A Menu of Activities in Different Intelligence Areas to Differentiate Instruction for Upper Elementary Students Related to the Book Because of Winn-Dixie

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Abstract
Today's elementary classrooms are becoming more diverse, requiring teachers to provide effective instruction to children with a wide range of academic performance, ability, background, and interest. This work focuses on the development of a menu of differentiated instructional activities for teaching literacy to upper elementary students. The author, a former elementary teacher, worked with a faculty member and her literacy methods class of undergraduate preservice elementary teachers to develop this teaching unit based on a popular, award-winning children's novel (DiCamillo, 2000). The menu of various activities organized in ten different intelligence areas (logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist, moral, and spiritual) and arranged at different levels of Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation) allows a teacher to easily select assignments designed to deepen comprehension or appreciation of this literary work to meet the individual needs of students. Each activity is accompanied by an example correct response so that teachers may gauge its demands. The reactions of preservice teachers to this project from beginning to end were examined. Before participation in the project, preservice teachers emphasized fame and recognition as being motivators and effects of publication. After participation in the project, they focused on the effects of the work on their employment opportunities, emphasizing a sense of accomplishment and downplaying fame/recognition. [5 tables, 11 references, 2 appendices]

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What is Differentiated Instruction? In a level one Spanish class, students want to find out more about the countries where Spanish is spoken, so the teacher provides a variety of resources (including sample texts, authentic documents, and Internet sites) that students can choose from in order to gather more in-depth information. Grouped according to the legend each has chosen, students read and interpret it, then demonstrate their understanding of the legend and its connection to their own lives by creating a skit, designing a children's book, or inventing a product of their choice that will be presented to the class. German II students are studying the weather. However, differentiated instruction is not merely a set of strategies and activities that Tomlinson describes differentiated instruction as factoring students’ individual learning styles and levels of readiness first before designing a lesson plan. Research on the effectiveness of differentiation shows this method benefits a wide range of students, from those with learning disabilities to those who are considered high ability. The roots of differentiated instruction go all the way back to the days of the one-room schoolhouse, where one teacher had students of all ages in one classroom. This process-related method also addresses the fact that not all students require the same amount of support from the teacher, and students could choose to work in pairs, small groups, or individually. How do we differentiate writing instruction when we have 20-30 students to consider? Here are some ways that we can differentiate to meet students' needs when we have them use writing paper: 1. Give some students paper with fewer/more lines than the paper most students are using. This can help us a) challenge higher students to write more, or b) prevent struggling students from feeling overwhelmed or insufficient because they can't fill up all the lines. Just like adults, kids think and plan in different ways. If I offer 2 different graphic organizers (that the kids already know how to use), this may help students better plan their writing – and they enjoy being able to choose, too! 5. Include word banks. Word banks are great for