Celebrating Diversity in Christian Schools with Differentiation

Patricia C. Kornelis
Dordt College, pat.kornelis@dordt.edu

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Celebrating Diversity in Christian Schools with Differentiation

Abstract
Does it matter if some of your students are lost and have no idea how to connect with you and with learning? Does it matter if some of your students are consistently ahead and are spending considerable time waiting for the rest of us to catch up?

Keywords
differentiation, Christian education, academic achievement, students

Disciplines
Christianity | Education

Comments
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CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS WITH DIFFERENTIATION
IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Does it matter that YOU the teacher has a clear learning destination for your students?
- Does it matter whether or not that destination is likely to help students build stronger, more productive and responsive lives in God’s kingdom?
- Does it matter if some of your students are lost and have no idea how to connect with you and with learning?
- Does it matter if some of your students are consistently ahead and are spending considerable time waiting for the rest of us to catch up?
DID YOU ANSWER “YES” TO THESE QUESTIONS??
IMAGE-BEARING

What does this mean??
What does it require of us as educators?
Let’s look at the case studies to determine the characteristics and the definition of differentiation.

Definition:
A systematic approach to planning curriculum and instruction for academically diverse learners.
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

• Based on learners’ needs (readiness, learning profile, interests)
• Takes various forms: content, process, product
• Requires continuous and ongoing assessment
• Requires flexibility
• Requires high-quality curriculum
STEP 1: KNOW YOUR LEARNERS
THE CANOE DILEMMA

• Nineteen people need to cross the river. It is too rapid to swim and there is only one canoe. Only three people can fit into the canoe at one time. One of the three must be an adult. Only one person is an adult. How many trips across the river will be needed to get all the children to the other side of the river?
HOW???
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Academic Characteristics</th>
<th>Behavioral Characteristics</th>
<th>Motivational Characteristics</th>
<th>Your teaching actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most struggling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most challenging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 2: KNOW YOUR CONTENT

• Importance of learning objectives
  • KNOW
  • UNDERSTAND
  • DO
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION: TIERING
WHAT IS IT?

• using varied levels of tasks to ensure that students explore ideas and use skills at a level that builds on what they already know and encourages growth

• All explore the same essential ideas but work at different levels of thought
1. Identify the key concepts and understanding you want all your students to learn.
2. Using pre-assessments, formative and ongoing assessments determine the readiness level of your students so that you can design tasks that will help them learn the key concepts and still challenge them.
3. Design different tasks that all meet the same objective and assign students to those tasks.
BIOLOGY LAB EXAMPLE
MEASUREMENT EXAMPLE
WHAT CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE DIFFERENTIATION DO YOU SEE IN THIS TIERED LESSON?
WHAT ARE IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS THAT EXCELLENT TIERED ACTIVITIES MUST CONTAIN?
DIFFERENT WORK – NOT SIMPLY MORE OR LESS WORK
EQUALLY ACTIVE
EQUALLY INTERESTING AND ENGAGING
YOUR TURN

1. Choose a concept/skill that is important for ALL your learners to understand
2. Think about your students (including those described in your earlier chart)
3. Describe an activity that is interesting, meaningful and meets the learning objectives.
   a. Which students will this activity best serve?
4. Design the different tiers.