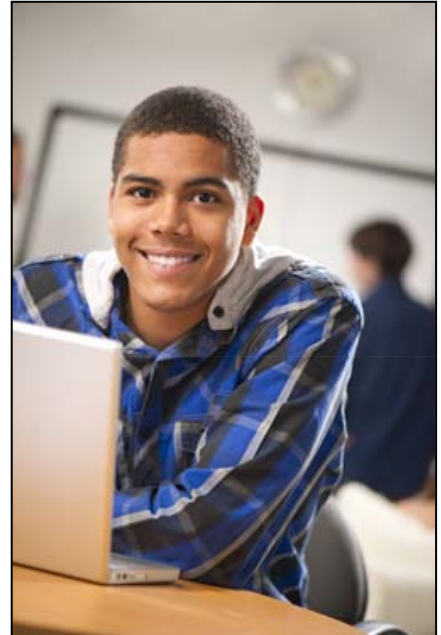


Differentiation of Online Instruction



Whether teaching online or in a F2F classroom, understanding the basic principles of differentiation is important to both the success of the teacher as well as the success of the students in understanding and applying the learning objectives in a course of study. The theory of differentiated instruction is based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms (Tomlinson 2001). The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible and adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners.



According to Tomlinson, the following are important principles of a differentiated classroom:

- The teacher is clear about what is important in subject matter.
- All students participate in respectful work.
- The teacher understands, appreciates, and builds on students' differences.
- Assessment and instruction are inseparable.
- The teacher adjusts content, process, and product in response to students' readiness, interests, and learning profile.
- Students and teachers are collaborators.
- The goals of a differentiated classroom are maximum growth and individual success.
- Flexibility is the hallmark of a differentiated classroom.

Source: Tomlinson, Carole Ann, and Susan Demirsky Allan. *Leadership for Differentiating Schools and Classrooms*. Alexandria, Va.: ASCD, 2000.

Additional Resources



[What Works in K–12 Online Learning](#): Cathy Cavanaugh and Robert Blomeyer;
Foreword by Susan Patrick)

[Technology Tips for Differentiated Instruction](#): WestEd's Regional Technology in Education
Consortium (RTEC) in partnership with the Alliance for Technology Access

[The Nuts and Bolts of Differentiated Instruction](#) (June 2009) Christine L. Hill, Ph.D. Deputy Chief
of Curriculum, DoDEA: (This PDF is a Power Point that presents a basic understanding of
differentiation pedagogically.)