Differentiating Instruction

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Some people claim...
Differentiating instruction is the “next cure”...
the newest “fix”
“the biggest buzz”

Some educators are ready to try it.

★ Group students
★ Purchase curriculum
★ More practice

Shouldn’t we ask 2 important questions?

Did you ask?
★ What is differentiated instruction?
★ Is it SBR?
★ How can it happen in classrooms?
★ Who does it help?
★ Where does it work?
★ What were the outcomes?
Differentiating instruction

★ Research definition…
  Alternative matching instruction
to meet the different needs of learners
in a given classroom… that includes
small groups & increased practice opportunities
in the form of Reading Centers (FCRR, 2006)

Differentiating instruction

★ Teachers report…
  ★ Grouping for instruction
  ★ Individualizing instruction
  ★ Assigning different activities/materials

Research reports

★ No scientific base (SBR)
Research reports
★ **NO scientific base (SBR)**

Characteristics are SBR...
★ GROUPING
★ TEACHING IN SMALL GROUPS
★ EXPLICIT, SKILLS-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION

Is differentiating instruction for?
★ reading instruction only
★ elementary students
★ low achievers
★ everyone?

Do we SING from the same song sheet?

What exactly is differentiated?
★ **Purpose**
★ **Expectations for performance**
★ **Instruction, delivery or content**
★ **Assessment, outcomes, mastery**

Maybe what we need to do...

examine characteristics of differentiated instruction ...
or teaching differently.
Instructional delivery differs

- Teaching
- Facilitated practice
- Testing

Pacing is flexible, differentiated.

Level of difficulty
learner
Instructional pacing

Classroom practice changes

- More teaching, STM & LTM
- More collaboration...Hear, see, say...do
- Partnering first, then independent
- Scaffolding, easy to difficult
- Gradual release of responsibility
- Reasonable mastery

Front load instruction:
vocabulary, oral language

Professional development is different...

Provide TIME to teach “teaching”

HOW to:
★ set routines
★ teach/train procedures
★ manage groups
★ increase teaching time
Instructional delivery differs: whole class & small groups

- FOCUS instruction, graphic organizer
- TEACH, 20 minute sessions
- MODEL, teacher-led
- DIFFERENTIATE within group, partnering
- Observed peer practice with constructive feedback

Flexible daily schedules

- 8:05-8:30 Whole class AM overview
- 8:35-9:00 Small groups
- 9:00-9:15 Whole class lesson
- 9:20-9:40 Small groups
- 9:45-10:05 Small groups
- 10:10-10:30 Whole class lesson
- 10:30-10:55 Small group practice
- 11:00-11:25 Whole class lesson
- 11:30-11:50 Wrap and review

Alternating whole & small group instruction all day

- 12:30-1:00 Whole class PM Overview
- 1:10-1:30 Small groups
- 1:35-1:50 Whole class lesson
- 2:00-2:20 Small groups
- 2:30-2:50 Small groups
- 2:55 Whole class wrap up/review

Students are engaged in 2 small groups per day with explicit, teacher-led instruction specific to need.

Class periods with less time, use fewer groups

50-60 minute class - 2 small groups

- 5-10 minute Overview, whole class, graphic organize
- 20 minutes, small groups (half class with teacher)
- 20 minutes, small groups (other half of class)
- 5-10 minutes, Wrap Session, whole class

- Alternate teaching one group M/W, one T/Th, and practice with partners/work independently on Friday
Differentiate responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Week 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>Carlos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart Caller</td>
<td>Mary Ann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice Level Monitor</td>
<td>Michelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Monitor</td>
<td>Randall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use a Job Chart
- Share work
- Be responsible
- Be accountable

Differentiate delivery...
rotate groups through activities

**Teaching Table**

- Jose
- Laurie
- Bianca
- Ming
- Melanie
- Gabrielle
- Kensey

**Workstations**
List of student names

**Worktable**
List of student names

Teachers report...
differentiating instruction creates...
- Decrease in behavior problems
- Increase in student participation
- Increase in teaching time
- Improvement in student performance
- Successful learning & greater achievement

*Why does this occur?*
More questions...

Does teaching in small groups ensure differentiated instruction?

Will student comprehension & achievement increase with better instruction in small groups?

Is changing delivery JUST the beginning of teaching differently?

More questions...

Does teaching in small groups ensure differentiated instruction?

Will student comprehension & achievement increase with better instruction in small groups?

Plan of Action:
WEEK ONE

FOCUS: Behavior & Environment—not academic!

- Set up 3-4 groups– form compatible groups
- Physically organize the classroom
- Develop schedule(s) – flexible to needs daily
- Job & rotation chart
- Assign & teach jobs, COACH performances
- Teach basic communication & conflict resolution skills
Plan of Action: WEEK TWO

**FOCUS: PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!**
- Students with Week One jobs teach Week Two job assignments
- Begin administering assessments to determine skill needs for academic grouping in small group
- Brag on EFFORTS and COACH performance

Plan of Action: WEEK THREE

**FOCUS: Begin moving toward an academic focus...**
- Rotate job assignments, students with Week Two jobs teach Week Three assistants
- Use data to determine skill needs for academic grouping & form small groups
- Continue practicing routines
- Plan whole class, small group, & work station lessons
- Brag on EFFORTS...not just achievements

Plan of Action: WEEKS FOUR+

**FOCUS: Provide intensive, explicit, systematic instruction**
- TEACH, not practice...in small groups
- Adjust group memberships as data indicates
- Monitor and adjust schedule or curriculum
- Use Student Contracts or Do/Done folders
- Continue rotating jobs for assistants
- Acknowledge students' success in managing their own behaviors...self-regulation is a GOOD thing.

**Differentiated Instruction:**
Grouping Students for Success
By Vicki Gibson, Ph. D,
Jan Hasbrouck, Ph. D.
available from Amazon.com

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