What’s So Different About Differentiation for the Gifted?

The 21st Century Learner

Today’s Classroom

Less emphasis should be placed on the amount of material memorized and more weight put on making connections, thinking through issues and solving problems.
The Essence of Differentiation for Advanced Learners

Avenues to Differentiating for Advanced Students

Advanced Content:
Depth through interdisciplinary concepts
Advancing Content
Link courses through concepts with relevance to the students
- Power
- Conflict
- Desire
Use essential questions that seek answers for the betterment of humanity
- In what ways has power influenced our lives?
- How do systems support certain power structures?

Avenues to Differentiating for Advanced Students

Sophisticated Process:
Complexity through advanced forms of thinking

Advancing Process
Use complex problems that require students to work collaboratively
- Local issue: Consider a local issue that includes the struggle or complexity of power. What’s the issue and what recommendation can we make to solve the problem?

Develop student thinking by teaching critical reasoning strategies and creative thinking tools
- Analyze the similarities/differences of lead characters in Romeo & Juliet and A Midsummer Night’s Dream and define a common principle of power that link them all together.
Avenues to Differentiating for Advanced Students

**Unique Products:**
Authentic products for authentic audiences

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Advancing Product

Products that have value to others:

- After the study of myths, legends and folktales, create a new myth, legend or folktale that represents the benefits or responsibilities of "power" and produce a book for younger students.
- Make a report to the School Board and School District after a public meeting that shares representations of the distribution and sharing of power.

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Avenues to Differentiating for Advanced Students

**Through**

Acting within the discipline as a disciplinarian (scholarly disposition)

- Open- and fair-minded
- Inquisitive
- Flexible in thinking & acting
- Interested in seeking out reason
- Immersed in acquiring more information
- Respectful of & expecting diverse points of view
Avenues to Differentiating for Advanced Students

Through

- Studying topics of interest not addressed in the core content

Developing advanced levels of self-regulation
- Goal setting
- Monitoring
- Reflecting

Rigorous Curriculum & Instruction for Gifted:

Pace:
Accelerated instructional practice

Depth:
Increased discipline knowledge and practice

Complexity:
Sophisticated levels of advanced thinking

Accelerated Pace

Based on instructional objectives
- Spend less time on didactic information
- Spend more time on advanced questioning and deep discussions

Begin instruction with the Big Ideas
- Essential question formation
- Considering possible answers
- Defining concepts/generalizations/principles/theories
Defining Depth & Complexity for Advanced Learners

Depth

- The level of information needed to solve complex and abstract problems within and across disciplines
  - Using facts and procedures automatically
  - Thinking abstractly through concepts
  - Incorporating advanced levels of self-regulation

How to Identify the Essentials

- What students will understand
- What students will be able to do
- What students will know
Different Facts

Identify general interests:
- Strong women
- The arts
- Leadership

What’s worth knowing
- Important women during the civil war
- How the arts influenced solidarity
- Strategies of leadership to maintain power

Determine how the facts may enhance the learning:
- Women’s role during conflict
- The arts role in conflict
- Leadership strategies during conflict
Procedural Knowledge
What you want students to BE ABLE TO DO

- **Strategies** within a specific subject,
  - Discrete, conscious actions
  - Step-by-step procedures
    - Example: Scientific method:
      1. Ask a Question
      2. Do Background Research
      3. Construct a Hypothesis
      4. Test Your Hypothesis by Doing an Experiment
      5. Analyze Your Data and Draw a Conclusion
      6. Communicate Your Results

- **Skills** within a discipline
  - When strategies have been amassed, and
  - Becomes automatic
  - Including general thinking skills
    - Problem solving & Decision making
    - Critical and Creative thinking
    - Communication & Collaboration
    - Self-Regulation

Complexity

3rd Level Analysis
Let’s Practice

In groups of 3-5
Select 3 unique words
Define those words in your own way

The Preamble to the US Constitution

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves, and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America
Let’s Practice

In your group:
1) What are the similarities & differences?
2) What make the similarities & differences significant?
3) Why do the similarities & differences exist?

Conceptual Knowledge
What you want students to UNDERSTAND
- The interrelationships between disciplines
- Knowledge of:
  - Classifications and categories
  - Periods of geological time, animal kingdoms
  - Generalizations and principles
  - Pythagorean theorem, economic laws
  - Theories, models and structures
  - Theory of evolution, governmental structures
Sample Interdisciplinary Concepts

- Adaptation
- Change
- Cause & Effect
- Evolution
- Extinction
- Equality
- Family
- Freedom
- Good & Evil
- Justice
- Knowledge
- Life & Death
- Loyalty
- Models
- Origins
- Patterns
- Responsibility
- Survival
- Systems
- Truth

Critical Thinking through Concept Development (Taba, 1962)

- List examples
- List non-examples
- Categorize
- Generalize

Generalizations

- Offer important understandings about the concept
- Explore adequately the scope of the concept under study
- Are valid for the content area
- Apply to other disciplines in a coherent way
Power Generalizations

Power can be real or perceived.

Power is control.

Power may have positive and/or negative consequences.

Power is assumed.

There is natural and human-made power structures.

Designing Good Questions: DOT

Divergent thinking

Open-ended

Take time to answer

Designing Good Questions

2 Types

Open ended

• In what ways...
• Who/What/When/Where/Why/How might...

Forced choice with explanation:

• Who/What is more important and why?
• Where can you find...and why?
• When/How do...and why
Sample Power Essential Questions

- In what ways is power real or perceived?
- In what ways does power control? or Why does power control?
- What are the positive and/or negative consequences of power?
- How is power assumed?
- How do natural and human-made power structures compare/contrast?
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<th><strong>Level 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Level 2</strong></th>
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<td>Where? When? What?</td>
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<td>How effective are the strategies and tactics? Use the information to explain, elaborate, expand, and extend the frame.</td>
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