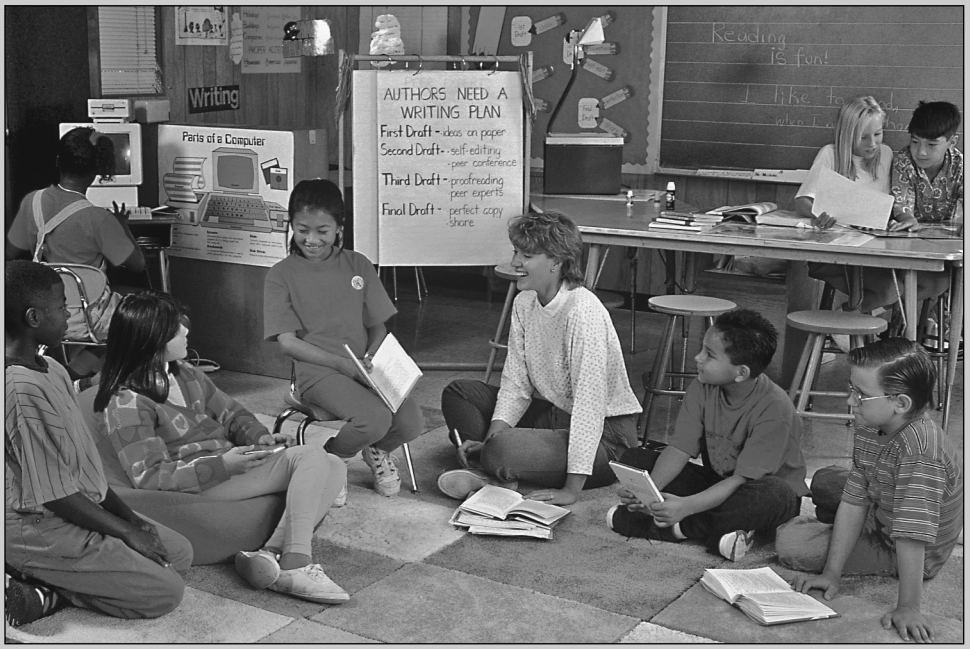
8 Differentiated Instruction: High Expectations for All



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Do not train children to learning by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.

—Plato

Focus Questions

1. What teacher expectations make a difference for student learning?
2. What is differentiation?
3. How do you group your students for differentiated instruction?
4. How can you use the idea of multiple intelligences to differentiate your instruction?
5. What are strategies you can use to differentiate your instruction?

Accessing Prior Knowledge: Learning Styles

You are sitting down with some friends to play a board game you have never played before. Do you . . .

1. Ask one of your friends to read the directions to you while you set up the board?
2. Reach for the directions and read them before you begin?
3. Say to your friends: "Let's just play and figure it out as we go"?

If you selected number:

1. You are an auditory learner.
2. You are a visual learner.
3. You are a kinesthetic learner.

We have spent a great deal of time in this book focused on student learning needs. We have discussed planning, assessment, and instruction. We have focused on students' need to learn the English language (both oral and written) and how to develop language within content areas. Taken together, these ideas and strategies will result in significant learning for students. However, there are a few things that teachers can do to ensure that English language learners reach the highest levels of achievement. First, teachers must hold high expectations for all of their students. The specific behaviors that teachers engage in clearly communicate their expectations for students. We will focus on the ways in which teachers can ensure that their students understand that they have high expectations as well as ways for helping students meet those expectations.

Second, teachers must differentiate instruction to address the diverse learning styles, needs, and skills found in the classroom. Through differentiated instruction, students are challenged but not frustrated and teachers are able to facilitate learning.

Research in Focus: Teacher Expectations

Nearly all schools claim to hold high expectations for all students. In reality, however, what is professed is not always practiced. Although some schools and teachers maintain uniformly high expectations for all students, others have "great expectations" for particular segments of the student population but minimal expectations for others. And in many urban and inner city schools, low expectations predominate.

Asa Hilliard III (1991) contends, "Our current ceiling for students is really much closer to where the FLOOR ought to be." Many believe there is great disparity between what youngsters are capable of learning and what they are learning (Bishop, 1989). Evidence suggests that schools can improve student learning by encouraging teachers and students to set their sights high.

Do Teachers' Expectations Affect Student Performance?

The expectations teachers have for their students and the assumptions they make about students' potential have a tangible effect on student achievement. According to Bamburg (1994), research "clearly establishes that teacher expectations do play a significant role in determining how well and how much students learn."

Students tend to internalize the beliefs teachers have about their ability. Generally, they "rise or fall to the level of expectation of their teachers. . . . When teachers believe in students, students believe in themselves. When those you respect think you can, YOU think you can" (Raffini, 1993).

Conversely, when students are viewed as lacking in ability or motivation and are not expected to make significant progress, they tend to adopt this perception of themselves. Regrettably, some students, particularly those from certain social, economic, or ethnic groups, discover that their teachers consider them "incapable of handling demanding work" (Gonder, 1991). Teachers' expectations for students—whether high or low—can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, students tend to give to teachers as much or as little as teachers expect of them.

A characteristic shared by most highly effective teachers is their adherence to uniformly high expectations. They "refuse to alter their attitudes or expectations for their students—regardless of the students' race or ethnicity, life experiences and interests, and family wealth or stability" (Omotani & Omotani, 1996).

In What Ways May Teachers' Beliefs Translate into Differential Behavior toward Students?

Either consciously or unconsciously, teachers often behave differently toward students based on the beliefs and assumptions they have about them. For example, studies have found that teachers engage in affirming nonverbal behaviors such as smiling, leaning toward, and making eye contact with students more frequently when they believe they are dealing with high-ability students than when they believe they are interacting with "slow" students (Bamburg, 1994).

When teachers perceive students to be low in ability, they may also give them fewer opportunities to learn new material, ask them less stimulating questions, give them briefer and less informative feedback, praise them less frequently for success, call on them less frequently, and give them less time to respond than they do for students they consider to be high in ability (Cotton, 1989).

In addition, we sometimes "dumb-down" instructional content for students we consider to be low in ability. Teachers in low groups and tracks usually offer students "less exciting instruction, less emphasis on meaning and conceptualization, and more rote drill and practice activities" than they do in high or heterogeneous groups and classes (Cotton, 1989).

When teachers summarily categorize or label students, typically some students end up receiving "a watered-down curriculum and less intense—and less motivating—instruction" (Gonder, 1991).

Source: Lumsden, L. (1997). *Expectations for students.* ERIC Digest, Number 116. (http://www.ericdigests.org). Used with permission.

Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement

Good (1987) defines teacher expectations as "inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students based on what they know about these students now" (p. 32). He notes that there are two kinds of expectation effects: *self-fulfilling prophecy* and *sustaining expectations.* Self-fulfilling prophecy effects are based on erroneous expectations that lead teachers to behave toward a student in ways that may be damaging to that student's learning. Some of the behaviors that distinguish teachers' treatment of higher from lower achieving students are found in Figure 8.1.

Nearly 30 years ago, staff from the Los Angeles County Office of Education decided to address the issue of differentiated teacher expectations. They reviewed the available research and identified 15 factors, or interactions, that can facilitate student achievement. These interactions connect student achievement with teacher expectation and are known as Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement or TESA. The research for their model has been updated regularly, but the 15 interactions have remained constant. The 15 interactions can be found in Figure 8.2. A summary of each interaction can be found in Figure 8.3.

While the TESA staff focuses on students who are not performing at grade level for any reason, our work has focused on using the TESA interactions with English language learners. We'll discuss each of the 15 interactions and why they are important for English language learners.

As you can see, TESA consists of three main strands: response opportunities, feedback, and personal regard. Each of these strands goes deeper and deeper

Figure 8.1 Behaviors That Can Indicate Differential Teacher Treatments of High and Low Achievers *(Source: Adapted from: Good, T. L. (1987). Two decades of research on teacher expectations: Findings and future directions.* Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(4), 32–47. Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications.)*

- Waiting less time for low achievers to answer.
- Giving low achievers answers or calling on someone else rather than trying to improve their responses by giving clues or rephrasing questions.
- Rewarding inappropriate behavior or incorrect answers by low achievers.
- Criticizing low achievers more than high achievers for failure.
- Praising low achievers less frequently than high achievers for success.
- Failing to give feedback to the public responses of low achievers.
- Paying less attention to low achievers or interacting with them less frequently.
- Calling on low achievers less often to respond to questions.
- Seating low achievers farther away from the teacher.
- Demanding less from low achievers.
- Interacting with low achievers more privately than publicly and monitoring and structuring their activities more closely.
- Giving high achievers more than low achievers the benefit of the doubt when grading tests or assignments.
- Having fewer friendly interactions with low achievers.
- Providing briefer and less informative feedback to the questions of low achievers.
- Making less eye contact and other forms of nonverbal communication with low achievers.
- Providing less time on instructional methods with low achievers when time is limited.
- Not accepting or using low achievers' ideas.

as you progress down the units. Our goal in presenting this information to you is for you to think about your classroom and how your behaviors, actions, and interactions can facilitate student learning.

Interactions that facilitate student achievement

Reflect on your own teaching in relation to each of these interactions.

Equitable Distribution of Response Opportunity. The first interaction focuses on the students who are encouraged to participate in class. Research evidence suggests that teachers call on lower-performing students less often than higher achievers. In addition, we know that we call on boys more often than girls. In terms of English language learners, teachers often allow them to sit quietly in the class.

Figure 8.2 Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement Interaction Model
(Source: Los Angeles County Office of Education (http://streamer.lacoe.edu/teas). Used with permission.)

TESA Interaction Model

UNITS	STRAND A RESPONSE OPPORTUNITIES	STRAND B FEEDBACK	STRAND C PERSONAL REGARD
1	Equitable Distribution	Affirm/Correct	Proximity
2	Individual Help	Praise	Courtesy
3	Latency	Reasons for Praise	Personal Interest & Compliments
4	Delving	Listening	Touching
5	Higher-Level Questioning	Accepting Feelings	Desist

Some teachers report that this is so that students won't be embarrassed. Others say that this is because English language learners don't understand the content and can't answer the questions. Of course we don't advocate requiring a Beginner to answer in fully formed complete English sentences. However, we do know that students need practice in speaking English and that teachers can structure their classrooms such that all students have many opportunities to participate orally.

Affirmation or Correction. When students do participate in the class, they want to know what their teachers think about their responses. At minimum, teachers should acknowledge the response—whether it be orally, in writing, on a test, or on a project. We know that students gauge their teachers' reactions to their participation and make decisions about future participation based on this information. If incorrect information is presented, students expect that teachers will correct them, but correct them in ways that honor them as individuals. Unfortunately, lower achieving students are often ignored or do not receive feedback. Our English language learners need affirmation and corrections. These corrections must be responsive to their language development level and current skills, while clearly communicating increased performance expectations. Importantly, we know that constant correction can lead to low self-esteem and poor performance. The effective teacher balances affirmation and correction to facilitate student learning. (See chapter 6 for further discussion of error correction.)

Figure 8.3 Fifteen Interactions for Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA) (*Source: Los Angeles County Office of Education (http://streamer.lacoe.edu/teas). Used with permission.*)

- **Equitable Distribution of Response Opportunity**: The teacher learns how to provide an opportunity for all students to respond or perform in classroom learning situations.
- **Affirmation or Correction**: The teacher learns how to give feedback to students about their classroom performance.
- **Proximity**: The teacher learns the significance of being physically close to students as they work.
- **Individual Helping**: The teacher learns how to provide individual help to each student.
- **Praise for the Learning Performance**: The teacher learns how to praise the students' learning performance.
- **Courtesy**: The teacher learns how to use expressions of courtesy in interactions with students.
- **Latency**: The teacher learns how to allow the student enough time to think over a question before assisting the student or ending the opportunity to respond.
- **Reasons for Praise**: The teacher learns how to give useful feedback for the students' learning performance.
- **Personal Interest Statements and Compliments**: The teacher learns how to ask questions, give compliments, or make statements related to a student's personal interest or experiences.
- **Delving, Rephrasing, Giving Clues**: The teacher learns how to provide additional information to help the student respond to a question.
- **Listening**: The teacher learns how to apply active listening techniques with students.
- **Touching**: The teacher learns how to touch students in a respectful, appropriate, and friendly manner.
- **Higher-Level Questioning**: The teacher learns how to ask challenging questions that require students to do more than simply recall information.
- **Accepting Feelings**: The teacher learns how to recognize and accept students' feelings in a nonevaluative manner.
- **Desisting**: The teacher learns how to stop a student's misbehavior in a calm and courteous manner.

Where in the classroom do you spend most of your time when you are teaching?

Proximity. The physical presence of the teacher in the classroom is a powerful motivator. We know that teachers use proximity as a classroom management tool. Proximity also communicates value. Teachers often stand near students who are performing well or who are in trouble behaviorally. In terms of seating patterns, lower achieving students are often placed in the back of the room or clustered in corners. The goal of this interaction is to ensure that the teacher gets physically near each of his or her students. This communicates value and provides the teacher an opportunity to develop a bond with each individual.

Proximity aids learning and can correct problem behaviors
Doug Fisher

Individual Helping. Most teachers know that students who struggle in school need individual help to succeed. However, students who are performing at grade level and students above grade level typically are more assertive in seeking the teacher's assistance. This TESA factor reminds us to focus our instructional interventions equitably. Consistent with Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, every student, including our English language learners, needs access to an adult model who can facilitate learning.

Praise for the Learning Performance. Everyone likes to hear praise. As humans, we like to know that we do some things well. For students who find school difficult, praise is especially important. While they are statistically less likely to receive praise, our English language learners need praise to develop their sense of self as they explore the English language. Importantly, the verbal praise must match the nonverbal clues and cues that the student is receiving. These nonverbal clues include looking at the student, tone of voice, using a student's name, facial expressions, and honesty. It is also important to note that praise builds the bond between the teacher and his or her students. Figure 8.4 includes a number of ways for teachers to say "good job."

Courtesy. While it may seem obvious that we should interact with students in a courteous way, research indicates that we do not always do so with students from traditionally underrepresented ethic groups. There is evidence that English language learners are treated and spoken to harshly. For example, Cesar Chavez reported having to wear a sign that said "I am stupid. I speak Spanish." Although this incident took place many years ago, it is not so very different from an attitude

Figure 8.4 Ways to Say "Good Job"

Aren't you proud of yourself?	Much better!	Well, look at you go.
Bravo!	Nice going.	Wonderful!
Congratulations!	Nothing can stop you now.	Wow!
Congratulations. You got it right!	Now that's what I call a fine job.	You are learning fast.
Couldn't have done it better myself.	Now you have it!	You are really learning a lot.
Exactly right.	Now you have the hang of it.	You are very good at that.
Excellent!	Now you've figured it out.	You certainly did well today.
Fantastic!	One more time and you'll have it.	You did a lot of work today.
Fine!	Outstanding!	You did it that time!
How impressive!	Perfect!	You did that very well.
Good for you!	Right on!	You figured that out fast.
Good going.	Sensational!	You have great potential.
Good job, (person's name).	Super!	You haven't missed a thing!
Good remembering.	Superb!	You must have been practicing.
Good thinking.	Terrific!	You outdid yourself today!
I knew you could do it.	That kind of work makes me happy.	You really make my job fun.
I like that.	That was first-class work.	You remembered!
I think you're doing the right thing.	That's better than ever.	You're doing a good job.
I think you've got it now.	That's coming along nicely.	You're doing beautifully!
I'm happy to see you working.	That's how to handle that.	You're doing fine!
I'm proud of the way you worked today.	That's it!	You're doing that much better today.
I'm very proud of you.	That's much, much better!	You're getting better every day.
I've never seen anyone do it better.	That's quite an improvement.	You're improving.
It's such a pleasure to teach when you . . .	That's right!	You're on the right track now!
Keep it up!	That's the best ever.	You're really going to town.
Keep on trying.	That's the best you've ever done.	You're really improving.
Keep up the good work.	That's the right way to do it.	You're really working hard today.
Keep working on it.	That's the way!	You've got it made.
Kudos!	That's the way to do it.	You've got that down pat.
Marvelous!	Tremendous!	You've just about got it.
	Way to go!	You've just about mastered it.

still prevalent today. There are many who, when listening to a non-native speaker of English, find a French accent charming and believe a Spanish one to indicate an uneducated or even ignorant person. As teachers we must remember that our interactions with students leave lasting impressions in their minds about who they are and what they can do. At the very minimum, every student deserves to be treated with respect and courtesy. Ideally, every student knows that he or she is loved and valued.

Latency. Wait time, or latency, refers to the amount of time between a teacher asking a question and then either moving on or answering the question him or herself. There are a number of benefits of ensuring that students are provided at least a five-second wait time before the teacher moves on, calls on someone else, or answers the question him or herself. By ensuring that students are provided sufficient time, the variety of students who volunteer to answer will increase as will the length of their responses. In addition, there is evidence that providing wait time results in responses that demonstrate critical thinking and that are supported by evidence or logic. For English language learners, latency is critical. As students become increasingly proficient in English, they begin to think in English and do less translation into and back from their heritage language. However, regardless of their level of proficiency, English language learners need time to compose their response. A few seconds' delay does not mean that they do not have profound things to offer the class.

See also chapter 5.

In addition to the latency period between asking the question and expecting a response, teachers should wait for the student to finish and let the response linger in the air for one or two seconds. This gives everyone in the room an opportunity to consider what was just said. We're sure you've been part of a conversation in which the person you're talking with has clearly already formulated his or her response. What happens to you? It makes you want to curtail your conversation in frustration. We don't want to do that to our students.

Reasons for Praise. As we delve deeper into the TESA interactions, we note that students also need reasons for the praise they receive. When possible, the praise students receive should be based on a specific action or response. The recommendation from TESA is that we strive for a ratio of four praises for each correction. For English language learners attempting to master the language, reasons for praise are critical. We can shape or influence students' language when we provide specific praise for their usages. TESA (2002) recommends that praise should:

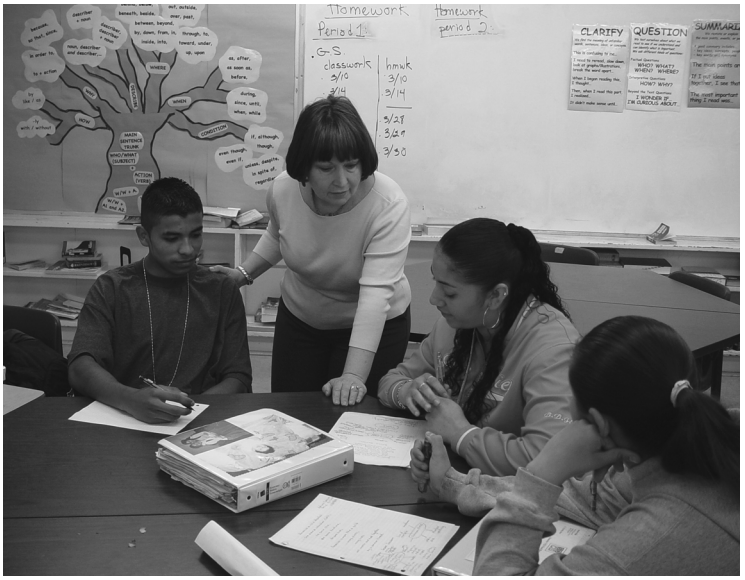
Observe yourself in your next lesson. How often do you praise students? Who are you praising? Who aren't you praising? What types of things do you say?

- Immediately follow the accomplishment.
- Be specific to the accomplishment.
- Be informative or appreciative.
- Be varied and credible.
- Be natural rather than theatrical.
- Be private most of the time.
- Be individualized.
- Be attributed to effort and ability. (p. D-31)

Personal Interest Statements and Compliments. Another way we make connections with our students and show them that we care is to make statements that indicate that we have a personal interest in their life. It may be as simple as noting that "Arian, you're from the same country that we're reading about. How interesting." Teachers may also ask students to share their experiences and backgrounds when they are connected with the focus of the class. In addition, teachers can make compliments about students, including comments about their clothes, performance at a sports event, or anything else the student engages in. In doing so, the student knows that the teacher has taken personal interest and cares enough to remember. For our English language learners, many of whom have world experiences that their teachers do not share, this interaction is a prime opportunity to draw on the student's "funds of knowledge" and allow him or her to demonstrate skills, knowledge, and interests.

Delving, Rephrasing, Giving Clues. As we have already discussed, we tend to ask fewer questions of low-achieving students than higher achieving students. In addition, when we ask low-achieving students a question, we typically ask easier questions or excuse them from answering if they pause, look confused, or avert their eyes. If this were not enough, teachers tend to rephrase the question less often for lower achieving students and rarely give this group of students clues to be able to answer. This cycle is problematic for English language learners. They need to develop oral language proficiency, but aren't provided as many opportunities to do so. When they are provided opportunities, they are asked "easy" questions, which reinforces for the teacher that the student doesn't know much. Although we aren't suggesting that English language learners be asked questions beyond their language skills, we hope that teachers scaffold their questions and provide the supports necessary for students to successfully respond in the classroom. We know that leveling questions is a good practice, provided that we give students opportunities to stretch their thinking, rephrase questions as necessary to aid their understanding, and give them clues rather than pass over them to another student.

Listening. We know that listening is a critical literacy skill. Unfortunately, students spend a great deal of their class time listening and not engaging in other literacy skills and practices. Several decades ago, Flanders (1970) noted that teachers of high-achieving students talked about 55% of the class time. He compared that with teachers of low-achieving students who monopolized class, talking at least 80% of the time. Clearly, as teachers, we need to listen more. By listening, we mean that students talk with their teacher and with one another. As listeners, we give our attention to the person speaking, make eye contact with that person, engage in nonverbal clues that we understand, and can ask questions or comment about what the person said. Listening to our English language learners is critical—they must develop a sense that someone is listening and that someone understands what they are saying. In addition, listening facilitates the bond between teacher and student and lets students know that we value them.



Respectful human contact develops positive relationships
Doug Fisher

Touching. In this era of lawsuits, touching has become taboo. We are warned of cultural and gender customs around touching, and teachers across the country have taken a "hands-off" approach to education. TESA challenges that assumption and suggests that students respond to touch and that teachers can and should touch students in respectful ways. While this may be uncomfortable to some teachers (and some students at first), the relationships that develop when you can shake the hand of a student entering the room, place a hand on a shoulder to communicate that they are doing a great job, or "high-five" a student who has completed a major project are amazing. In addition, it should be noted that teachers can "touch" with their eyes and words—a wink for a job well done, a smile at the end of a presentation, the use of pronouns such as "we" and "our"—all communicate value and respect.

Higher-Level Questioning. As we have noted before in this discussion of the TESA interactions, we generally ask fewer and easier questions of students who struggle with schooling. Importantly, this does not result in their becoming critical and creative thinkers who can solve problems. Every student needs the opportunity to engage in complex thinking and to receive the support to do so. Benjamin Bloom (1956) created a taxonomy or classification system for educational objectives. This system has been applied to questions as well. To ensure that students develop cognitive flexibility and thinking skills, they need to consider a wide range of question types. They need teachers who ask these kinds of questions and who provide the language support for them to answer them. Our work with English language learners suggests that we need to prepare these questions in advance. It is very difficult, even for veteran teachers, to create good questions on the spot that expand student thinking.

See chapter 5 for an in-depth discussion of questioning.

Table 8.1 contains Bloom's taxonomy as well as an example from two classrooms, one reading "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and the other studying the formation of oceans. In addition, Table 8.1 provides a list of the range of words found in each type of question.

Table 8.1

Bloom's Taxonomy with Examples		
Category	**Example**	**Key Words**
Knowledge: Recall data or information.	1. Recall the items used by Goldilocks in the three bears' house. 2. List the major oceans of the world; name the largest ocean in the world.	define, describe, identify, know, label, list, match, memorize, name, outline, recall, recognize, repeat, reproduce, select, state
Comprehension: Understand the meaning, translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. State a problem in one's own words.	1. Explain why Goldilocks liked Baby Bear's chair best. 2. Locate and identify all the oceans on a map; describe four kinds of sea life found in the ocean.	comprehend, convert, defend, discuss, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalize, give examples, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarize, translate
Application: Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction. Apply what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the workplace.	1. Demonstrate what Goldilocks would use if she came into your house. 2. Illustrate the different levels of the ocean; dramatize what might happen on an underwater expedition.	apply, change, compute, construct, demonstrate, discover, manipulate, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, solve, use
Analysis: Separate material or concept into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Distinguish between facts and inferences.	1. Compare the story to reality. What incidents could not have happened? 2. Compare the differences between fresh and salt water (oceans and rivers); diagram the food chain in the ocean.	analyze, break down, compare, contrast, diagram, deconstruct, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, identify, illustrate, infer, outline, relate, select, separate

Category	Example	Key Words
Synthesis: Build a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure.	1. Propose how the story would be different if it were "Goldilocks and the Three Fishes." 2. Design a model of the ocean floor; construct a three-dimensional diorama of ocean life.	categorize, combine, compile, compose, create, devise, design, explain, generate, modify, organize, plan, rearrange, reconstruct, relate, reorganize, revise, rewrite, summarize, tell, write
Evaluation: Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.	1. Judge whether Goldilocks was bad or good and be prepared to defend your opinion. 2. Evaluate the programs that are in place to protect the ocean. Rate the effectiveness of these programs.	appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, critique, defend, describe, discriminate, evaluate, explain, interpret, justify, relate, summarize, support

Accepting Feelings. Humans have feelings. We react to the world around us. As teachers, we have to accept the feelings of our students. We must acknowledge their joys and sorrows. And we can help them think about their feelings and what they want to do with them. This is a critical component in the teaching of English language learners. As we discussed in chapter 2, we have to create an environment that is safe for learning. That safety includes accepting feelings. Our English language learners will experience a range of emotions such as loss of loved ones, excitement of finding a new living arrangement, embarrassment with language mistakes, joy when acknowledged for work well done. As teachers, we must be on the lookout for these feelings, help our students name them, and help students decide what they want to do with these feelings.

Desisting. The final interaction outlined by TESA focuses on the actions that teachers take to stop misbehavior. Most teachers use a wide range of strategies to manage their classrooms. In too many classrooms, lower achieving students are punished more frequently. Desisting should be impartial and equitable. The teacher must clearly demonstrate that he or she expects the same behavior and interest in learning from all students. Regardless of the systems in place, the effective teacher knows that the results of desisting are an end to the problem behavior *and* a continued respect for the learner.

See *The Effective Teacher's Guide* by Nancy Frey (2005) for a list of 50 effective classroom management strategies.

Addressing each of these 15 interaction factors that comprise the TESA model is an important component of the Differentiated Approach to teaching English

language learners. When combined with the focus on oral and printed language, which we have discussed previously, and differentiated instruction, which will we will discuss presently, teacher expectations will result in proficiency for our students.

From this discussion of teacher expectations, we hope that it is clear that what teachers must hold alike for all students is high expectations. Some students may take longer to reach those expectations, some may need to reach them in a different manner, some may need more support to reach them. The expectations still remain the same—high.

So if the expectations, or the end goal, remain the same for all our students, and we know that each student has unique needs, how do we support them so that they can all achieve to the highest levels? As we have seen in each of the preceding chapters, we can differentiate both instruction and the assessment to guide that instruction. But how do we organize in order to accomplish that? Let's look first at how we organize overall classroom placement, and then we will look at ways to organize within the classroom.

Heterogeneous or Homogeneous Classrooms?

Across the nation, perhaps the only characteristic of our students that remains constant are the unique differences our children bring. Each classroom consists of students from different backgrounds, who speak different languages and arrive with different strengths and different needs. We have students with special needs, students who excel at math but struggle with reading, students who are visual learners, and others who need to be physically active as they learn. And, of course, we have the students who are the focus of this book, those who are at different stages of learning English, many of whom cannot rely on language alone to drive their learning.

While some schools have special, temporary programs for students who are brand-new to the country and brand-new to English (newcomer programs), most schools place students in classrooms according to grade level and space, perhaps with consideration to maintaining a balance of gender, ethnicity, and special needs. This results in a marvelous diversity that we believe strengthens our classrooms, our schools, our communities, and our nation. It also results in a wide spectrum of learning styles, skills, interests, and readiness to meet the established standards.

How does your school place ELL students?

In secondary schools, English language learners at the earlier levels of proficiency—Beginning, Early Intermediate, and Intermediate—typically are placed in one class of ESL/ESOL (English as a Second Language/English for Speakers of Other Languages) comprised of students at like proficiency levels. The remainder of their day, however, is generally spent in "regular" classrooms with a mix of native and fluent speakers, along with students at varying levels of English proficiency. In elementary schools, even when ELL students are initially placed in classrooms according to proficiency in English, as the year goes on, students progress at varying rates; some leave the school and others come in, placed in the class because there is room for them at that point in the year. And the

result is a classroom with a wide range of learning styles, skills, interests, and readiness to meet the established standards.

These heterogeneous classrooms reflect the world outside our classrooms and provide a richness of experiences for our students. But the mix of students will lead to improved achievement only if we are prepared to meet each student's point of readiness. Carol Ann Tomlinson (1999) suggests that there are two common practices in heterogeneous classrooms that prohibit progress of both the native speaker and the English language learner. First, students who are still learning English are often placed in classrooms with native speakers in order to provide them with fluent models. Mere inclusion, without scaffolds to support full participation with proficient students, does not result in academic progress. We may see some growth in social language (BICS) as a result of increased opportunities to interact with native speakers of English, but this will not transfer to growth in academic language simply by virtue of the placement.

Tomlinson addresses the issue of struggling students and those who are gifted; we will look at her ideas from the point of view of English language learners.

The second practice relates to the progress of the proficient speakers. They are often asked to act as tutors for students who are new to English. Clearly, there are benefits to students teaching other students, both academic and social, and we encourage teachers to use peer and cross-age tutors and buddies to facilitate language development (Jacobson, et al., 2001). When the tutoring replaces time they could be spending engaged in challenging activities within their own Zone of Proximal Development, however, it limits opportunities for their own academic growth. Pacing can also take time away from learning for proficient speakers as they wait for ELLs who often need extra time to grasp new ideas presented through unfamiliar language. Let's explore how a differentiated classroom maximizes the learning opportunities for *all* students.

What are the pros and cons of asking a proficient student in your class to assist a student who is new to English?

Diverse students working together mirrors the real world in which students will live, work, and play
Scott Cunningham/Merrill

See chapter 5 for guidelines on students helping students.

What Is Differentiation?

What do you think it means to differentiate instruction? Close your eyes for a moment and visualize a differentiated classroom. What do you see?

So what is differentiation? Paula Rutherford (2005) says it's a way of thinking—a way of thinking about instruction that is based on the recognition of the diversity of our students. If we begin with Vygotsky's belief that learning takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development, if we understand that our students come to us with differing levels of *readiness*, and if we believe that we must hold high expectations for all of our students, we know that we must design learning activities that address the same standards *and* take into consideration the differing levels of our students. If we also believe that students will be most engaged when we ask them to participate in activities that capture their *interest*, we then must think about our content from a variety of perspectives. And if we recognize that all our students have different *styles of learning*, we can design learning activities that utilize their preferred style, as well as ones that develop other styles. For English language learners, this may mean that learning activities relying solely on language, whether verbal or written, are relying on a learning style that, at this point in their development, is not their strongest means of learning.

In short, differentiating instruction means that we think about our content from different perspectives. Figure 8.5 depicts what we can differentiate and what we need to consider in planning.

Differentiating sources, processes, products

As you read, think of a lesson you have taught.

When we know our students' level of readiness and we are aware of their interests and specific learning styles, we can select varied sources, use different processes, and provide a choice of products to match.

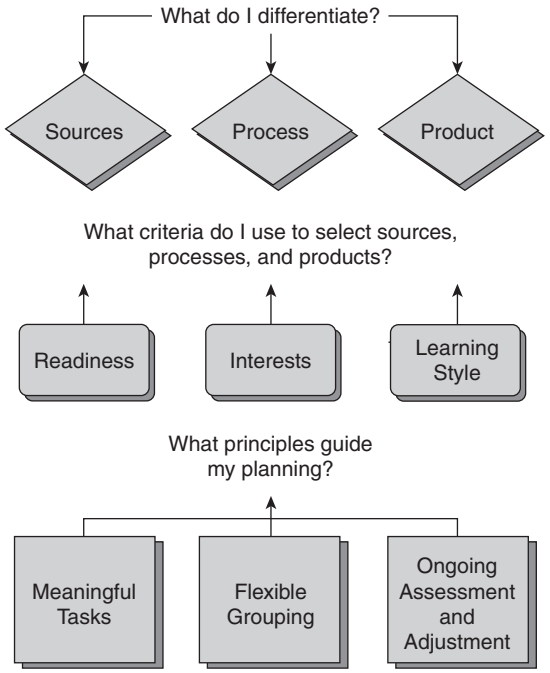
What additional resources could you use to support learning for students? Think about readiness, interest, and learning style.

Sources. When you hear people talk about differentiating instruction, you may hear them talk about differentiating content. We prefer to think about differentiating the *sources* used to teach/learn the content. Our standards remain the same for all our students, regardless of readiness or language proficiency level. So, in order to help all our students reach the standards, the differentiation lies in making the same content more accessible through a variety of resources and scaffolds. If your sixth graders are learning about plate tectonics in their science class, some might be asked to conduct their own Internet search about volcanoes or earthquakes, others might use only sites that you have selected for their level of readability, still others might read a children's book that contains basic information along with pictures and charts to support their reading. In a unit on legends, fourth-grade students might read legends or fairy tales from their own culture to compare with a similar story from another culture.

What are three ways for students to engage with the content of your lesson?

Process. You can choose to differentiate the *processes* in which students will engage as they learn. The processes are the strategies and structures you use to teach the content; they are the "how" of teaching. You may use small group activities, a variety of cooperative learning structures; you may assign tasks that vary in the level of complexity or abstractness, or that rely on a particular learning style.

Figure 8.5 Differentiating Instruction *(Source: Adapted from Tomlinson, C. (1999).* The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners. *Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Reprinted by permission. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is a worldwide community of educators advocating sound policies and sharing best practices to achieve the success of each learner. To learn more, visit ASCD at www.ascd.org.)*



Moving between large and small group, partner, and individual activities allows you to address readiness, interest, and learning style at the same time as providing multiple opportunities for students to practice and apply their learning.

Products. *Products* are the ways in which students demonstrate their learning. Students at early levels of language proficiency may have understood the content and yet be unable to express their understanding in a written report. (Remember Luz in Ms. Voeltner's U.S. history class?) These students might complete a graphic organizer that compares or classifies, or you might ask them to construct a chart, diagram, or timeline. Others who still make numerous errors in speaking may be uncomfortable giving an oral presentation but can create a poster report that can be shared with the class. Understanding that, it is also important to remember that English language learners are also required to participate in standards-based, or standardized, tests. Figure 8.6 includes a list of ways to provide testing accommodations for English language learners.

What are three ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of your lesson?

Figure 8.6 Common Testing Accommodations: Assessment Accommodations for English Language Learners *(Source: Fisher, D., Lapp, D., Flood, J., & Suarez, L. (2001). Assessing bilingual students: When policies and practices meet in the classroom. In S. R. Hurley & J.V. Tinajero (Eds.),* Literacy assessment of second language learners *(pp. 104–114). Boston: Allyn & Bacon. Copyright © 2000 by Pearson Education. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)*

Flexible Scheduling Time extension Duration Successive administrations Multiple days	Student is . . . • provided with extended time • provided periodic breaks • administered the assessment in sections over time • given several days to complete the assessment
Setting Individual administration Small group administration	Student is . . . • administered the assessment in a separate location • given the assessment in a separate location with a • small group of peers
Test Directions Rewriting directions Emphasizing key words in directions Reading directions aloud Native language	Student is . . . • provided simplified language in directions; provided additional examples; provided cues (e.g., arrows or stop signs) on the answer form • given directions with highlighted instructions or underlined verbs • provided oral directions for the assessment; reread directions for each page of questions • provided with instructions in language of choice.
Use of Aids Special equipment Proctor/reader Equipment to record responses Scribes Computational aids	Student is . . . • provided auditory tape of test items; provided with markers to maintain place • reread oral comprehension items; read passages, questions, items, and multiple-choice responses; provided cues to maintain on-task behavior • provided tape recorder for taping responses; • provided typewriter or word processor grammar check • provided adults to record answers on paper • provided use of calculator, abacus, or arithmetic tables

Uniqueness in learning

Each of us learns in different ways. We use different senses to help us learn, and we connect with new material from unique perspectives (Armstrong, 2000). Yet our classrooms most often ask students to participate using their auditory skills.

And, while this may be the case more as students move up through the grade levels, we find that students at all grade levels, kindergarten through high school, must rely on their listening skills as they encounter new information and concepts. For English language learners, even those with strong auditory skills, listening in an unfamiliar language can be a challenging way to learn. In this chapter we will discuss ways to design instruction that utilizes the diversity of student strengths to facilitate access to grade-level content. We know that students all have unique learning profiles and strengths. We also know that no one learns through just one style or type of intelligence. While some people may prefer kinesthetic activities, they can also interact with others, use visual representations, reason logically, and classify plants and animals. And indeed, virtually all these styles are necessary in varying degrees.

For information on a multiple intelligences assessment, see Christison, M.A. (1999). *A guidebook for applying multiple intelligences theory in the ESL/EFL classroom.* Burlingame, CA: Alta Book Center.

Research in Focus: Multiple Intelligences

Intelligence has traditionally been defined in terms of intelligence quotient (IQ), which measures a narrow range of verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical abilities. Howard Gardner (1983) argues that humans possess a number of distinct intelligences that manifest themselves in different skills and abilities. All human beings apply these intelligences to solve problems, invent processes, and create things. Intelligence, according to Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory, is being able to apply one or more of the intelligences in ways that are valued by a community or culture. The current MI model outlines eight intelligences, although Gardner (1999) continues to explore additional possibilities.

- *Linguistic Intelligence:* The ability to use language effectively both orally and in writing.
- *Logical/Mathematical Intelligence:* The ability to use numbers effectively and reason well.
- *Visual/Spatial Intelligence:* The ability to recognize form, space, color, line, and shape and to graphically represent visual and spatial ideas.
- *Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence:* The ability to use the body to express ideas and feelings and to solve problems.
- *Musical Intelligence:* The ability to recognize rhythm, pitch, and melody.
- *Naturalist Intelligence:* The ability to recognize and classify plants, minerals, and animals.
- *Interpersonal Intelligence:* The ability to understand another person's feelings, motivations, and intentions and to respond effectively.
- *Intrapersonal Intelligence:* The ability to know about and understand oneself and recognize one's similarities to and differences from others.

Source: Christison, M. A., & Kennedy, D. Multiple intelligences: Theory and practice in adult ESL. ERIC Digest. (http://www.ericdigests.org/2001-1/multiple.html). Used with permission.

Using varied grouping configurations to differentiate instruction

It is possible to differentiate instruction for readiness, interest, and learning style while teaching in whole class configurations. You can simply vary the products that you assign. It is difficult, however to differentiate the sources and processes that match the diversity of your students without incorporating some small group activities. Differentiating instruction is not the same as individualized instruction. We don't assign every student different work, rather we assign them to work in different groups. Flexible grouping is one of the key principles of a Differentiated Approach.

There are times when the whole class will come together to participate in a focus lesson or a class discussion, observe a demonstration, or share their learning. At other times, you will pair students to brainstorm ideas, clarify their understanding, or accomplish a task. And at times, you will ask students to work in groups, whether for small group instruction or to complete an assignment. While individual conferences and assistance are vital supports for students who do not yet have the language proficiency to participate fully without help, it is within the small group configuration that you will find the most effective opportunities to differentiate sources, processes, and products. In small groups students practice language, process understanding, and learn from each other. So what is the best way to group students for maximum learning?

Think about the students in your classroom. Divide them into three groups based on similar needs for an upcoming lesson.

Teachers often ask us, "What is the best way to group my students? Heterogeneously, or homogeneously?" If we had to answer this in two words or less, our answer would be "It depends." It depends on your purpose. In chapter 4, we discussed other important elements of effective grouping. Varying grouping configurations allows you to provide both the supports that your ELL students require, and to offer the challenges that stimulate your more proficient students.

Grouping for Purposeful Instruction. Sometimes you will want to pull aside a small group of ELLs for a quick preview of the content you are about to introduce to the class. In this group you can build background knowledge or introduce vocabulary that your native English speakers already possess. You might highlight particular language structures that are needed to understand the lesson and express the ideas—language structures such as *if . . . then* to express cause and effect in a science experiment, or *first . . . then . . . finally* to retell the sequence of events in a story. You might also want to work with a small group after a lesson to review the concepts, assess their understanding, and reteach anything they may have missed. For these mini-lessons, you may want to group your students by language proficiency level.

Grouping to Practice Language. When your purpose is to have students practice academic language and build understanding, you want to form groups that

bring together students of varying language and academic proficiency. One way to determine these groups is to create a list of all your students in one class, putting them in rank order by language proficiency or by academic skill. You can then form your groups by taking the first student, the last one, and two from the middle to form the first group. In the next group, you place the second student, the second to last, and the two who are now left closest to the middle. You continue drawing students from the top, bottom, and middle of the list until you have formed all your groups. Once the groups are formed, you can adjust them based on other concerns such as students who do not work well together. Remember not to assume that students who are at an early level of proficiency in English have weak academic skills or little understanding of the content.

Follow the steps listed here to create heterogeneous groups in your classroom.

Grouping for Learning Styles. When your planning incorporates consideration of individual learning styles or interests, you might group students according to their learning style to complete a project that matches that particular style. Literature circles and book clubs will be composed of students with like interest in a particular book.

Grouping to Build Community. Sometimes you may want to allow students to select their own teammates, other times your focus might include building a collaborative environment and have students grouped randomly. In this case you could distribute matching cards as students enter the classroom, perhaps a picture with a statement that describes it, or the steps of a process, each written on a separate card, and students form a group by finding the students whose cards match theirs.

Grouping to differentiate language instruction

For the purposes of focused language instruction, which is only a portion of the students' day, we advocate placing students in groups according to language proficiency level.

See chapter 3 for a discussion of the instructional framework for teaching English language learners.

Beginners may need to learn how to form regular plurals and write simple sentences in the present tense. They would be virtually unable to participate in a lesson on using figurative language or writing a persuasive essay. And obviously, students at more advanced levels of proficiency would have little to gain from practice with regular plurals. Students who are in the process of developing proficiency in English should have a time in their day when the teacher's instruction is aimed precisely at their level. For elementary school students, this may be a portion of the literacy block, or it may occur during another part of the day. In schools where each classroom is composed of students at varying levels of proficiency, you can redeploy students to other classrooms for their ELD time. For secondary students, this time should be a class period that focuses specifically on language instruction for English language learners.

So again, the short answer to the question, "What is the best way to group my students?" is, "Vary them according to your purpose."

Spotlight on Instruction

Differentiating Sources and Processes

Ms. Johnson wanted her seventh-grade students to develop their skills in writing an essay, taking notes, outlining, summarizing, and using effective transitions to unify ideas. She decided to use the topic of the sinking of the *Titanic,* having discovered previously that her students tended to be very interested in this event. To build background knowledge and capture their interest, she showed a few short clips from the film with Leonardo diCaprio—a clip of the passengers boarding the ship, one of the life in first class versus the life in steerage, and one of the ship as it began to sink. Following each clip she asked the students to talk in pairs about what they noticed and what they could infer about society at the time, how they thought the characters were feeling and why, and so on.

After a whole class discussion of the event, Ms. Johnson divided her students into groups based on language proficiency and reading level. She gave each group a selection of reading material and assigned them a role for their RAFT. Chris gave two of the groups different excerpts from books that describe the lives of individual passengers in steerage and in first class. The students were directed to compose a journal entry that their RAFT character might have written, describing their experience. Two other groups were given a variety of books that describe the ship, its unique construction, the size of the iceberg, and the sequence of events taking place among the crew. They were to write their RAFT from the point of view of the ship's architect, and their task was to explain to the investigating committee how the sinking happened. Ms. Johnson assigned two different groups to write an editorial commentary on the division between the upper and lower class society of the time, using selections from books that include primary source documents, illustrations, quotations, and descriptions of the differences in the living conditions aboard the ship. Each RAFT asked students to look for information, take notes, interpret what they were reading, and organize their writing to include anecdotes, descriptions, and examples, all strategies directly from the grade-level standards for English language arts. Ms. Johnson differentiated the sources she provided and the processes she used to vary the level of structure and abstractness so that students could focus on the writing skills, rather than struggling with the text. These groups are flexible and students in Ms. Johnson's class are grouped and regrouped regularly based on the various tasks at hand.

RAFT prompts are explained in chapter 6.

She varied the level of structure for each group by using different graphic organizers. The journal writers used a partially completed graphic organizer to help guide their search for information in the text. Those writing the editorial were given a Venn diagram to compare and contrast living conditions. And she asked the ship's architects to create their own graphic organizer that would support their presentation to the investigating committee.

Some of the books she selected included:

- Ballard, R. (2002). *Exploring the Titanic.* New York: Scholastic.
- Hoh, D. (1998). *Titanic: The long night.* New York: Scholastic.
- Marschall, K. (1997). *Inside the Titanic*. Toronto, Ontario: Madison Press.
- White, E. (1998). *Voyage on the great Titanic.* New York: Scholastic.

As we discussed in chapters 6 and 7, language development occurs not only during ELD time, but throughout the day, across the content. Differentiating language instruction during math, science, social studies, or other content may be as simple as highlighting and explaining language structures during the lesson itself, or it may entail pulling aside a small group of students for a front-loading lesson before the whole group lesson. For example, before showing a film on the Great Wall of China, Ms. Mathews met with a group of English language learners to provide specific instruction in vocabulary, explained the main ideas from the film, and modeled the note-taking she would expect of the students in her class.

Planning for Differentiated Instruction

Figure 8.5 depicts what you can differentiate, the criteria to use to determine what sources, processes, and products you will select, as well as the three basic principles to keep in mind while planning. These three principles are important for any type of instruction, whether you are differentiating the lesson or not. Without attention to them when planning for differentiation, you won't end up with a differentiated lesson. Considering student interests helps to ensure that tasks are *meaningful*. Knowing your students' proficiency levels in English, background knowledge related to the lesson, and reading levels (in other words, their *readiness*), as well as their *interests* and *learning styles,* helps you determine appropriate grouping configurations. And, of course, the *ongoing assessment* is what provides this information for planning and helps you know how to *adjust* your lessons accordingly.

Differentiation and scaffolding

In the preceding chapter we saw a variety of ways to scaffold learning. Differentiating instruction allows you to build in different scaffolds for different groups of students, using what you know about your students and what it is you want your students to learn. Rutherford (2002) suggests some guiding questions to ask as you plan. We have added some of the considerations that relate specifically to English language learners.

As you read this section, think of a lesson you are going to teach and answer the questions listed here.

How Abstract Are the Ideas? Do I need to make the ideas more concrete for some of my students? What is the best way to do that? Are there pictures, charts, graphs, realia, demonstrations that will help to contextualize the content and provide comprehensible input for my ELLs? What connection to background knowledge will help to build a bridge from old knowledge to new?

How Accessible Are the Resources? What materials and resources can I provide at a level that will challenge all my students without frustrating them? How can I make the materials more accessible? Are there *graphic organizers* that help to *build schema*? Can I *model* reading the text through a Think Aloud? Is there *background*

knowledge that I need to provide for my ELLs to help them understand the material? Is there *language* or *vocabulary* that my proficient students know that my ELLs may not?

How Complex Is the Task? Are there specific *metacognitive learning strategies* such as organizational planning (providing benchmark deadlines) or *cognitive learning strategies* such as summarizing chunks of text that will help my students by breaking the task into simpler parts? How can I make sure that my ELLs understand the directions for the task?

What Is the Level of Independence? How can I adjust the level of independence? Do some of my students require more "to" and "with" than others? Do I need to provide more frequent feedback to help some of my students adjust their learning? Are there *language structures* that I can introduce to my ELLs that will facilitate their participation? Can I provide some of the information on a *graphic organizer* that will guide my ELLs and provide a scaffold? What type of *grouping configuration* should I use for my ELLs—same language so they can discuss the ideas in their native language? Same proficiency level so I can provide specific language support or background knowledge? Partnered with proficient students to help facilitate the discussion and provide opportunity to practice language?

What Is the Pacing? How can I allow adequate time for those who need it and still provide well-paced, challenging learning experiences for those who demonstrate understanding in a short time? My ELLs may require more time to read as they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary. They may require more time to discuss the assignment as they search for the language to express their ideas.

Application to Practice

Reflection

1. What is the first step you will take toward differentiating instruction in your classroom? Why did you select this step? How will you go about implementing it?
2. What is something you have a question about?

Case Study: *Learning Styles and Interests*

1. Assess your target student's learning style and decide how to change your instruction as a result.
2. Conduct an interest inventory with your student and develop a plan to address the findings. How might you incorporate this student's interests in planning and teaching?

Planning and Instruction: *Design a Differentiated Lesson*

1. Using the plan for the unit of study that you developed previously, consider the instructional needs of your entire class. Which strategies from this chapter could be added to ensure that all of your students reach high standards?
2. Evaluate yourself on each of the 15 TESA interaction factors. What are you good at? Are there areas in which you can improve?

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