
Contents

Foreword	4
Introduction	6
Chapter 1	
What Does Differentiated Instruction Mean in Kindergarten?	10
Chapter 2	
Modalities and Intelligences: The Channels for Learning	17
Chapter 3	
Building a Profile for Your Learners	27
Chapter 4	
Setting the Stage for Differentiating	55
Chapter 5	
A Menu of Skill-Building Activities to Satisfy Every Learner's Appetite	83
Professional References	125
Children's Literature Cited	127
Index	128

Strategies to Engage All Learners

TO ENGAGE VISUAL LEARNERS

- Use highlighting tape in text
- Make reference to posters and visuals around the room
- Point on the map when referencing different states, countries
- Show filmstrips, videotapes
- Diagram a story through a story web
- Use expressive body language and gestures
- Point out details in photos and illustrations
- Display word walls for themes, sight words, names

TO ENGAGE AUDITORY LEARNERS

- Read aloud often
- Offer a listening center
- Teach rhymes for making numbers, letters
- Sing to learn skills
- Vary pitch and tone of voice
- Encourage retellings and Readers Theater
- Provide puppets
- Demonstrate use of phonics phones

TO ENGAGE KINESTHETIC AND TACTILE LEARNERS

- Model role-playing and acting out
- Use gross-motor activities to reinforce concepts
- Allow active participation in experiments and demonstrations
- Provide props for story retelling
- Encourage standing when answering questions
- Practice writing in cornmeal, sand, or salt
- Make music, rhythm, and keeping the beat an integral part of lessons
- Supply clay, acetate sheets, and whiteboards for writing practice

was his or her rank in the classroom or according to state or national norms. In today's standards-driven educational environment, those numbers are still an important part of the learning profile. However, with current research supporting more child-centered, *differentiated* education, teachers are realizing that achievement must be monitored in a variety of ways that gauge each child's individual growth, and they plan instruction that will best support the child as he or she takes the next step in learning.

The Whys of Assessment

ASSESSMENT DATA HELPS US:	TEACHER REFLECTIONS
1. For each child, define instructional areas that need adjustment, reinforcement, extension, or challenge.	<i>Janet already knows sets and numbers to 10. I can encourage her to begin writing the number words for the sets when we're practicing.</i>
2. Plan group activities and individual mini-lessons that target specific areas for growth.	<i>Both Hunter and Liam are still naming /g/ with the /j/ sound. I'll pull them aside during center time and do a follow-up lesson.</i>
3. Celebrate and nurture the child's own development, and include the child in that awareness.	<i>Kenny! Look at the way you are writing your name now. Just last week, you weren't happy with how it looked. You have worked hard, and it shows!</i>
4. Effectively communicate to parents about progress and achievement.	<i>Look at these two math work samples, dated six weeks apart. Sherelle has gone from simply identifying a pattern to now extending and creating her own patterns!</i>
5. Evaluate and revise our plans for instruction based on student needs.	<i>Seventeen children are still mixing up the nickel and the quarter. I need to reteach that in another way and give them more practice.</i>

Home to School . . . and Back Again

A Quick Note to or From the Teacher

Dear Families,

This sheet should stay in your child's folder all month. If you need to ask a quick question or let me know something, jot it here. I check the folders every morning. Likewise, if I need to send you a comment, it will be here. Please initial, so that I know you have read it! (I'll do the same for you!)

Date	Comments, questions, concerns about _____ child's name	Initials

A Look Inside a Differentiated Classroom:

It is early in the school year. The children and Ms. K are gathered on the rug. Today Jenna is sitting in the Champ's Chair because yesterday's "champ," Diego, drew Jenna's name from the pile of name cards. Jenna is today's Newsworthy Name.

Ms. K's objectives in the daily Newsworthy Name activity is to build phonemic awareness, draw attention to the phonetic qualities within each child's name, and build self-esteem and confidence as each child becomes the daily star of the show. She knows that the most interesting and meaningful word to most kindergarten children is their own name, followed by the names of people they care about (Mommy, Daddy, and friends' names). By using one name a day, Ms. K teaches early reading skills that are accessible to all children.

Together Ms. K and Jenna lead the class through all the name activities they have done with each Newsworthy Name. The class spells Jenna's name, raps Jenna's name, counts the letters, claps out the syllables, does a Names-ercise with the letters, and watches as Jenna cuts the letters on her name card apart and mixes them up in the pocket chart. Ms. K puts an uncut card of Jenna's configured name in the pocket chart and asks, "Jenna, do you want to reassemble your name, or do you want a friend to come up and do it?" Jenna chooses Audra, who bounces to the pocket chart and says, "I don't need to look at the card. I know how to do Jenna's name. She sits at my table."

Ms. K leads the group through a discussion of other names and words that begin with *J* and whether *j* is in the beginning, middle, or ending part of the alphabet. Everyone agrees that the alphabet picture of the *j-j-jeep* does indeed have the same beginning sound as *J-J-Jenna*.

Ms. K quickly reviews the rules and procedures for centers that the children have been working on this week and dismisses a few children at a time to check the Center Board to see which center they will complete today.

In a few minutes, Ms. K's classroom is quietly buzzing. Children, in groups of four and five, are working with their names and their friends' names.

Brendan, Rosa, and Bradley are working with Name Grids and Pictures. Brendan, a solid, adventurous learner, looks at the picture on the card and says, "That's Megan. I know her name starts with *M* and has a /g/ sound. That would be a *g* in the middle." Brendan lays Megan's picture on the word *Megan* and sees no need to check the back of the picture for verification. "Your turn," he announces as he pushes the Name Board toward Rosa.

Rosa, a competent learner, but not a risk taker, picks up a picture. Rosa says, "Oh, I know Robert. His name starts with my letter, *R*. Here's my name on the board. This other *R* must be Robert." Rosa turns the picture over, checks for Robert's name, and deposits the picture in the box on the grid.

Bradley is a hesitant, struggling learner, yet he approaches the name board with confidence. He picks up a picture and studies the face for a few seconds. He shrugs and turns the picture over to expose the name. He obviously neither recognizes the child nor can read the name, but Bradley begins moving the card from box to box on the grid until he proudly finds the letters that match the card he is holding. "Look, you guys, I found a match! It's him!" At this point, Bradley looks around the classroom, finds the classmate whose picture and name he has just matched, and points triumphantly to Mikey. Bradley, too, has found success, and has connected to his classmates while accessing important neural passageways.

Ms. K will keep the Name Grids and Pictures center available to children for five to six days, or until this center rotation is complete. She may then add it to the shelf of sponge activities as a free choice for an additional week or two. She knows the time invested in creating the center will pay off again later in the year when she brings it out again. With more skills and experience, children will then approach it differently. By adding a recording sheet to the center, she can ask children to write names, grouping them according to beginning sounds or number of claps (syllables), or to write sentences using the names once they have completed the grid.