



SHELL
EDUCATION

Activities for a

Differentiated Classroom

STANDARDS & RESEARCH BASED

Interactive
Whiteboard-
Compatible CD



Level

5

Developed by

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Understanding Differentiation

As I conduct workshops with teachers of all ages and grade levels, I hear a familiar tune: *Differentiating curriculum is worrisome and stressful*. I believe this is due to the fact that teachers do not know how to begin differentiating. Their administrators tell them that they must differentiate, but teachers are overwhelmed with the task of doing it because there is not a clear explanation of what to do. Teachers know the theory. They know they need to do it. They just do not know *how* to do it.

The right way to differentiate depends on the unique students in a classroom. To successfully differentiate, teachers must first know their students. Knowing what academic level students are at helps us understand where to begin. When we have students who do not succeed, we find out why they are not succeeding. Then, we look for the type of support that they need to help them learn specific concepts. We make adjustments when students have trouble comprehending material. We look for new ways to present information, new manipulatives that make sense, and opportunities to provide additional support. As our struggling students grow, we can then scaffold the amount of support that we provide so that students continue to grow instead of leaning too heavily on that support. Differentiation is about meeting the needs of *all* students and providing the right amount of challenge for *all* students.

What Should I Differentiate and Why?

Many teachers have heard the terms *content*, *process*, and *product* when it comes to differentiating curriculum, but few have the time to ponder how these words apply to what they do in their classrooms. Below is a chart that briefly defines how we differentiate and why we differentiate.

Differentiating Curriculum







How	Why
Vary the Content (what is taught)	Readiness (students are not at the same academic level)
Vary the Process (how it is taught)	Learning Styles (students prefer different ways of learning)
Vary the Product (what students produce)	Interests (students have different passions)

Differentiation Strategies in This Book



What Differentiation Strategies Can I Use?

Each book in the *Activities for a Differentiated Classroom* series introduces a selection of differentiation strategies. Each lesson in this book uses one of the six differentiation strategies outlined below. The strategies are used across different curriculum areas and topics to provide you with multiple real-world examples.

Differentiation Strategy		Lessons in This Book
	Tiered Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book in a Day—<i>Language Arts</i> • Exploring Volume—<i>Mathematics</i> • Rock Investigation—<i>Science</i> • The Civil War—<i>Social Studies</i>
	Tiered Graphic Organizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing with Details—<i>Language Arts</i> • Equivalent Fractions—<i>Mathematics</i> • Animal Adaptations—<i>Science</i> • Revolutionary Social Networking—<i>Social Studies</i>
	Bloom's Taxonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Response—<i>Language Arts</i> • Introducing Algebra—<i>Mathematics</i> • Inherited Traits—<i>Science</i> • Reconstruction—<i>Social Studies</i>
	Menu of Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasive Practice—<i>Language Arts</i> • Geometry Wrap-Up—<i>Mathematics</i> • Forces and Motion—<i>Science</i> • Colonial America—<i>Social Studies</i>
	Choices Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying Genres—<i>Language Arts</i> • Number Sense—<i>Mathematics</i> • Food Chains—<i>Science</i> • Declaration of Independence—<i>Social Studies</i>
	Leveled Learning Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Inferences—<i>Language Arts</i> • Long Division Algorithm—<i>Mathematics</i> • The Scientific Method—<i>Science</i> • Westward Expansion—<i>Social Studies</i>

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