

Tiered Learning

“The meat and potatoes of differentiated instruction.”

Carol Ann Tomlinson (1999)



Tiered Learning

- Addresses standard, concept, or generalization
- Allows several paths to arrive at understanding
- Students work in teacher assigned groups
 - Number of groups may vary
 - Groups don't have to be the same size

Tiered Learning Lessons

- Readiness
- Learning profile
- Student interest

Tiered by Readiness

- Teacher understands ability levels and designs tiers to meet their needs
- Most tiered lessons @3 levels
 - Below grade level
 - At grade level
 - Above grade level
- Each lesson is contained; therefore groups will change depending on the topic of each lesson

Example of Readiness Tiered Lesson

- Science lesson on magnetism
 - Low level: works on concrete level, looking at kinds of objects a magnet can attract
 - High level: works on more abstract level, investigating whether the size of the magnet affects its strength

Tiered by Learning Profile

- Students grouped according to style of learning in which they work best
- Students learn same content but the way in which it is presented differs
- Example:
 - Auditory
 - Visual
 - Kinesthetic

Tiered by Student Interest

- Teacher pre-assessment of student interest
 - Design an interest survey listing several topics to be studied with possible activities
 - Students rank choices
 - Teacher assigns students to group based on their choices

Tiered Lesson Planning

Tiered Assignment Template

Essential Understandings, Skills, Knowledge:

Task One:

Task Two:

Task Three:

Criteria for evaluation:

Tiered Lesson Planning Checklist

- Identify standard
- Identify key concept or generalization
- Assess student background for prerequisite understanding
- Select **what** you will tier
 - (content, process, product)
- Select **how** you will tier
 - (readiness, interest, or learning style)
- Determine how many tiers you need

Assessments of Tiered Lessons

- Recorded observations
- Rubric for student self assessment of each tiered assignment
- Formal pencil and paper test
- Folders/ portfolios for teacher to monitor at any point
- Student checklist

Reflection on Tiered Lessons

- Differentiation means qualitatively different, not quantitatively different
- Lessons should differ in levels of complexity rather than amount of work
- Each tier should be challenging & developmentally appropriate