

Tool B4: Differentiated Instruction Rubric

Why this tool is important: Differentiation is used to accommodate the range of student abilities that exist within a single classroom. This ensures all students receive meaningful and relevant instruction that connects to their prior knowledge and addresses their individual needs. Research has demonstrated that effective differentiated instruction incorporates many of the elements listed in the rubric. The rubric provides a way to assess evidence of differentiated instruction in the classroom. Some elements of this rubric are based on the work of Carol Ann Tomlinson (see references and resources).

How to use this tool: This tool can be used by individual teachers to self-assess or by other individuals at the request of the teacher to provide peer feedback. One should not expect to see (or use) all of the components listed on this rubric in any one lesson, but, over time, evidence related to all sections should emerge. Complete the items below by providing a rating (0 = not evident, 1 = minimally evident, 2 = partially evident, 3 = fully evident) for each section. After completing this rubric – on one occasion or multiple occasions (to have increased data points) – information can be used to guide discussions about excellent differentiation skills and any areas needing improvement.

KNOWLEDGE-CENTERED CLASSROOM	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lesson is based on clear objectives (based on learning goals and content standards), and all students are supported to meet those objectives. Students are presented with tasks that are appropriately challenging (e.g., from questioning, student work) and focused on achieving the learning objectives. 					
LEARNER-CENTERED CLASSROOM	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher demonstrates an understanding of individual student skills and characteristics. The classroom instruction and classroom environment are culturally sensitive. 					
PACING	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides adequate time to gauge student prior knowledge. Students have sufficient time to meet the lesson objectives given different learner needs. 					
GROUPING	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher utilizes varied instructional groupings (whole group, small groups, partners, heterogeneous, and homogenous groups). The teacher interacts with all of the different groups during the course of the lesson. The teacher circulates among the groups to ensure students are learning and provide feedback. 					
MATERIALS	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The materials in the classroom environment allow for all learner needs (i.e., materials at different levels, allow for multiple learning styles.) The materials are accessible by students. 					
PROACTIVE PLANNING AND INSTRUCTION	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lesson plan reflects potential struggles students may have with content. The lesson is differentiated on one or more of the following variables: 					

CONTENT	0	1	2	3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher has prioritized what content students are expected to learn (e.g. essential material vs. incidental facts/enrichment). 					
PROCESS	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher has differentiated the method by which students gain access to the content (e.g. audio, visuals, guided notes, technological assistance) The teacher has planned for different activities by which students can engage in or make sense of the content (based on student interest, need, learning style, etc.) 					
PRODUCT	0	1	2	3	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher has planned various performance indicators for students to demonstrate evidence of learning (tiered assessments, choice of culminating products, etc.) 					