

## In this Session...

- A very brief overview of differentiation
- A reminder of why it matters

### Later in the day

A look at some strategies that support attention to students' varied learning needs...



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## The idea of differentiation



is NOT new

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## Differentiation is based on a simple set of principles:

Students differ as learners.  
The differences matter in learning.

Teachers are more successful in helping each student achieve when they systematically plan with those differences in mind.



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Chenoch et He Neez  
Al Pi Darcho

King Solomon

הנך הגער על פי דרכו

“Educate the child  
according  
To his way”

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“خاطبوا الناس على  
قدر عقولهم”

\* حديث مشرف  
عن محمد بن عبد الله الصلوة والسلام

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**At its most basic level, differentiating instruction means “*shaking up*” what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn.**



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Differentiation is planning for the unpredictability of a classroom.



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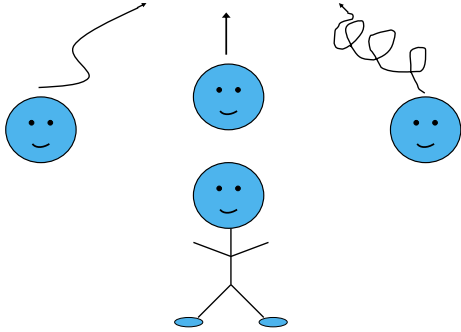
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**Learning Result**



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There's an App for that!



"When I think of differentiation, I think of an Apple iPhone—no matter what you're trying to accomplish, 'There's an app for that.'"

I think of DI from the perspective of finding appropriate resources to meet a learner's needs. No matter where they are developmentally, there are resources, Strategies, and best practices to get them what they need.

That's what the iPhone commercials remind me of—and I love them for their resourcefulness!"

Amy Sherwin  
A teacher in Michigan

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**DIFFERENTIATION IS  
RESPECTFUL  
TEACHING**

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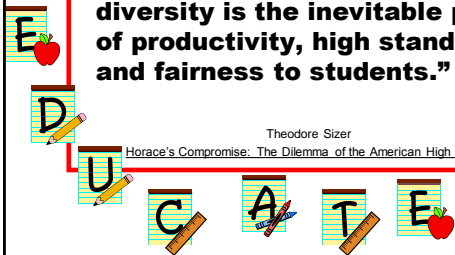
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**"That students differ may be inconvenient but it is inescapable. Adapting to that diversity is the inevitable price of productivity, high standards, and fairness to students."**

TheodoreSizer  
Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School



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"First of all," he said, "If you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view..."

"Sir?"

"...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

--Harper Lee  
*To Kill a Mockingbird*



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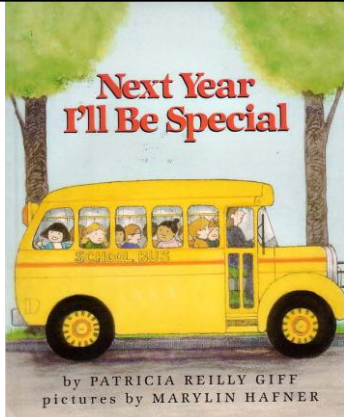
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*Everyone  
Should have something to point to,  
Something to be proud of,  
Look what I did,  
See what I've done,  
I did the job,*



***I was the one.***

From *Working* by The Paradigm Players

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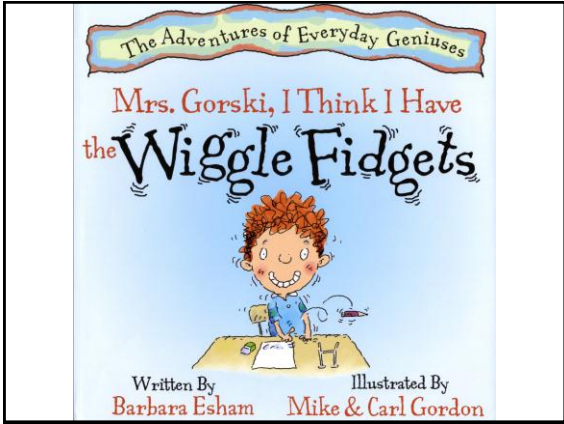
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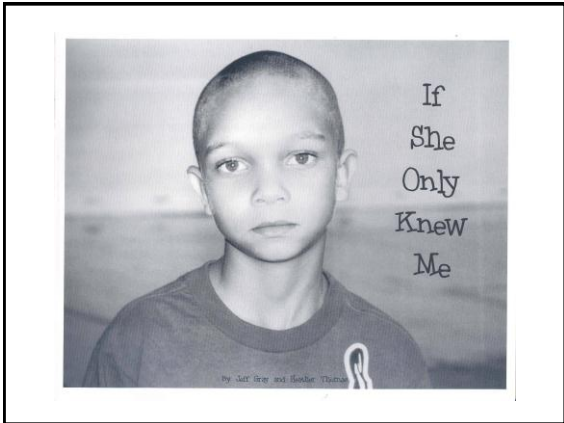
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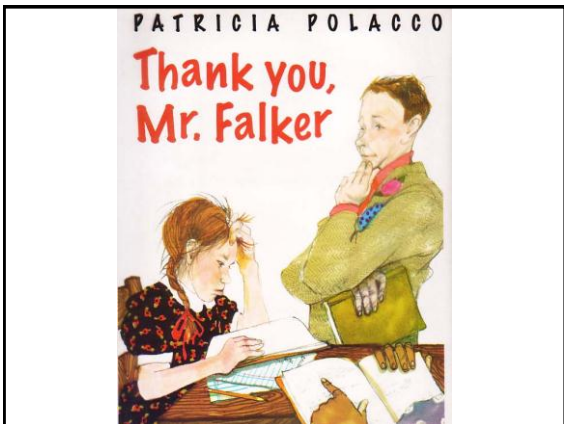
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## Letter From Anne



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*Dear Miss Brin,*

*Yesterday you got really really mad in class. I didn't argue with you, because that just makes you madder and being yelled at makes my stomach feel funny and I can't think. But I want to say what happened. Maybe you will understand why it looks like I don't pay attention in class.*

*Letter  
from Anne*

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*You told us to open our books to page 4 and read silently. Then you asked everyone to put your hand up if we had finished the third page and Sean didn't. You waited for him to finish the page. Then you told us to take turns reading out loud.*



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*When you got to me, I started asking you what paragraph to start on and you started yelling at me. You asked a lot of questions but you didn't let me answer any of them. You answered them yourself but the things you said weren't true answers!*

*This is what happened...*



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*I started reading when you said. I finished the chapter and stopped because you get mad if I read any more. I didn't get out another book because that makes you mad too. I didn't doodle or talk to Sarah or get up or walk around because those things make you mad. So I worked on my Greek in my head until you called on me.*

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*I tried to keep track of where the other kids were when they were reading. And I had the right page. I just didn't hear where Kim stopped. Her voice is sooo quiet and the verb I was saying was too loud in my head. So it's not true that I was day dreaming! And I'm not stuck up or arrogant or insolent or any of those things you said I was! I TRY to follow along, but I CAN'T read that slow!!*

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*You said you got mad because I was wasting everybody's time. But I just asked "which paragraph, Miss Brin?" Look at your watch and say it too. It takes 2 seconds. You could have said the third paragraph." That takes 2.1 seconds. I timed it too. Then Sarah R and Amy B would have 6 minutes to read aloud. Instead you yelled at ME for 6 minutes and they did not get to read any thing!*

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*Peter takes almost a whole minute to read "Ben heard the bear cough behind him." I timed him. It's a game I made up to pay attention instead of doing greek or making up poems in my head. If I ask you what paragraph and you tell me it still takes me less than half a minute for me to read a whole paragraph.*




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*So I guess I don't understand why you are mad or why you used 6 minutes to tell the class what a bad stupid mean person I am because I wasted their time for 4 seconds. I think YOU wasted their time!!! And I think YOU were mean to call me those names in front of everybody.*




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*I don't know HOW to not think! I don't know HOW to read slow! Please tell me what to do so it won't make you mad at me all the time. And PLEASE don't yell at me in class.*

*Love,  
your sad student,  
Anne*



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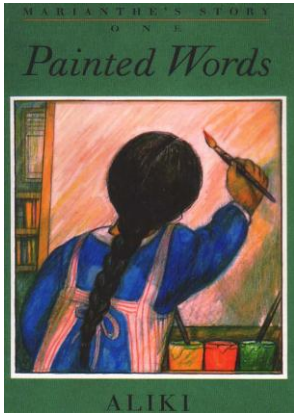
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I won't be in class today.  
I don't know where I'll be.  
I just know I can't go home any more.  
I wanted you to know just in case you were worried.  
I wouldn't want you to worry.

Janet

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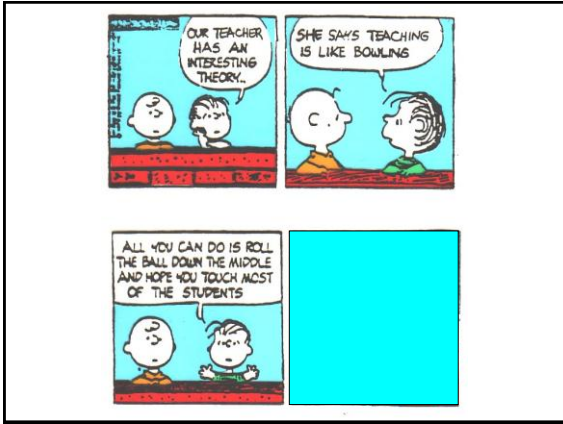
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TheodoreSizer  
Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School

E D U C A T E

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**Teaching is essentially about building lives.**

Jane Tompkins  
A Life in School:  
What the Teacher Learned

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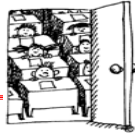
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The biggest mistake of past centuries in teaching has been to treat all children as if they were variants of the same individual and thus to feel justified in teaching them all the same subjects in the same ways.

Howard Gardner - *Phi Delta Kappan* -  
March, 1994 - p.564




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### HOW THE KIDS THINK . . .

Students in Marian Gilewicz's class in Yellowknife, were skating after a week of indoor recesses due to -40 temperature. On returning to the class, one student commented on the wide range of skate sizes in the class. Another student said, "That's like our clothes sizes." Another chimed, "It's like how we learn." Their teacher -- who systematically differentiates instruction said, "I couldn't pass that one up." So for the day's journal assignment, she asked:

"What is different-sized learning?"

#### Here's some of what the kids said



David Carlson

age 10

If everybody had to learn the same thing at the same time in the same way, it would be too easy or too hard because everybody is different, not the same. If it were like that, I would be bored because school would be too easy or bored because it would be too hard.



Sonja Len Martin-Elsom

age 8

Different-sized learning is when you learn at the right level that is just the right amount of work for you. Not too much and not too little . . .

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#### Here's some of what the kids said



Bryan Pinn

age 10

Different sized learning is different people having different activities because they have different learning needs. Imagine if everybody had to do the same thing! 'Whew! And well, thank goodness it's not like that in our classroom.



Jeremy Clarke

age 10

What would happen if we all had to learn everything just alike? Well, we probably wouldn't go to school because we would ask our parents to get home-schooled. Thank goodness our school isn't like that!



Shelby Bravvold

age 10

Different sized learning is sort of the way we are in all subjects because no one is the same in a subject. People are different in learning.



Rebecca

age 10

With different size learning we wouldn't understand so much and our marks would be lower. When we work so it's right for us, our marks grow. Sometimes Mrs. G. tells us what to do and sometimes we pick. It helps us work our way up.

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Here's some of what the kids said



Danyk  
age 9

If we all had to learn alike, it would be disastrous and just plain boring. A better thing is just to be myself and work with the work Mrs. G. gives me.



Yellowknife, NWT, Canada • Jan 2004

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Here's some of what the kids said



Garrick  
age 9

If we didn't have different sized learning, it would be like everybody having the same job in this world. Now don't you think that's boring?



Daniel T.  
age 10

If we had to learn exactly alike, we'd quit being unique. People wouldn't develop their special qualities.



Shawn Thagard  
age 9

If it weren't for different size learning, we would have no challenge at all. Lots of people have lots of different learning abilities. Without different size learning we would be frustrated or else start anticipating everything. If you destroy the balance between student and work you plunge the school into chaos—a sort of educational dark age.

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"This semester a differentiated class has made me stronger not only as a student, but also as an individual. This class has given me the freedom to push myself, and see how well I can do on my own...I really *can* succeed by pushing myself."

--Chelsea Myers  
Colchester High (VT)

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I really like DI classes because it makes me feel like I can do (the work). It doesn't make me feel smart *or* dumb, big *or* small - it makes me feel *important*.

Meg--a high school student in Vermont



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ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

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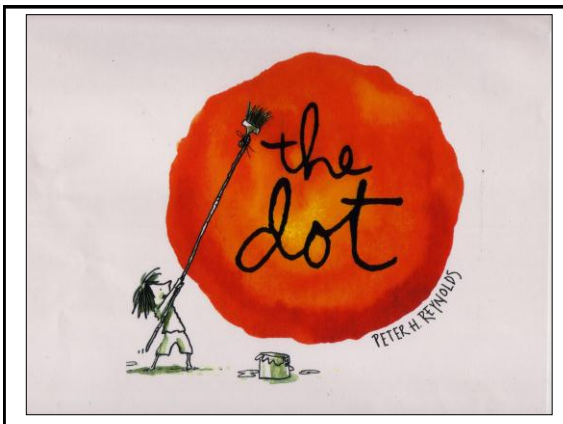
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