Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners Project

# Aim:

This project provides experience in differentiating instruction for advanced learners. It focuses on modifying an existing lesson plan that you have taught or plan to teach soon, using principles explained in the related Foundational Concept. This project has three specific learning outcomes, which are keyed to Ohio’s Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Students Who are Gifted, as indicated in the table below.

# Standards and Project Outcomes:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Standard | Outcome One | Outcome Two | Outcome Three |
| The ability to differentiate instruction based on a student’s readiness, knowledge and skill level, including using accelerated content, complexity, depth, challenge, creativity and abstractness. | A lesson plan that differentiates instruction to accommodate one or more advanced learners presently in the participant’s classroom. | Teaching a lesson that accommodates one or more advanced learners presently in the participant’s classroom. | Reflections on the experience of teaching a lesson that accommodates one or more advanced learners presently in the participant’s classroom. |

## Background Information

Before completing the project, read the OLAC foundational concept, *Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners.* Briefly review the foundational concept, *Access to Advanced Curriculum for Advanced Learners*. Also keep the importance of acceleration in mind as you think about the lesson you develop.

## Estimated Completion Time

Ten hours

# Procedures

NOTE: Teachers completing this project may need to search the internet for lesson plans. Possible sites include:

(1) the National Education Association’s *Lesson Plans* site <http://www.nea.org/tools/LessonPlans.html>

(2) Scholastic’s Common Sense for Common Core lesson site <http://commoncore.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans>

(3) BetterLesson <https://betterlesson.com/commoncore>

***Step 1: Center.*** This plan for differentiation should address the needs of all students in your classroom. The focus of the project, though, is to provide—when differentiating instruction for everyone—a more advanced level of engagement for advanced learners, including students who are gifted. Remember to be culturally responsive as you think this through!

***Step 2: Select.*** Select a lesson plan: either one you are already using or one from an online source if you want to try a new lesson plan. This should be something you will teach soon.

***Step 3: Review and Think.*** Review the foundational concept, *Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners* and select an approach to differentiation. Think about which approach you want to take. There are many different approaches to choose from, experience may eventually prove that you have a preference for a certain approach that matches your style of teaching.

***Step 4: Differentiate.*** Whatever method you have chosen, differentiation allows you to address the same standard (and sometimes the same learning target) with each student. But it also asks you to create different activities for different learners. The form of differentiation will vary according to the approach you chose in Step 3. For the advanced-learner portion of this planning, keep in mind the characteristics of the advanced learners in your class.

***Step 5: Write it up.*** The form of your differentiation plan is up to you. This is to be a plan for all students in your classroom, even though the focus of the project is on advanced learners.

***Step 6: Teach.*** Teach the lesson and think about how it goes. Maybe you can invite an observer to be present (e.g., a member of your TBT) or you could make an audio or video recording of the lesson. In any case, write down reflections about the lesson as soon as possible.

# Reflections

The products of learning for this project include three reflections. Each reflection should be at least one to three pages in length. The tables below provide the required components for these reflections. ***Submit your three reflections to your district’s facilitator for the Gifted Education PD.***

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| Reflection One – Planning for Differentiated Instruction |
| Description of original lesson | What is the grade level? What standard does it address? What learning target(s)? Is this a new lesson plan or one you have used before? |
| Lesson choice | Why did you choose this lesson? |
| Differentiation approach | What approach to differentiation did you select? Why did you choose this approach? |
| Differentiation plan | Include the revised differentiated lesson plan. Introduce it by describing the considerations that went into producing this plan. |
| Planning process reflection | How did planning the lesson feel? What were challenges you experienced when planning differentiated instruction for advanced learners? How did you overcome these challenges? What resources (district personnel or materials) did you find especially helpful to you during the planning process? |

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| Reflection Two: Delivering Differentiated Instruction |
| Teaching reflection | How did teaching the lesson feel? How did the advanced learners engage in the lesson? What differences did you notice in how advanced learners engaged with the lesson compared to their engagement in non-differentiated lessons? What parts of the lesson would you keep? What would you change? How would you use this experience to improve future instruction for advanced learners? |

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| Reflection Three: Summative Reflection |
| Using Differentiation to meet the needs of Advanced Learners | Using what you learned in the OLAC Foundational Concept, Differentiated Instruction for Advanced Learners and your experience planning and delivering differentiated instruction, explain the importance of differentiation for advanced learners and students who are gifted. Be sure to include how differentiation can address academic and social and emotional needs of these students. |

## Rubric: Differentiating Instruction for Advanced Learners Project

Participants in the Gifted Education PD might review the “distinguished” column of the rubric below as a guide to what a complete and well-executed project would look like. The person who is supervising the Gifted Education PD can use the rubric to evaluate participants’ projects. Total rubric scores of **16 or higher** are sufficient for receiving credit for the project.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criterion  | Distinguished (4 points for each criterion at this level)  | Accomplished (3 points for each criterion at this level)  | Competent (2 points for each criterion at this level)  | Emerging (1 point for each criterion at this level)  |
| Description of lesson plan  |  |  | Description is complete.  | Description is incomplete.  |
| Lesson choice  |  | The justification is very logical, and very well explained.  | The justification is logical and explained well.  | Reasons and explanations are present but could be more fully explained.  |
| Differentiation approach  |  | The justification is very logical, and very well explained.  | The justification is logical and explained well.  | Reasons and explanations are present but could be more fully explained.  |
| Differentiation plan  | The plan is clear, complete, coherent, and seems sure to work.  | The plan is complete, specifics are clear, and it makes sense as a whole.  | The plan is complete and makes sense as a whole, but specifics are vague.  | The idea makes sense in general, but specifics and coherence need more work.  |
| Planning process reflection | The reflection is complete, thoughtful, coherent, and compelling.  | The reflection is complete and thoughtful.  | The reflection is complete.  | The reflection is incomplete or insufficiently thoughtful.  |
| Teaching reflection  | The reflection is complete, thoughtful, coherent, and compelling.  | The reflection is complete and thoughtful.  | The reflection is complete.  | The reflection is incomplete or insufficiently thoughtful.  |
| Summative reflection  | The reflection is complete, thoughtful, coherent, and compelling.  | The reflection is complete and thoughtful.  | The reflection is complete.  | The reflection is incomplete or insufficiently thoughtful.  |
| Clarity of the writing  |  | The writing is clear, concise, and well organized; it uses correct grammar and spelling.  | Coherent overall; writing is clear; few grammar or spelling errors; writing is wordy or repetitive.  | The plan is not coherent; the writing is wordy; errors in spelling and grammar are too numerous.  |