

# Differentiation Planning Step #1

## **Content:**

What skills/concepts will students be expected to know and/or be able to do at the end of the unit or project?

Are all students expected to learn the same skills/concepts at the same level of difficulty/complexity?

### **Yes**

Consider differentiating the product or process.

### **No**

- Use DesCartes to identify the levels of difficulty appropriate for each student or group of students. Decide what each student will be accountable for learning.

### **Consider:**

- Group students for instruction based on their level of readiness (using RIT scores and other assessments as a guide)
  - Does the use of small groups work with this unit/project?
- If there are any students significantly above or below the rest of the group, consider ways to develop independent projects or assignments at an appropriate level of difficulty.
  - Are there students who would benefit from independent work?



# Differentiation Planning Step #2

## Product/Assessment:

How will the students show what they've learned at the end of the unit/project?

Will all students be given the same assessment?

### Yes

Consider differentiating the activities or learning materials

### No

- Can the assessment/expectations be adjusted to levels appropriate for each student or group of students?

### Consider:

- Levelled tests/assignments
  - Start with the assessment you would normally use. Use DesCartes as a guide to adjust the difficulty or complexity of each question or requirement.
- Rubrics or Checklists
  - Especially useful for projects
  - Create a rubric that would be appropriate for students in the middle. Use DesCartes as a guide for increasing or decreasing the level of difficulty for use with other students.
- Samples and links:  
<http://www.floridahotteachers.org/rubrics.htm>



# Differentiation Planning Step #3

## **Process:**

What activities, lessons and assignments are included in this project/unit?

What learning materials will be used (ie. textbooks, manipulatives, tools etc.)?

Would any of these lessons be logical choices for differentiation?

### **Consider:**

- REMINDER: Not every lesson can be (or should be) differentiated. There are times when whole group instruction is more effective or simply more manageable.
- Could a lesson be easily made more simple or more complex?
- Tool: Tomlinson's suggested adjustments:  
[http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/diff\\_instruction.html](http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/diff_instruction.html)  
Section titled: "How to Think About Differentiating Instruction"

### **Consider:**

- Are there reading materials being used? How can RIT-to-Reading range (Lexile) scores help match students to appropriate reading materials?
- Tools: (both allow you to search for books using levels and key words)
  - Lexile website: [www.lexile.com](http://www.lexile.com)
  - Scholastic Teacher Book Wizard: <http://bookwizard.scholastic.com/>