



# Differentiated Instruction and Assessment



Rennie's River Elementary

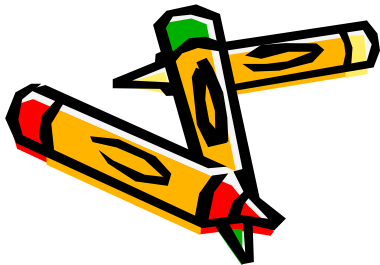
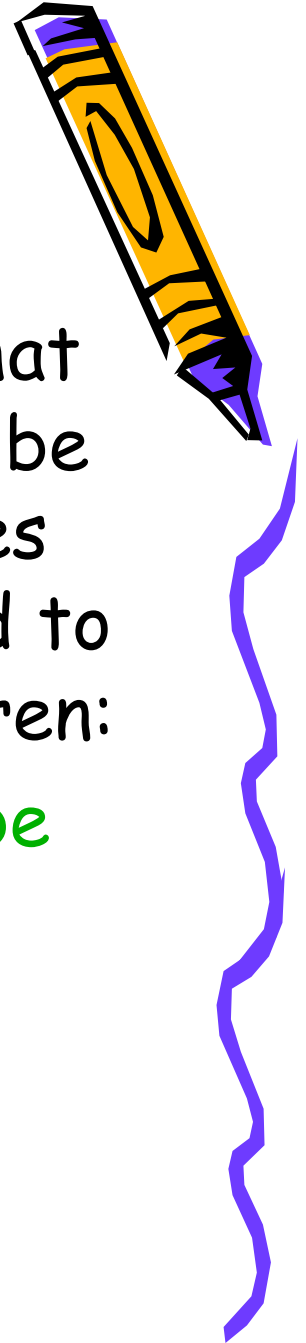


# As teachers, we believe that:

- No two children are alike.
- No two children learn in the identical way.
- An enriched environment for one student is not necessarily enriched for another.
- In the classroom we should teach children to think for themselves.



- Consequently, it necessarily follows that although essential curricula goals may be similar for all students, methodologies employed in a classroom must be varied to suit to the individual needs of all children:  
ie. **learning must be differentiated to be effective.**



# Differentiated Instruction Defined

"Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to **student differences**.

Rather than marching students through the curriculum lockstep, teachers should modify their instruction to meet students' varying **readiness levels, learning styles, and interests**. Therefore, the teacher proactively plans a variety of ways to 'get at' and express learning."

Carol Ann Tomlinson

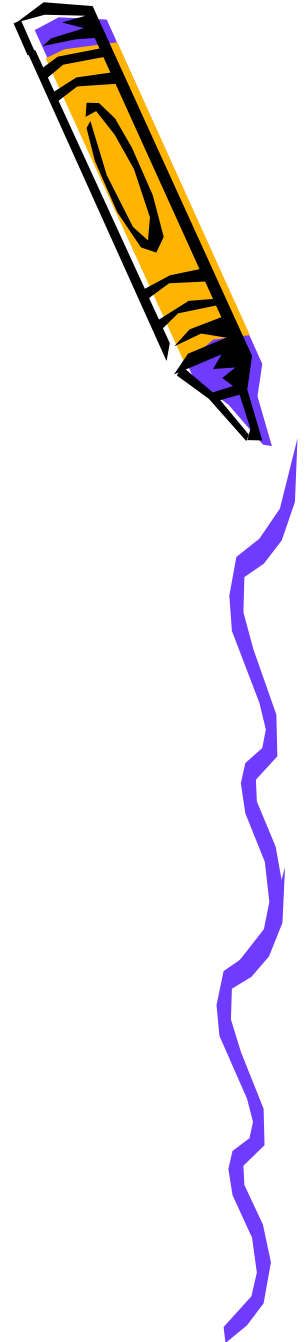


- *Readiness*-offers a range of learning tasks (concrete or abstract; simple or complex; more structured or more open, etc.)
- *Interests*- allows students to have a say in how they will apply the key skills being studied
- *Learning Profile*- takes into account the learning style of the students



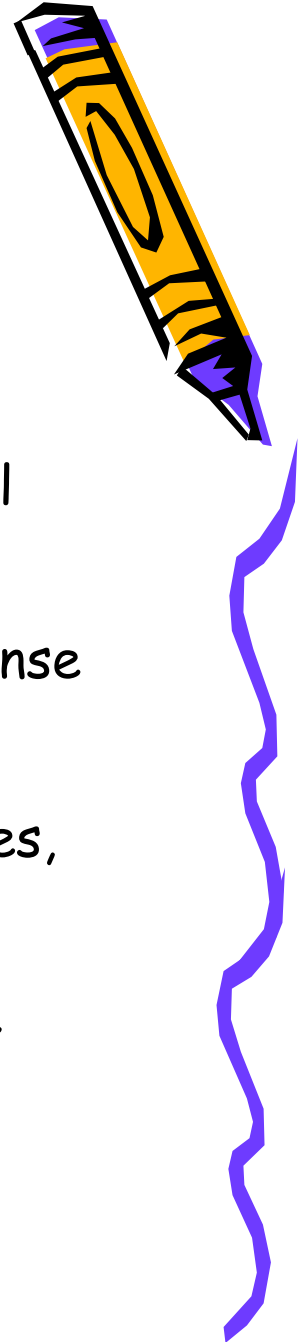
# Four Ways to Differentiate Instruction:

1. Differentiating the  
**Content/Topic**
2. Differentiating By  
**Learning Styles**
3. Differentiating the  
**Process/Activities**
4. Differentiating the  
**Product**



# What do each of these strands mean?

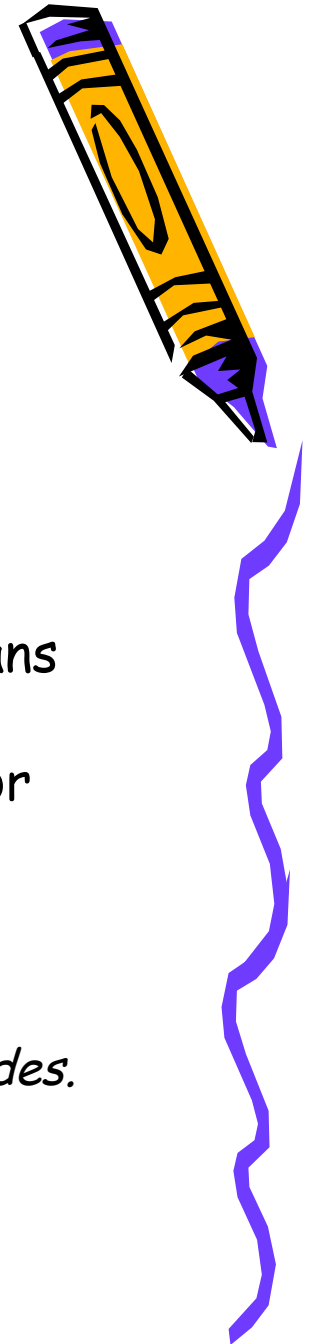
- *Content-*  
what the student needs to learn or how he/she will access the information
- *Process-*  
activities in which the student engages to make sense of the information and master it
- *Products-*  
culminating projects in which the student rehearses, applies or extends what he or she has learned
- *Learning Environment/Styles-*  
the way the classroom looks and feels and how the child learns best



# Differentiating Content

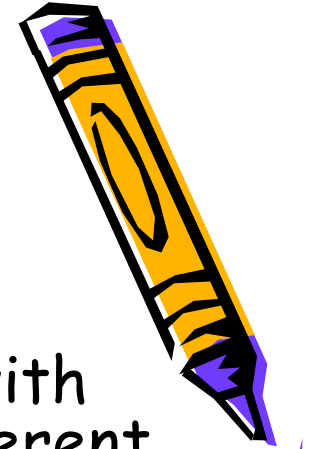
- Using reading materials at different readability levels
- Putting text on tape
- Using spelling or vocabulary lists at readiness level of students
- Presenting information through visual and auditory means
- Using reading buddies
- Meeting with small groups to re-teach ideas or skills for struggling learners or extend the thinking or skills of advanced learners

Excerpted from: Tomlinson, C. A. (August, 2000)  
*Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades.*  
*ERIC Digest. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and*  
*Early Childhood Education.*



# Differentiating Process

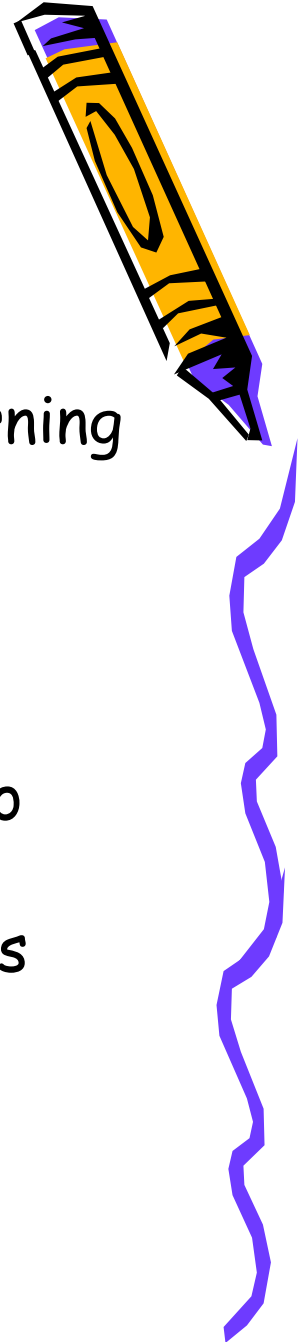
- Using tiered activities- all learners working with same understandings and skills, but with different levels of support or challenge
- Creating interest centers that encourage students to explore parts of the class topic of particular interest to them
- Providing agendas- task lists containing whole class work and work addressing individual needs of students
- Providing manipulatives or hands-on materials
- Varying length of time to complete tasks



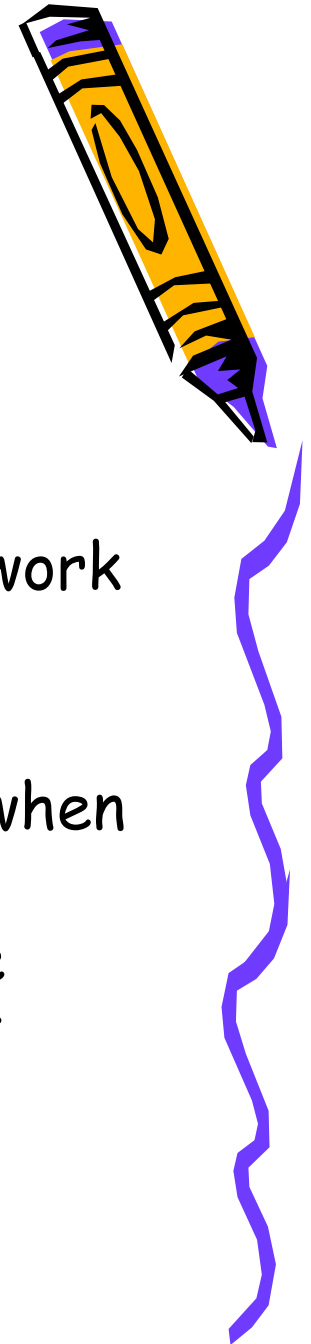
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# Differentiating Product

- Giving options on how to express required learning (make a mural, write a letter, create a puppet show, etc.)
- Using different rubrics to match and extend students' skill levels
- Allowing students to work alone or in groups to complete product
- Encouraging students to create own product as long as it contains the required elements



# Differentiating Learning Environment/Styles



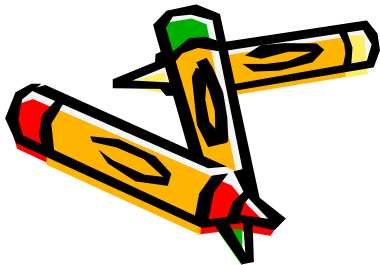
- Allowing for places to work quietly without distraction, as well as places for students to work collaboratively
- Setting clear guidelines for independent work
- Developing routines for students to get help when teacher busy working with other students
- Allowing for those students who need to move around when learning, while others need to sit quietly



# Differentiated Instruction

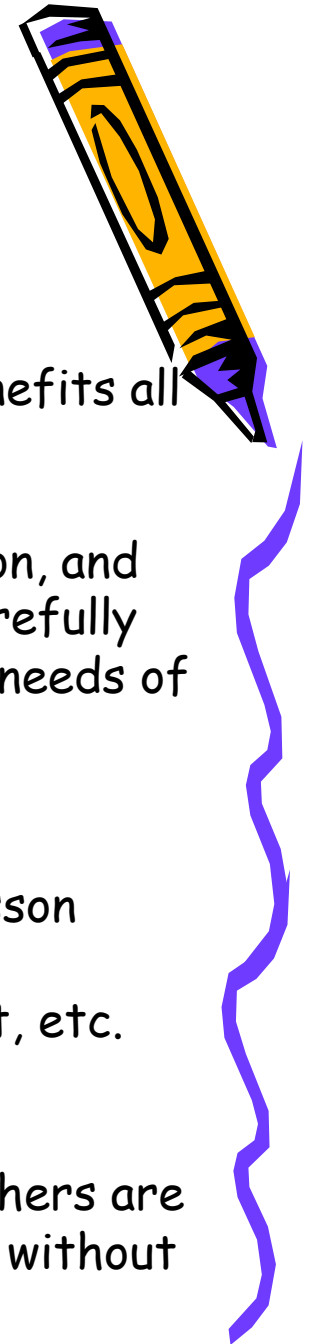
## Is Not:

- An approach designed to help disabled students
- Adaptations "tacked on" to already developed lessons
- Changing parts of a lesson for one or two students
- A new approach to teaching and learning



## Is:

- An approach that benefits all students
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment that is carefully designed to meet the needs of students
- Creating diversity in instruction- mixing lesson formats, instructional arrangements, support, etc. for all learners
- Something most teachers are doing already perhaps without realizing it



# Key Principles of a Differentiated Classroom

- The teacher is **clear about** what matters in **subject matter**.
- The teacher understands, appreciates, and **builds upon student differences**.
- **Assessment** and **instruction** are **inseparable**.
- The teacher adjusts **content, process, and product** in response to student **readiness, interests, and learning profile**.
- All students participate in **respectful work**.
- Students and teachers are **collaborators** in learning.
- Goals of a differentiated classroom are **maximum growth** and **individual success**.
- **Flexibility** is the hallmark of a differentiated classroom.

