DIFFERENTIATING CURRICULUM FOR GIFTED LEARNERS AT JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Features of a Differentiated Classroom

Acceleration	Complexity	Depth	Creativity
Assign fewer tasks to master standard	Use multiple higher level skills at once	Study a concept in multiple applications	Design/construct a model based on principles or criteria
Assess earlier or prior to teaching	Add more variables	Conduct original research	Provide alternatives for tasks, products & assessments
Cluster by higher order thinking skills	Use multiple resources	Develop original product	Emphasize oral and written communication to real world audience
Resources for the gifted used		Make cross-disciplinary connection/applications	
Sophisticated content used		Reasoning made explicit	

Q1 - Differentiation Report

Content: ELA 8 **Unit: Memoirs**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Choice of mentor texts based on reading level/interest
- Ability grouping by reading ability or interest level
- Goal setting based on RI scores. Students encouraged to read books of their choice
- Writing conferences - Students are provided personalized feedback on their writing
- Peer review: students paired with others based on interest and/or ability level
- Enrichment writing opportunities: students encouraged to enter the PTA Reflections writing contest
- Word Study: students find their own weekly vocabulary words that include Latin/Greek prefixes, suffixes, and root words

Content: ELA 7 **Unit: Me Magazine**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Mentor texts of varying complexities
- Multiple modalities on summative
- Extra writing opportunities: over the course of Q1 students were encouraged to enter the PTA reflections writing contest.
- Personalized feedback
- Kelly Gallagher's 30-15-10 word part list
- One-on-one conferences
- Independent reading - students set a goal for progress based on their RI scores
- Personalized reflections post-summative

Content: ELA 6 **Unit: Characters in Conflict**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Choice of independent reading text
- Comparing the retelling of stories from various points of view
- Emphasis on using evidence to support analysis of text
- Heterogeneous and homogeneous student grouping based on ability and interests

Q1 - Differentiation Report

Content: Science 8 **Unit: Physical and Chemical Property Changes**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Socratic Seminar (critical and creative thinking framework): Student-led discussion on the ethical questions surrounding the case of Henrietta Lacks and HeLa cells. Promoted analytical and critical thinking skills,
- Pre-assessment (using data to inform instruction): Before beginning the unit students were asked to differentiate between physical and chemical properties and physical and chemical changes. Teachers used data from this to plan in-class learning activities for students with strong background knowledge.
- Lab activity (increased complexity): Gifted students were able to test all known and unknown substances in the CSI Missing Cake Lab while other students were tasked with one substance per group. Gifted students were also asked to answer lab questions at a higher level and without group assistance.

Content: Science 7 **Unit: Characteristics of Life**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Content Leveled Readers (ex: Science Journals for Kids - https://sciencejournalforkids.org/; NewsELA, Frontiers for Young Minds https://kids.frontiersin.org/)
- Strategic Grouping/Strategic Partnering
- Digital Media - Simulations/Visuals: Gizmos
- Practical Laboratory Exercises - (ex: Observing D. magna with Microscopes)
- Specify Differentiated Product (ex: Tier 1 - Tier 2 - Tier 3)
- Choice Boards (i.e., multiple options, multiple products)
- Independent Project (Student-generated)

Content: Science 6 **Unit: Astronomy**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Scale model task: Students will receive reduced guidance to construct an accurate scale model of the solar system (original task specifies step-by-step instructions with more structure).
- Gizmos: Seasons: Why do we have them? : Students will complete a digital simulation related to angle of sunlight in lieu of a direct instruction task.
- Seasons on a mystery planet task: Students may design a mystery planet and explain how seasons occur on that planet.
- “More on Dwarf Planets” NASA task
- Planetary comparison task: Students will use higher-level resource (NASA website) to complete research
- Higher level reading content presented in lieu of grade-level texts. Textbooks include Earth Science (high school) and Foundations of Astronomy (college-level).

Q1 - Differentiation Report

Content: Geography 8 **Unit: Canada and United States**

Differentiation Strategies:

Zombie Project

- Group work/discussion: students grouped by ability level and/or interest level
- Peer review: students paired with others based on interest and/or ability level
- Extension opportunities for historical relationships to geography and political systems of a region

Unit 2 Canada and US Mapping Lab

- Group work/discussion: students grouped by ability level and/or interest level

Great Migration DBQ

- Enrichment sources provided
- Student choice for primary and secondary sources
- RTG co-teaching for the writing process

Content: Civics 7 **Unit: Foundations of Government**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Process - choice in how students receive information
- Product - choice in how students choose to demonstrate understanding of content.
- Formatted poetry choices for Constitution summative assessment
- Choices for Duty or Responsibility Meme and Explanation

Content: Math 6 **Unit: Coordinate Graphing & Integer Operations**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Open Middle Problems
- Marcy Cook Tiles
- Number Sense Routines
- Use of hands on integer chips and Braining Camp to connect the visual to the abstract
- Extension opportunities available (inquiry based)

Q1 - Differentiation Report

Content: Pre-Algebra 6 **Unit: Coordinate Graphing, Integer Operations, Ordering and Comparing Real Numbers**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Open Middle Problems
- Number Sense Routines
- Spiraling Questions to spark critical thinking
- Use of hands on integer chips and Braining Camp to connect the visual to the abstract
- Extension opportunities available (inquiry based)

Content: Math 7 **Unit: Rational Numbers & Pythagorean Theorem**

Differentiation Strategies:

- Open Middle Problems
- Number Sense Routines
- Spiraling Questions to spark critical thinking
- Choice Boards
- Use of hands on algebra tiles and Braining Camp to connect the visual to the abstract
- Extension opportunities available (inquiry based)

Content: Pre-Algebra 7 **Unit: Rational Numbers & Pythagorean Theorem**

Differentiation Strategies

- Open Middle Problems
- Number Sense Routines
- Spiraling Questions to spark critical thinking
- Choice Boards/ Station work
- Student Choice
- Use of hands on algebra tiles and Braining Camp to connect the visual to the abstract
- Extension opportunities available (inquiry based)

Q1 - Differentiation Report

Content: Pre-Algebra 8

Unit: Proportional Reasoning with Consumer Application

Differentiation Strategies:

- Number Sense Routines
- Spiraling Questions to spark critical thinking
- Self-paced Desmos lesson
- Personalized Learning
- Student Choice
- Open Middle Problems

Content: Algebra & Algebra Intensified

Unit: Exponents, Expressions, Equations, Absolute Value (intensified)

Differentiation Strategies:

- Number Sense Routines
- Spiraling Questions to spark critical thinking
- Self-paced Desmos lesson
- Personalized Learning
- Student Choice
- Open Middle Problems