Differentiation in the Classroom

**Why?**
Success for All Abilities

**Based On?**
Readiness and Interest

**Teacher's Responsibilities?**
Consistency: The ABCs

**Student's Responsibilities?**
Time on Task
Team Work
Getting Help
Flexible Groups

**Planning Options?**
Content
Process
Product

**Differentiation IS**
... proactive
... more qualitative than quantitative
... ways to provide multiple approaches to content, process and product
... student centered
... a blend of whole class, group and individual instruction
... "organic" continuous learning for students and teacher

**Differentiation IS NOT**
... "Individualized Instruction" of the 70's
... chaotic
... just another way to provide homogeneous grouping
... just "tailoring the same suit of clothes"
Consistency Guarantees Success
THE ABC’s FOR CONSISTENCY

ANCHOR ACTIVITY
Whole class works independently & quietly then part of class works on anchor while others engaged in different content-based activity designed for readiness. Later, flip flop, and finally, all sorts of combinations.

BEGIN AND END AT HOME BASE
Beginning and ending a class or lesson from a "home base" or seating chart enables better organization of students and materials.

CAREFULLY DELIVER INSTRUCTIONS
• Create and give task cards or assignment sheets.
• Avoid giving multiple directions to a class to avoid confusion and focusing on others' tasks.
• Go over tomorrow's lesson with a few responsible students.

Making A Difference Series
Strategies for Success That Students and Parents Need to Know

1. FLEXIBLE GROUPING

GOAL:
Student groups according to interests or readiness.

HOW:
Use a wide variety of grouping strategies

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT TASKS?
At times students will:
• form a circle for discussion.
• work with pre-assigned working/thinking partner
• partner with a buddy to share work
• quickly discuss an idea with partner
• work with others at their table
• do a small group project on an interest

Making A Difference Series
Jackie Buisman/differentiation in the classroom/pub/5/01
Strategies for Success continued ...

2. GETTING HELP

GOAL:
Student get help available when teacher is busy

HOW:
Give students opportunities to help; teach resources for help.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT TASKS?
At times students will:
• know several options to get help
• ask peer for clarification when stuck
• be the expert of the day; respect other experts on their day
• use learning logs to think on paper
• know it's never OK to sit and wait or disrupt someone else
  • assist in such ways as checking papers, setting up art construction, proofreading
3. TEAM WORK

GOAL:
Smooth classroom operations

HOW:
Give students as much responsibility for their learning as possible

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT TASKS?
At times students will:
• make suggestions for smooth operations
• pass out materials
• move furniture for group work
• keep records of own work
• critique other's work
• chart progress using goals
Strategies for Success continued ...

4. TIME ON TASK

GOAL:
Sense of success in the tasks

HOW:
Help all students sustain tasks for longer than what is initially comfortable for them. Time allotted for tasks should be a bit shorter than the attention span. Advanced learners often have extended attention spans. Allow a longer chunk of time for those in groups whose interest/skills not as great.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENT TASKS?
At times students will:

• sustain group and independent work
• know more than one way to solve a problem
• check for accuracy
• decrease impulsively
• frequently keep track of materials and job at hand
• clarify details