

# 4 Ways to See Differentiation in the Classroom

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## 1. Time

- **Compacting Instruction:** *Giving students full credit for what they know based on a pretest and then providing opportunities to learn the content in a shorter amount of time*
- **Guided Research/Independent Study:** *Guided Research is teacher-assigned topics where students work individually or in paired/small groups to develop research skills and habits necessary for self-directed learning; Independent Study encourages students to pursue extensive knowledge and understanding in an area of interest (student choice); both accent high-level thinking and enhance life-long learning skills*
- **Extension Menu:** *A selection of topics from which a student can choose to pursue an independent study that extends the learning of a required standard beyond the mastered content standards*

## 2. Assistance

- **Flexible Grouping-Similar Readiness Level (Homogeneous):** *Grouping of similar ability levels; accents abstract/complex thinking and prompt construction of symbolic relationships; encourages use of sophisticated vocabulary; provides beyond grade-level learning opportunities*
- **Learning Centers (Student &/or Teacher developed):** *Focuses on practice, mastery, or extension of concepts and skills; enables student exploration independent of teacher direction; most effective if beyond grade-level resources and depth and complexity are used*

## 3. Resources

- **Use of Multiple Texts and Supplementary Materials:** *Textbooks, newspaper, primary video, expository text etc... available at multiple grade levels*
- **Use of Instructional Strategies:** *Project Based Learning, Visual Thinking Strategies, Depth and Complexity Icons, Blooms Taxonomy*

## 4. Modification of Curriculum

- **Open-ended Tasks/Inquiry :** *Flexible learning activities; accents divergent thinking by encouraging students to respond with multiple correct ideas at various levels of complexity & understanding; demonstrates reasoning; springboard for in-depth study*
- **Creative Problem Solving :** *A series of steps that guide the creative process that eventually leads to one or more creative, viable solutions; accents creativity by encouraging both divergent and convergent thinking in every step*
- **Product Options/Choice/Learning Styles:** *Providing a series of options/choices based on varying degrees of complexity that appeal to student learning styles so that the student can demonstrate mastery of a desired skill; accents creativity and motivates learners; validates the significance of all modalities and intelligences*
- **Problem-Based Learning :** *Both a curriculum & a process; students investigate a real-world problem and find a solution; fosters active learning, supports knowledge construction, and naturally integrates school learning and real life*
- **Tiered Instruction:** *Provides different levels of learning tasks WITHIN the same unit in order to align the curriculum to various readiness levels; lessons can be tiered by content, product, or resources.*