometimes randomly, and often with the class as a whole. In addition, teachers can assign students to work groups, and sometimes students will select their own work groups. Flexible grouping allows students to see themselves in a variety of contexts and aids the teacher in “auditioning” students in different settings and with different kinds of work (Tomlinson, 1995, 1999).

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO BEGIN DIFFERENTIATION? Teachers are as different as their learners. Some teachers naturally and robustly differentiated instruction early in their careers. For other teachers, establishing a truly flexible and responsive classroom seems daunting. It is helpful for a teacher who wants to become more effective at differentiation to remember to balance his or her own needs with those of the students. Once again, there are no recipes. Nonetheless, the following guidelines are helpful to many teachers as they begin to differentiate, begin to differentiate more proactively, or seek to refine a classroom that can already be called “differentiated”:

• Frequently reflect on the match between your classroom and the philosophy of teaching and learning you want to practice. Look for matches and mismatches, and use both to guide you.

• Create a mental image of what you want your classroom to look like, and use it to help plan and assess changes.

• Prepare students and parents for a differentiated classroom so that they are your partners in making it a good fit for everyone. Be sure to talk often with students about the classroom -- why it is the way it is, how it is working, and what everyone can do to help.

• Begin to change at a pace that pushes you a little bit beyond your comfort zone -- neither totally duplicating past practice nor trying to change everything overnight. You might begin with just one subject, just one time of the day, or just one curricular element (content, process, product, or learning environment).

• Think carefully about management routines -- for example, giving directions, making sure students know how to move about the room, and making sure students know where to put work when they finish it.

• Teach the routines to students carefully, monitor the effectiveness of the routines, discuss results with students, and fine tune together.

• Take time off from change to regain your energy and to assess how things are going.

• Build a support system of other educators. Let administrators know how the [ . . . ] you have a second pair of hands and eyes. Form study groups on differentiation with like-minded peers. Plan and share differentiated materials with colleagues.

• Enjoy your own growth. One of the great joys of teaching is recognizing that the teacher always has more to learn than the students and that learning is no less empowering for adults than for students.

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For More Information


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WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATION SUCCESSFUL? The most important factor in differentiation that helps students achieve more and feel more engaged in school is being sure that what teachers achieve more and feel more engaged in differentiation that helps students...
Shining Stars: Charting the Future for Today’s Children
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Who Should Attend
Early Childhood Special Educators
Early Childhood Educators
Related Service Providers
Paraprofessionals
Head Start, Title I, and Even Start Providers
Early Head Start and Early Intervention Providers
Administrators
Families

For more information and to register for the conference, log onto: www.ttaconline.org and click on the Events tab.

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Sponsored collaboratively by
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Registration available beginning March 1, 2010 on www.ttaconline.org

Differentiated Writing Instruction for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Karen Berlin, M.Ed., VDOE T/TAC at GMU

Writing can often be a challenge and source of frustration for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Both written expression and graphomotor deficits have been identified as weaknesses for students with Asperger Syndrome (AS) or High Functioning Autism (HFA) (Whitby and Mancil 2009) with as many as 60% of individuals with AS/HFA displaying writing disabilities (Dickerson Mayes & Calhoun 2008). Likewise, handwriting of students with ASD may be sloppy or even illegible. Written expression for students with ASD can be impacted by organization and attention deficits, and graphomotor abilities can be impacted by motor planning, coordination difficulties, and information processing deficits (Barnhill et al., 2002). The result is that many students may protest writing tasks while others may willingly approach them but experience difficulty in completing them. To maximize writing outcomes, teachers will need to differentiate instruction for their students with ASD.

Important for all students is for the teacher to cultivate a positive climate for writing, but this is especially critical for students with ASD. According to Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992), a student’s belief in his/her ability significantly impacts the amount of effort expended and the height of achievement (as cited in Chapman, 2003, p. 10). Creating a positive environment includes supporting and encouraging whatever expressive attempts are made by students, whether scribbles, pictures, words, sentences, or a few lines. Also, a positive writing climate can be fostered by encouraging students to use alternative forms of expressions, such as a computer, word processor, or communication device. In addition, support can be offered through peers, classroom volunteers, teachers, and paraprofessionals who serve as scribes to students with ASD to record their thoughts and ideas expressed. Finally, teachers and peers can influence positive writing experiences and build confidence by providing specific constructive feedback on all writing attempts.

Once a positive writing environment has been established, differentiation for individual students with ASD might include some of the following considerations:

• Individualized instructional goals: Acknowledge the need for increased processing time, and implement time and work assignment modifications as needed.
• Choice making: Providing opportunities for choice making will increase student engagement. Because an associated characteristic of ASD is a heightened display of interest in a narrow field of topics, students will engage the most when writing about topics of interest to them. Embedding choices throughout the writing process, such as preference to work in a group or alone, graphic organizers to be used, and selection of output device, maximize student participation and outcomes.
• Final product form: Because written work is an integral component of instruction across content areas, it is important to consider assistive technology to support students in expressing their ideas. In addition, a variety of final product forms can be offered for the student to choose. These can include but are not limited to oral responses, PowerPoint presentations, graphs and diagrams, mindmaps, storyboards, and flow charts.
• Vocabulary Instruction: Teaching vocabulary is important for all students,
but especially important for students with ASD for whom communication is a significant challenge. Attempt to maximize vocabulary that the student already knows and uses and expand from there.

- Model before writing: It is beneficial to take the time to work out a sentence or thought structure verbally or visually before having the student write it.

- Visually support the writing process: Use graphic organizers to help the student see the components of the writing assignment and provide visual prompts to support student thinking and expression. For example, start with one thought at a time and provide visual and/or verbal prompts to support the student thinking through what they want to say next.

- Use small, simple steps to teach the writing process: Break down and chunk information for students with ASD. Think about each step in the writing process and back up further.

It is important that students have specific writing instruction and activities each day, even if the process is difficult. To support teachers in differentiating writing instruction for students with ASD, a wide variety of resources can be found at local T/TAC lending libraries.

To view the SOL Enhanced Scope and Sequence PLUS documents that include sample activities and lesson plans - click on your region; then on the SOL Enhanced tab at the top; click on Search SOL+ Lessons (left margin); then choose a grade level for English.

- To access resources, including a wide variety of web-based resources - click on the Resources tab at the top; then enter “writing” within the search box.

Software and resources, such as Alternative Pencils, Buildability, Clicker 5, Co-Writer, Developing Minds, Draft Builder, Handwriting Without Tears, PieWriter, and Write OutLoud are available for check-out through your local T/TAC lending library.

References


Everyone Means All: Differentiation in a Math Lesson for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Guest authors Melissa Ainsworth and Elizabeth Obester are educators in Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools - Melissa as a classroom teacher at the secondary level and Elizabeth as an Assistant Principal at the elementary level. Each has a considerable history of special education classroom experience and continues to work with students with significant intellectual disabilities. They collaborate often to present successful and practical instructional strategies from their own experience around the state of Virginia. This article is a follow-up to a recent presentation, ASOLs Everyday: Planning Your Math Instruction, given in two regions of the state.

Classes in Virginia public schools can be quite diverse. For example, in one classroom for students with intellectual disabilities in which math ASOLs were taught, there were seven students. Of the seven, four spoke a language other than English at home, three of the seven were non-verbal, and two had significant physical disabilities. Additionally, their academic abilities ranged from emergent to early first grade skills. Despite this diversity, the students worked well together and many group lessons, where everyone participated and learned, were able to be conducted.

A favorite math activity was bowling. By using Universal Design and differentiation, students were able not only to bowl, but to work on their own individual math goals while building class spirit and team work. “When the content, materials, and teaching strategies are developed to consider the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and other learning needs, educators are using what is known as ‘universal design’ (Snell & Brown, 2006, p. 493). In Universal Design, there will be many different ways for information to be presented, for students to engage with the material, and for students to express what they have learned (Snell & Brown, 2006). Differentiation is an overlapping concept that involves many of the same aspects as Universal Design with the addition of varying the complexity and nature of content presented during the course of a unit of study” (Browder & Spooner, 2006, p. 25). This is a key concept because it allows for all students to participate in one lesson while each one is working on a potentially different goal. In the following math lesson, students are working on various goals, including communication and group skills, as well as the designated math concept of more than.

The lesson is structured in the LEARN lesson format, developed by Fairfax County Public Schools, which breaks the lesson into the following segments: Link (connect what students are about to learn to something they already know), Engage and Educate (this is the teaching portion of the lesson where new information is explicitly taught), Active Learning (this is largest portion of the lesson, where the students participate with hands-on activities), Reflect (the students review what they have learned; this section is student centered, not teacher directed), and New and Then (bridge what the students just learned to other subjects, other areas of practice or to something that is coming up).

Lesson: Bowling Math

Objective: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the concept of more than through a variety of measures as listed individually for each student.

Related ASOL: M-NS 1

The student, given two sets containing 10 or fewer concrete items, will identify and describe one set as having more, fewer, or the same number of members as the other set, using the concept of one-to-one correspondence.

Materials:
1. Plastic bowling set, easy to find at a dollar store or yard sale, with numerals written in permanent marker on one side of them
2. Individual containers, such as pie tins, one for each student
3. Pompoms, colored chips, or other fillers
4. Calculators
5. Pencils and paper

Links: Remind students of the bowling trip taken recently. Tell them that today we are going to do math bowling. (If you have not taken a bowling trip, you can link the activity to the concept of more that will be covered, or to a book you read where bowling was a part of it, etc.)

Engage and Educate:
1. Teacher says, “When we bowl, we knock down pins. When we...
Active Learning: Here are the basics: Each student has several opportunities to roll the ball and knock down pins. Each student will get a colored pom pom in their personal container for each pin they knock down. Here is how the lesson is differentiated for each student:

Tier 1 (2 students): The students who fall into this tier have the most significant needs. Both of these students are non-verbal. One has very severe physical disabilities. For both of these students, use of their communication devices is a major focus. The use of their IEPs, each of these students will need to indicate “my turn” before they bowl. After they have had the opportunity to knock down pins, they will have help to pick up the pins they knocked down. As they are picked up, the adult working with them tells each of them to be counting in their heads while the adult counts aloud. Once the pins have been counted, a pom pom is placed in their individual containers, right in front of the students, and the expectation is that the students count again while the adult counts aloud. They will then indicate which of the two of them has more than the other with adult support.

Tier 2 (2 students): The students who fall into this tier are both verbal and have limited number identification skills. After they have bowled and knocked down the pins, they have the opportunity to identify the numbers written on the pins – however, this is not the focus of this lesson, this is more incidental learning. The students will then help count the pom poms as they are put into their individual containers, noting the quantity of pins they have knocked down and who has more of the two of them.

Tier 3 (3 students): The students who fall into this tier have some higher math skills than the students in the other two tiers. So in order to maximize their experience they will approach the bowling a little differently. After these students have had the opportunity to bowl, they will write down the numbers on the pins they knocked down. Then, with a calculator, they will add up the numbers and get a total for each turn. At the end of the lesson they will use the calculators to add up the totals for each turn to get a final number. These students will also get to put pom poms in their individual containers for each pin they knocked down. These students can compare between the students who’ve just bowled to see who has more, as well as, comparing their own scores between turns.

Reflect: In this section of the lesson, the students will review and again apply their learning. The students in Tiers 1 and 2 will look at a range of individual containers and determine which container has more than the others. Tier 1 students will have a range of two containers with obvious differences in amounts to look at in order to determine more than.

Tier 2 students will have three or four containers to look at in order to determine which one has more than. Students in Tier 3 will compare their final calculations to determine who has the biggest number and therefore more than the others. Also, they may look at the individual containers for each student and determine who has more than their classmates.

Now and Then: Remind students that they can see more than all around them. Give them some examples such as: Who got more fries in their lunch? Which bus has more students on it? Tell them to be on the lookout for more!

Through Universal Design and differentiating lessons, it is entirely possible for all students, despite individual skills, goals and needs, to participate meaningfully in a group lesson that will build teamwork and class unity, as well as, group dynamic skills.

References:


Universal Design for Learning http://www.cast.org/research/udl/udlIndex.html

20 WAYS TO ADAPT THE SCIENCE LAB

Too often, students with disabilities, especially those with more moderate and significant disabilities, are excluded from the rich and complex experience of the science lab. This is unfortunate as many a science teacher would argue that if students are not engaged in hands-on science, then they are not really “doing” science. In other words, science is about learning ideas and concepts, studying vocabulary, and understanding theories, but it is also about observation, exploration, and discovery.

Another reason to give all students access to lab work is to pique their interest and enhance their learning. It is widely accepted that students who participate in labs and other hands-on science activities will remember the material better and be able to transfer the learning across situations and lessons. Students who have learning difficulties or differences often are more on task during hands-on activities because there are often a wider variety of ways to participate and the active and social nature of the science lab keeps students engaged and interested. Finally, lab work helps all students hone social and communication skills, making it ideal for learners with disabilities who may need help with asking questions and answering questions, taking turns in a conversation, or knowing how to enter a discussion.

Having shared all of these benefits, many learners will need adaptations or modifications in order to be successful in a lab situation. One idea that can help you support diverse learners in your science classroom are offered here:

1. Be explicit about what you want students to know and in each lesson and model what you want to see (e.g., language, behaviors, techniques, safety procedures) in the lab.

2. Post expected “lab behavior” on a poster or chart that is clear for all to see—emphasizing, of course, safety guidelines. Draw students’ attention to this information every time they work in the lab.

3. Organize your lab around big questions that all students can answer in some way. For instance, the question, “What is a rock?” can be answered on many different levels. One learner will be able to show or give an example of a rock while other learners will learn that it is “consolidated mineral matter”.

4. Be sure to create very clear step-by-step directions for the lab. If needed, provide a checklist or even an illustrated checklist of steps.

5. Instead of pairing students alphabetically or randomly, think about individual needs to determine best partnerships. You might also give students a questionnaire to find out not who they want to work with but who they think they can work effectively with. Get suggestions from them but make the final decisions based on your observations. Some learners might have difficulty working with new or unfamiliar people. You may want to pair these students with a familiar peer.

6. Give different students different roles based on their strengths. For example, a student who is a strong writer might take notes for the group, while a student who enjoys public speaking might present the group’s findings to the class. You can also assign roles based on student needs. For instance, an individual who needs more practice with social skills might be asked to serve as the group facilitator.

7. Some students may be better served by working across groups instead of within a group. For instance, if measurement is a skill you are focused on, you might have a learner go to each group to measure and pour liquids. If calculations are a target skill, perhaps an individual can help each group check and re-check their work.

8. If the experiment or lab requires procedures that are complicated or has directions that are easily misunderstood, be sure to clearly demonstrate these pieces in front of the students.

9. If reading the supporting materials will be a challenge for one or more learners, consider simplifying the directions, highlighting key words, or adding icons, tables, or photos to the text.

10. If you work with students who struggle with the writing requirements of labs, allow all or some to use portable word processors or to speak observations and findings into a tape recorder or digital voice recorder.

11. Add additional roles or tasks for students who are working on individual goals that would not
All parents of school-aged children and youth who receive special education services in Virginia’s schools are encouraged to complete the Department of Education’s annual Parent Involvement Survey. This is a great opportunity for parents to provide input to help guide efforts to improve services and outcomes for their children. Your responses will be kept anonymous and never be personally linked to your child. The results of this survey will be made available to the public.

The survey will be available from April 5, 2010 to September 30, 2010.

This online survey can be found at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Parent-Involvement-2010E

If you are unable to take the survey online, your child’s school will provide paper versions for your use. All paper versions of the survey will include a pre-addressed postage paid return envelope. All responses will be sent directly to the Virginia Department of Education.

If you have any questions related to the Parent Involvement Survey, please call Gloria Dalton (Gloria.Dalton@doe.virginia.gov) at the Virginia Department of Education at (804) 371-7420.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta relacionada con la encuesta acerca de la Participación de los Padres o desea una copia de la encuesta en Español, por favor llame al Centro de Padres que abogan por la Educación Especial de sus Hijos (PEATC) al 1-800-869-6782
Getting there is the focus of this article. It is based on the premise from Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that reminds us that “diversity is the norm, not the exception.”

The acronym SMARTER© is a first letter mnemonic device to complement each other. It is based on the premise that “Getting there is the focus of this article. It is based on the premise from Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that reminds us that “diversity is the norm, not the exception.”

The principles of SMARTER Planning© provide a guide for operationalizing these theories. The A-R-T of SMARTER is highlighted here as a planning guide.

To plan for all is the challenge. The primary resources for this article are SMARTER Planning© from the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (Lenz, Deshler & Kissam, 2004) and the theories of differentiation promoted by Tomlinson (2001, 1999).

Please see Table 1 on page 16 for an overview of how these two approaches complement each other.


References


If it weren’t for students impeding our progress in our race to the end of the term, but whether we as teachers can get to the end of the text or the end of the term, but whether our students are with us or that journey. (Cross, P. 1995, p. 416)
### SMARTER Planning©
Lenz, Deshler & Kissam (2004)

**Table 1: Complementary approaches to planning for a diverse population**

| **S: Shape the critical questions:** | **Differentiation**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What should every student know at the end of the lesson, week or unit?</td>
<td>Tomlinson (2001 and 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will my assessment cover?</td>
<td><strong>Content:</strong> Clarify critical concepts, principles, &amp; facts students need to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin with the end in mind.</td>
<td>Assessment is a road map for planning. Begin with the end in mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M: Map the critical content:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Readiness/Interest/Learning profile:</strong> Consider how to help students make connections between critical concepts and among themes and facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will I present the content?</td>
<td><strong>Process:</strong> All students should be challenged to critical and creative thinking. Some students may need more support than others. Activities may be whole class, small group and/or individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the topics and subtopics?</td>
<td>How will I differentiate the process, content and/or product?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will I organize these for the students?</td>
<td>Teachers need to understand students to best tailor instruction to meet their needs. So, go straight to the source and let students tell you -- on camera -- who they are. Get hold of a small, hand-held video camera, such as a Flip Video Camcorder, either borrowed from T/TAC or purchased yourself, and give students creative rein to put together videos about themselves as learners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**R: Reach enhancement decisions AKA**

Plan your work:
- What strategies, methods or materials will be best for individuals, certain small groups, and/or the whole class? Cue students as appropriate, to use learning routines, or strategies they can use independently.

**T: Teach strategically AKA** Work your plan:
- Based upon defined objectives, assessments, perceived difficulties and enhancement decisions.

**E: Evaluate mastery:**
- What does my assessment tell me about their learning? My Instruction?
- **Product:** Assess for mastery of the content.  
  Provide choice, or direct options according to student strengths.

**R: Revisit outcomes.**
- Do I need to re-teach or review?
- Reflect on student performance according to differentiated content, process or product in light of learning goals. Use data to guide instruction.
Have We Forgotten Discussion in Adolescent Literacy?

The T/TAC Telegram April/May 2010

The T/TAC Telegram April/May 2010

The National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (IES), 2008

Using extended discussion to differentiate instruction for a range of learners is highly recommended for both vocabulary development and comprehension for building sophisticated literacy skills. There is research evidence that language and verbal restatement of ideas from text have a strong positive effect on student learning and that group interactions and discourse help students recall information, and engage in problem solving and higher level thinking. (Wilkinson & Anderson, 1995; Wilkinson & Gung, 2002). The findings suggest that when students discuss text ideas for extended periods of time, are prompted by open-ended or structured questions, focused but not dominated by the teacher, students have improved comprehension and learning outcomes. In addition, classrooms that provide many opportunities for students to work together have stronger literacy growth (Langer, 2001).

Moreover, these findings have significant implications for teaching as current secondary course content demands have reduced amounts of time spent for sustained discussion to explore topics in depth. A large study of middle school and high school classrooms, found 1.7 minutes out of 60 for discussion with a variation from 0-14 minutes. Most secondary classrooms also have, predominantly, a traditional discourse interaction between the teacher and the students (IRE... Initiate, Respond, Evaluate). In this traditional discourse pattern, teachers initiate a discussion topic (usually by posing a question), to which students raise their hands and someone is called on by the teacher to give a response. The teacher evaluates the response and provides a response and starts the sequence again. Research by Cazden (2001) and others has shown that teachers talk for more than 2/3 of the time, a few students contribute most of the answers, and boys and those sitting in the front and center are most likely to contribute (Cazden, 2001; Alexander, 2006). Many students are unengaged and lack motivation and rarely talk in class.

By contrast, in interactive discussion, all students are included. Students support the teacher's ideas, and group interactions and discourse help students recall information, and engage in problem solving and higher level thinking. (Wilkinson & Anderson, 1995; Wilkinson & Gung, 2002). The findings suggest that when students discuss text ideas for extended periods of time, are prompted by open-ended or structured questions, focused but not dominated by the teacher, students have improved comprehension and learning outcomes. In addition, classrooms that provide many opportunities for students to work together have stronger literacy growth (Langer, 2001).

The overall goal for academic literacy instruction for adolescents is to increase their abilities to comprehend complex text, not just to identify facts or literal meaning, but to be able to make deeper interpretations, generalizations, and draw conclusions (Applebee, 2003).

The goal of discussion is to encourage students to elaborate their responses to reflect deeper understanding, connection of ideas, and personal connections, and to invite multiple perspectives. The goal is not to reach consensus (The National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (IES), 2008). Finally, extended discussion is a powerful way to differentiate instruction and to improve reading, writing, and thinking across courses. Obviously, with the current curriculum, standards, and general time constraints, teachers face many pressures when organizing their instruction, but leaving opportunities for quality discussion out of the plan misses the chance for many learners to access the instruction and improve their academic literacy.

Adolescents entering the 21st Century are expected to need more advanced literacy skills than previous generations to prepare them for the workforce and to handle the flood of information in a technological society. At the same time, secondary literacy instruction has not kept pace with today's demands for academic literacy. It is estimated that approximately 8.7 million fourth through twelfth graders struggle with reading and writing as they move through K-12 grade levels (Kamil, 2003).

The recommended practices for teachers to improve adolescent literacy include:

1. Build essential content knowledge including explicit vocabulary instruction.
2. Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction and supported practice.
3. Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation.
4. Increase motivation and engagement in literacy learning.
5. Make available intensive individualized interventions to teach basic reading skills for struggling readers provided by qualified specialists.

The reason to use extended discussions to differentiate instruction is to help a range of learners to engage more purposefully in instruction and to support development of academic literacy skills and content learning. Some considerations to keep in mind when establishing quality discussion include the following:

1. Carefully pre-plan for discussion
   - Look for one or more short text selections of various readability levels or a short text book selection.
   - Or use a visual artifact or interesting idea that will elicit multiple interpretations.
   - Identify questions that engage students in reflection or connection to their own experience or something a reader might wonder about.
   - Identify a purpose or product and set clear expectations for each discussion and the discussion process itself.
   - Consider vocabulary or comprehension aspects.

2. Provide a task or discussion format
   - Read selections individually, together, whole group, small group, interest groups.
   - Is teacher role facilitating, redirecting, or modeling thinking, observing?
   - Are any specific strategies being introduced or modeled?

Initially some strategies may be necessary to get students used to talking and listening and giving more elaborated comments, for instance, passing a talking stick, turn taking checks, or using specific activities. An activity example includes “He said; she said; I think”.

Before offering their own responses, a student listens, restates what 1-2 people have said and then offers his/her idea. The purpose of this is to have the students listen to others and then connect what they are sharing to what has been said before.

Teacher or students use follow-up questions to encourage more elaborated responses like: “Why do you think that? Was there something you saw in the text that suggested that idea? What does this (student comment) suggest about…….. (big idea of reading or topic)?” Students can have a sample question list to work from when they are learning to ask follow-up questions.

3. Develop and practice using a specific discussion protocol or graphic organizer or reflection sheet or journal system
   - Select an organizer or activity to use at different points in the discussion process during the reading, prior to, or after the discussion. (For example, you might use “post-it notes” individually at different points in the text reading and a group response graphic organizer.)

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Finally, extended discussion is a powerful way to differentiate instruction and to improve reading, writing, and thinking across courses. Obviously, with the current curriculum, standards, and general time constraints, teachers face many pressures when organizing their instruction, but leaving opportunities for quality discussion out of the plan misses the chance for many learners to access the instruction and improve their academic literacy.
Children must be four by September 30th. To qualify for the program, a child whose birthday is September 30th, and one whose birthday is on October 1st. Therefore, a student who is turning four at the end of September could have a classmate who is one whose birthday is on October 1st.

Within the classroom, there may be students with differing backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and languages. And as more students with disabilities are educated with their peers, it is common to see them enrolled in these programs as well. This is a common picture of many early childhood communities. How then do teachers meet the needs of so many, while considering the individual strengths and contributions of each student and still meet learning standards and goals for both students and the program? Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a blueprint or framework that incorporates a variety (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) of opportunities and ways to access the curriculum goals and learning objectives, offer multiple methods by which to process information, and include a range of methods for students to demonstrate their knowledge and learning. To put it simply, UDL encourages early childhood environments to exhilarate children’s senses with exciting, engaging, and authentic learning opportunities; to give them the ability to create, explore, and manipulate materials; and to participate in diverse and meaningful learning experiences at the level and comfort dictated by their strengths and needs.

Margaret Vaughan, M.Ed., VDOE T/TAC at Virginia Tech

UDL 101 in the Early Childhood Environment

Margaret Vaughan, M.Ed., VDOE T/TAC at Virginia Tech

Consider for a moment a typical state-sponsored early childhood classroom for four-year-old children. To qualify for the program, a child must be four by September 30th. Within the classroom, there may be a child whose birthday is September 29th, and one whose birthday is on October 1st. Therefore, a student who is turning four at the end of September could have a classmate who is essentially a year older. The difference a year can make between two children consists of many developmental milestones and growth variations. Added to the mix in the classroom are students with differing backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and languages. And as more students with disabilities are educated with their peers, it is common to see them enrolled in these programs as well. This is a common picture of many early childhood communities. How then do teachers meet the needs of so many, while considering the individual strengths and contributions of each student and still meet learning standards and goals for both students and the program? Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a blueprint or framework for supporting all learners (of any age). The three principles of UDL, as put forth by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), the designers of UDL, call for:

- Multiple means of representation, to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge;
- Multiple means of engagement, to tap into learners’ interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation; and
- Multiple means of action and expression, to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know (CAST, 2009, p. 1).

For the early childhood world, UDL suggests that instructional design encompasses a range of flexible learning materials and activities. These learning materials and activities should incorporate a variety (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile) of opportunities and ways to access the curriculum goals and learning objectives, offer multiple methods by which to process information, and include a range of methods for students to demonstrate their knowledge and learning. To put it simply, UDL encourages early childhood environments to exhilarate children’s senses with exciting, engaging, and authentic learning opportunities; to give them the ability to create, explore, and manipulate materials; and to participate in diverse and meaningful learning experiences at the level and comfort dictated by their strengths and needs.

Sheryl Burgstahler suggests that universal design can be applied to all aspects of instruction—teaching techniques, curricula, assessment—as indicated in the following guidelines:

- Class Climate. Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness.
- Interaction. Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and the instructor and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants.
- Physical Environments and Products. Ensure that facilities, activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible to and usable by all students and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations.
- Delivery Methods. Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners.
- Information Resources and Technology. Ensure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are engaging, flexible, and accessible for all students.
- Feedback. Provide specific feedback on a regular basis.
- Assessment. Regularly assess student progress using multiple, accessible methods and tools and adjust instruction accordingly.
- Accommodation. Plan for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by the instructional design (Burgstahler, 2008, p. 5).

Many of these guidelines fall into the three principles of UDL, but may not be obvious areas of consideration when using the framework to develop teaching design.

So what do the guidelines and suggestions look like in action in an early childhood classroom? Let’s take a look at an activity that occurs on a daily basis in preschool classrooms and see how the planning and facilitation of the activity interface with the UDL framework.

Activity: Reading a book during large group or circle time

Often the activity looks like this: The teacher sits in front of the students with a book in hand or on an easel. She/he talks about the front and back of the book, the author, the title, and maybe the illustrator. The book is read, and questions are asked. There may be a follow-up activity related to the plot or the characters in the book.

Using the UDL framework, some questions that teachers should ask themselves while planning for this type of activity are presented in Figure 1. These questions will help ensure that UDL principles are a component of their teaching design.
Multiple Means of Representation

- What other formats can I use to enhance or replace this book?
- Can I find multiple copies of the book to allow better access for students?
- Do I need to add visuals to the book to assist in understanding?
- Are the pictures in the book abstract or more concrete, and how can I change that to reach children on differing levels of understanding?
- Should I try a completely new format, such as a PowerPoint book or slide show?
- Is there software I can use to supplement and enhance this story?
- How can I use differing sensory sensations during this activity? (tactile, visual, auditory, kinesthetic)

Multiple Means of Engagement

- What else might I need to do to engage ALL students?
- What do I need to do to make this a community of learners where all students are members, particularly in each other’s eyes?
- How do I ensure that this activity is not designed for one “level” of student?
- Can I make this experience unique and exciting?
- Will the group size matter? Should I change that?
- Does the activity include movement? If not, how can I add that component?
- How long have the children been sitting up to this point? Let me consider that.
- Has there been a good balance of teacher-directed and child-directed activities up to this point?
- How can I encourage student involvement and discussion?
- What is students’ prior knowledge with this information? (Without a solid formation of prior knowledge, children cannot learn new information.) How will I/do I gather this information?
- What kind of feedback and encouragement can I offer to students who need it?
How to Build a Positive Parent, Professional Relationship that Benefits Everyone

As the school year continues, it’s important to remember the benefits of working together with mutual respect and shared knowledge.

Research confirms the positive benefits of parent-professional collaboration on the education of children with disabilities. In fact, good parent-professional partnerships benefit everyone involved: Parents and professionals have a more positive view of each other; parents become more involved in their child’s education; and children with disabilities have more confidence and perform at higher levels.

Because parents and professionals bring different strengths to the collaboration, there are different ways for each to make the relationship positive and productive.

WHAT PROFESSIONALS CAN DO

In general, research has shown that what families want most from professionals is respect and acceptance. Professionals can help engage families in collaboration by:

• Keeping promises and ensuring confidentiality
  Professionals can develop trust by telling the parents what information will be shared with others and what will be kept private, and by always asking permission to talk about their child with others. For new immigrants in particular, confidentiality for their child and themselves may be the most critical element in building a collaborative relationship.

• Being hopeful and honest about the child’s abilities and potential
  Professionals should not withhold information they presume might be painful and should be willing to admit if they do not have answers to a parent’s question. Sometimes families will have issues that professionals do not know how to address. It is then appropriate for the professional to connect the family with someone who may be helpful.

• Helping parents identify their strengths
  Some parents truly do not understand what they do on a daily basis is as important as formal services. Professionals can regularly point out where family interventions have been effective.

• Helping parents identify choices
  School personnel can help families to identify the choices that are available to them, present options and solutions that might work, and encourage and support parents to make their own decisions.

• Demonstrating and modeling problem-solving skills
  Professionals can demonstrate and model problem-solving skills and support parents to find creative solutions to their own problems.

• Accepting parents as equal partners
  It is easier for professionals to bring parents into the system rather than the other way around, because professionals have traditionally acted in a leadership role.

• Being flexible and considerate of the parents’ points of view
  Professionals can develop skills to shift their perspective from their specialty area to a broader perspective of the needs of the whole child and family.

• Considering the family’s preferences in aspects of planning
  Professionals should utilize the family’s strengths while keeping in mind their challenges and other responsibilities.

• Supporting parents as their child’s best advocates in making decisions
  Some parents may need to be reminded that they are decision-makers for their child, and that their input is valued.

• Taking care of logistical details
  It is helpful when professionals are flexible in their time and location for meetings and services and when parents are assured that changes are possible.

• Planning for parent involvement in systems change
  Professionals can encourage parent-professional collaboration by requesting that parents be invited to participate on committees to develop policies and procedures that address education and other relevant areas.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Parents can also take steps to build and maintain collaborative relationships with professionals by beginning with an assumption that professionals are doing the best they can for the child. Parents can contribute to the success of a collaborative relationship by:

• Overly recognizing the professional’s commitment and expertise
  It is important for parents to acknowledge the skills of their child’s teachers and service providers and recognize their commitment to meeting their child’s needs.

• Thanking the professionals that have been helpful to them
  It is not surprising that many times professionals go beyond the requirements of their job to help a family. It is important to recognize this effort and thank them when it occurs.

• Considering that professionals are often limited by the systems in which they work
  Professionals may wish they could provide more help than they are able offer, but it is not always within their ability to do so.

• Reinforcing at home what a child is learning in school
  Children are aware of their parents’ view of their school, teachers, and other professionals. Parents should try to keep any conflict separate and keep their child’s outlook positive.

• Being flexible and considerate of the professional’s point of view
  Most parents fear what will happen if their child does not receive the right kind of services in the right amount and at the right time. However, each person faces compromises every day, and Individualized Education Program meetings are no exception. For instance, does a child need 40 minutes of direct speech or is indirect speech in the regular classroom more effective? Keeping the focus on outcomes will make compromises easier, systems accountable, and collaboration more effective.

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• Remembering that life is full of compromises

• Committing to work to find solutions when disagreements arise
  It is inevitable that there will be times when parents and professionals disagree. For instance, does the child need an assessment, new glasses, allergy testing, or shortened homework? Disagreements are honest differences of opinion, not personal attacks. Effective parent collaborators commit to working on solutions.
A Parent’s Guide to Special Education
Revised 2010

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) offers this updated publication to help parents understand their rights and responsibilities, their child’s rights, and the school’s responsibilities within the special education process.


Do you need options for differentiation? Check this out!

SOL Enhanced PLUS lesson plans . . .

- Go to T/TAC Online: www.ttaonline.org and click on your region on the Virginia map
- Click on SOL Enhanced (at the top)
- Click on Search SOL+ Lessons (left margin)
- At Option 1- choose a subject area and choose a grade/course - click Go
- Click on any SOL standard and click Submit (at bottom of page)
- Choose from the lessons listed for the standard
- Click on Word or PDF format to download lesson

You will have a complete lesson plan aligned to the Standards of Learning (SOL) which includes:
- An objective
- Prerequisite understanding/knowledge/skills
- Materials needed
- Procedures to follow
- Specific options for differentiation in the areas of:
  - Technology
  - Multi-sensory
  - Community Connections
  - Small Group Learning
  - Vocabulary Strategies
  - Student Organization of Content

The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act:
Learn about the Blueprint for Reform

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VDOE T/TAC at George Mason University

On March 15, 2010 The U.S. Department of Education announced the release of A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf The blueprint is intended to support state and local efforts to help ensure that all students graduate prepared for college and a career.

Following the lead of the nation’s governors and state education leaders, the plan will ask states to ensure that their academic standards prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and to create accountability systems that recognize student growth and school progress toward meeting that goal. This will be a key priority in the reform of NCLB, which was signed into law in 2002 and is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).


What Does the Blueprint for Reform say about Students with Disabilities?

While the primary funding for programs specifically focused on supporting students with disabilities is through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the ESEA reauthorization proposal will increase support for the inclusion and improved outcomes of students with disabilities. This proposal will help ensure that teachers and leaders are better prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, that assessments more accurately and appropriately measure the performance of students with disabilities, and that more districts and schools implement high-quality, state- and locally-determined curricula and instructional supports that incorporate the principles of universal design for learning to meet all students’ needs.


Where Can I Learn the Latest Information On ESEA and Determine How It Relates to Students with Disabilities and Special Education?

There are many resources to view, but here are three websites for hearings, public comments, and articles related to this topic:

- U.S. Committee on Education & Labor: Elementary and Secondary Education: http://edlabor.house.gov/education/


Go to T/TAC Online: www.ttaonline.org and click on your region on the Virginia map
Click on SOL Enhanced (at the top)
Click on Search SOL+ Lessons (left margin)
At Option 1- choose a subject area and choose a grade/course - click Go
Click on any SOL standard and click Submit (at bottom of page)
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Differentiating instruction means teaching in a way that considers the individual learning needs of each student in the classroom. It means looking at what each student knows about the content, how each student learns best, and how each student responds to what is happening in the classroom. When you differentiate instruction, you use the information that you have gathered to develop a plan that will provide everybody the best opportunity to learn and continue building the skills necessary to achieve academically. Differentiating instruction is particularly important for those teachers and paraeducators who are helping students with disabilities successfully access the general curriculum.

In her book Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom (2003), Carol Ann Tomlinson describes four elements that are important to consider in an educational setting. They should be used when looking at how instruction is delivered, particularly when the goal is to support a variety of student learning styles. These elements include content, process, product, and learning environment.

**Content** refers to the information and ideas being taught. In an effort to provide all students access to the same learning objective, there may need to be a variation of the material and equipment used to teach. As an example, delivery of content can be differentiated by providing a student with an audio version of printed text or by using manipulatives to illustrate an idea, rather than just a picture.

**Process** refers to how a student comes to understand the knowledge and skills within the learning objective. Differentiation of process might be accomplished by providing the student with a graphic organizer for note taking or giving him the opportunity to learn and review in a small group setting. The best type of processing activity or procedure depends on the individual student’s characteristics and learning profile.

**Product** is what a student does to demonstrate that they understand and can apply the knowledge within the learning objective. Differentiating product might be done by allowing student choice on things such as selection from a list of research project topics. This gives the student the benefit of using a particular interest and/or learning style to show what they know. Another effective way to differentiate is to have students show progress on a product before the due date. This allows them to use teacher feedback to better understand the information and improve on the product before it is turned in for a grade.

**Learning environment** refers to the classroom rules, guidelines, routines, and overall “climate.” It also pertains to how each student in the class is valued and how successes, no matter how small, are celebrated. A differentiated learning environment is flexible in terms of space, time, and materials in order to meet the needs of all students. In addition, the students themselves are allowed appropriate input into decisions made on things such as classroom rules and routines.

As mentioned in the description of differentiation of process, student characteristics must also be considered in the classroom. These include student interests, learning profiles, and readiness to learn the content (Tomlinson, 2003). Teachers and paraeducators should continually assess these characteristics and use them to differentiate content, process, product, and the learning environment when planning for instruction.

Considering **student interest**, both general and content-specific, increases the chance that the student will be motivated to learn. This can be as simple as asking what a student hopes to know when they finish a unit of study, thus getting him to focus on the expected outcome. It can also be more planned and deliberate, such as using a detailed comparison of two things. To emphasize a lesson, or part of a lesson, something from the content being studied can be compared with something from an area or topic of student interest.

A student’s **learning profile** describes how a student typically learns, how a student appears to think or solve problems, and what preferences a student may have related to culture, gender, experience, etc. A teacher or paraeducator who considers differences in learning profiles might take great care to present content in a variety of methods and using a variety of materials. They might also allow students to demonstrate knowledge through different methods such as writing, illustrating, or actually performing a concept or idea.

**Readiness** involves factors that affect the level of preparedness of a student for learning specific content. A student’s ability is one factor in his/her readiness to learn, but other things have an impact on readiness as well. These include, but are not limited to, previous exposure to the specific content, basic health and safety needs, and individual interests and learning profile. Teachers and paraeducators may support students at various levels of readiness by making themselves available outside of class time to help anyone who may be struggling with content. They should review assessments from a student’s previous school year in order to check achievement in prerequisite knowledge.

In summary, to differentiate instruction means to be responsive to the particular learning requirements of the students in your classroom. Information about individual students, to include their interests, learning profiles, and prior knowledge and skills are taken into account. Students are provided a variety of ways to learn content through a variety of processes. Teachers continually adjust instruction to ensure that all students work at a level where they are challenged but also have the best chance to learn the material. Learning outcomes are assessed by offering students a variety of ways to demonstrate understanding of content. Finally, the environment should be one that considers and values every student’s characteristics, abilities, and learning styles.

This overview describes the basic information on differentiating instruction. It is a good idea to discuss any thoughts you have on this process with your supervising teacher. For more information on specific strategies for differentiation, please refer to the books Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom (Tomlinson, 2003), and the Differentiation in Practice series (Tomlinson & Eidson, 2003). Additional resources on differentiation can be found on the web sites for The Access Center [http://www.ksuccesscenter.org](http://www.ksuccesscenter.org) and The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [http://www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org).

**References**


**Tools**


The T/TAC at GMU Advisory Board annual meeting was held on March 9th. During the day-long event, T/TAC staff presented information on the year’s work efforts, both regional and statewide. In turn, Advisory Board members provided us with feedback on the impact of some of our programs in their school systems while also advising us on the training needs that continue to exist. Additionally, they talked about the many unique and successful programs currently going on in which the focus is on student well-being and emotional development, as well as academic achievement. For example, one member told us about his staff’s commitment to ensuring that each individual student at this particular school is known by at least one adult in the building. Not only does this help students truly feel a part of their learning community, but the school staff feel that they are much more aware of individual student needs, can make themselves available for support and encouragement whenever necessary, and can recognize and understand critical situations that may occur involving the student(s) they know.

We also asked Advisory Board members for specific input on how we can best deliver services in the next school year. We anticipate that budget constraints may limit attendance at training events, so we sought information on things such as the ability of school personnel to travel to trainings, their ability to access online web shops for recertification credit, and whether or not they might participate in activities such as online communities of practice forums. Knowing this will allow us to more effectively and efficiently plan for the best ways to deliver professional development in the near future.

Kudos to our T/TAC Advisory Board!

Lynn Wiley, Ph.D., VDOE T/TAC at GMU

Virginia Doherty, Performance Evaluation Program (PEP) Specialist, Alexandria City Public Schools
Kathleen Donovan, Special Education Coordinator, Parent Resource Center, Arlington County Public Schools
Margaret Harmon, Middle School English Teacher, Fairfax County Public Schools
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Cathy Marston, Principal, Page County Public Schools
Mark Nichols, Assistive Technology Coordinator, Loudoun County Public Schools
Steve Parker, Principal, Fauquier County Public Schools
Jane Razeghi, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education, George Mason University, Executive Director, Division for Career Development & Transition Council for Exceptional Children
Susan Rismiller, Teacher, Emotional Disabilities Program, Fairfax County Public Schools
Cindy Scott, Lead School Psychologist, ECSE Support Specialist, Culpeper County Public Schools
Beth Somers, Transition Coordinator, Department of Rehabilitative Services, Richmond
Joe Strong, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools
Tony Tallent, Special Education Teacher, Warren County Public Schools
Lisa Wooditch, Adapted Curriculum Specialist, Fairfax County Public Schools
John Word, Sr., Principal, Arlington County Public Schools
What’s in YOUR library at VDOE’s T/TAC at GMU?

April/May 2010

Featuring some of our Most Wanted resources...

Applications of Reading Strategies within the Classroom: Explanations, Models, and Teacher Templates for Content Areas in Grades 3-12
By Cecilia B. Frank, Janice M. Grossi & Dorothy J. Stanfield; call number - 372.476 FRA 2006

This easy-to-use and practical book offers teachers 50 content area learning strategies—each with directions, models and templates to design effective lessons that scaffold learning strategies with literacy enrichment for every child in the classroom. This ‘teacher friendly’ manual provides the models and templates for teachers to use in planning lessons on effective learning strategies for students to understand content level materials. This text offers a concise yet complete review of the research supporting each of the strategies contained in this book.

Co-Teaching in the Differentiated Classroom: Grades 5-12: Successful Collaboration, Lesson Design, and Classroom Management
By Melinda L. Fattig & Maureen Tormey Taylor; call number - 373.11 FAT 2008

Co-Teaching in the Differentiated Classroom is a practical hands-on guide that explains how to implement co-teaching programs in mixed-ability classrooms. Based on the authors’ award-winning model, this important guide shows how special education teachers can pair with general education teachers to improve classroom functioning while promoting high achievement for all students. The book provides tested frameworks and tools for teacher collaboration on lesson planning, student grouping, assessment, and discipline. It also offers guidance on managing overcrowded classrooms and on designing and implementing differentiated lessons and assignments, and includes advice for administrators.

By Sue Schwartz; call number - 649.15 SCH 2004

The new edition presents sixty-five new toys and accompanying toy dialogues to use with children with a wide range of special needs from birth through age six. These sample toy dialogues show parents how to play purposefully with their children—using store-bought and homemade toys—to provide language learning opportunities and stimulate language development. The exercises are fun and educational, too, as parents help their child build receptive language skills (understanding), expressive language skills (communicating), and speech.

Meaningful Exchanges for People with Autism: An Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication
By Joanne M. Ciferro; call number - 618.929 CAF 2005

From the Topics in Autism Series, this book is a practical introduction to the topic of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), a type of assistive technology. This guide provides an overview of the AAC techniques, devices and strategies available today (both low and high tech) and is a useful resource for parents and professionals. Although this book was written specifically to address the needs of children with autism, the general concepts are applicable to a much broader range of children with disabilities.

Good Questions: Great Ways to Differentiate Mathematics Instruction
By Marian Small; call number - 372.7 SMA 2009

To help K-8 teachers differentiate math instruction with less difficulty and greater success, this resource:
* Underscores the rationale for differentiating math instruction.
* Describes two universal, easy-to-implement strategies (Open Questions & Parallel Tasks) designed to overcome the problems that teachers encounter.
* Provides specific strategies and examples for each grade band which are organized around the NCTM content standards
* Offers almost 300 questions and tasks that teachers and coaches can adopt immediately, adapt, or use as models to create their own.
* Includes Teaching Tips sidebars and an organizing template at the end of each chapter to help readers build new tasks and open questions.
* Shows how to create a more inclusive classroom learning community with mathematical talk that engages participants from all levels.

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* Includes Teaching Tips sidebars and an organizing template at the end of each chapter to help readers build new tasks and open questions.
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KELLAR LIBRARY LINE-UP

Jackie Petersen, MLS, VDOE T/TAC at George Mason University
May

May 1: “Celebrate Communication 2010” at George Mason University, Center for the Arts

Summer 2010


July 27: “Every Student, Every Day... Against All Odds” at JMU Festival and Student Conference Center, Harrisonburg, VA http://www.ttaconline.org/staff/s_events/s_event_detail.asp?cid=1703

August 3-4: Opening Doors: Unlocking Potential 2010. “Invigorating Instruction for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing” at the Holiday Inn University Area & Conference Center, Charlottesville, Virginia. For registration information and conference details, please visit T/TAC Online (Events tab) www.ttaconline.org after April 26, 2010.

November

November 11-12: 2010 Symposium on Professional Collaboration and Inclusive Education: “Celebrating 21 Years of Quality Collaboration for Student Success” at The College of William and Mary’s School of Education Professional Development Center, Williamsburg, VA http://www.ttaconline.org/staff/s_events/s_event_detail.asp?cid=1717

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