

Follow-up Discussion

Professional Development Monthly Advisor and Planner (PDMAP)

Differentiated and Multi-Level Instruction for Adult Learners

August 2011

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Of all of the resources in the PD MAP on *Differentiated and Multi-Level Instruction for Adult Learners* which **one resource** was the most helpful or interesting to you?
2. Based on the article(s) you read how was differentiated instruction defined? Multi-level instruction? How did the article(s) expand your understanding of differentiated and multi-level instruction and the relationship between the two?
3. What does an instructor need to know and be able to do to make the learning experience positive and productive for everyone? How can instructors avoid frustrating the learners with the lower skills, boring the learners with the higher skills and in the end, really only meeting the needs of those whose skills fall in the middle?
4. According to a few of the articles, differentiating instruction requires instructors to modify learning experiences in the areas of content, process and product. How do you:
 - Adjust the **content** to allow all learners to learn the same concepts but in different ways
 - Select presentation methods and activities to help learners understand and eventually master the concepts and skills being taught (**process**)
 - Allowing learners a choice in options to demonstrate their learning (**product**)

(You can give examples of how you differentiate instruction in one or more of these three areas.)

5. How important is it in multi-level classes to strategically structure interactions between learners at different levels and/or different learning styles/ preferences and to have a variety (type and level) of learning materials available in the classroom that learners can access (sometimes referred to as self-access materials or stations)? How do you do this in your classroom?

6. According to Julie Mathews-Aydinli and Regina Van Horne in *Promoting Success of Multilevel ESL Classes: What Teachers and Administrators Can Do*, teachers can only be successful teaching multi-level classes if they have: "(a) training, experience and extra time for preparing lessons and materials; (b) teacher collaboration; and (c) program support." Included in this is the effective use of tutors, teacher aides, volunteers and counselors to help learners understand their educational options and establish educational goals.

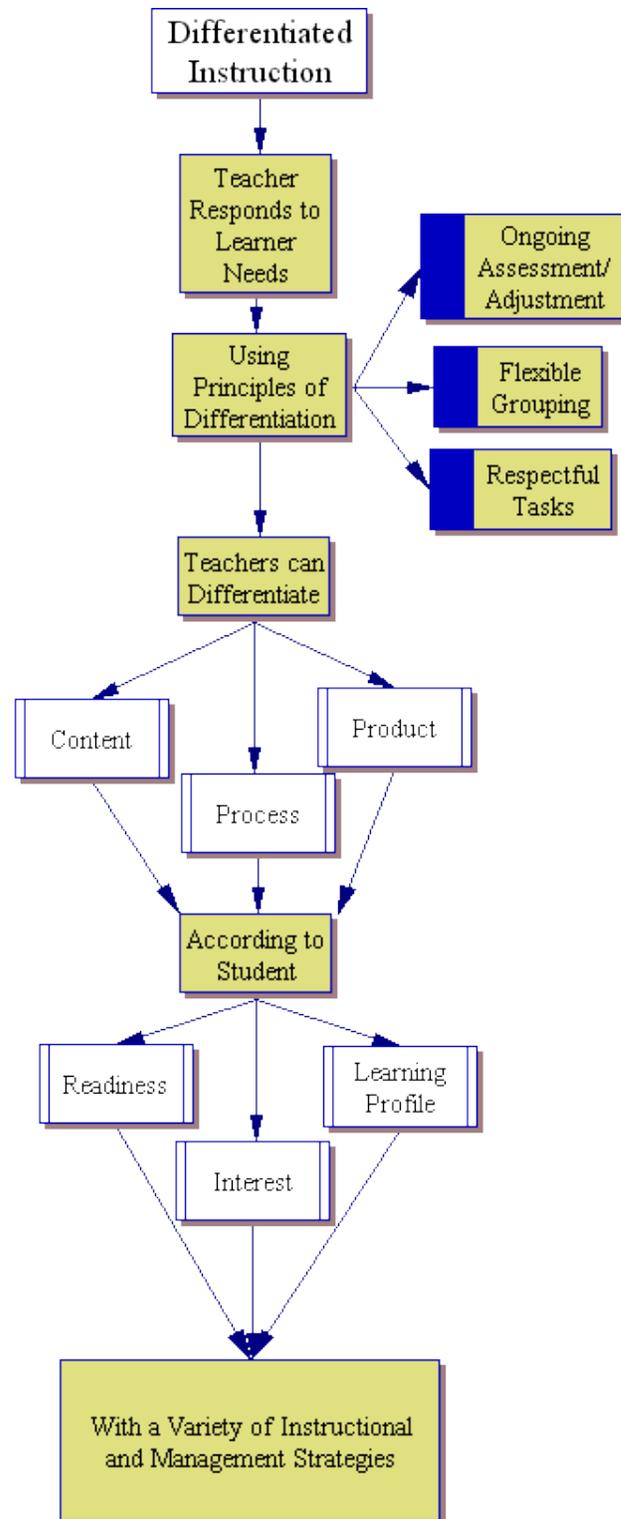
Is this true based on your experience? Share the resources and support available to instructors who teach multi-level courses at your program or at programs where you have taught multi-level learners in the past.

7. The Mathews-Aydinli and Van Horne article mentions the importance of telling learners during orientation and enrollment that they will be in multi-level classes and explaining – even at a basic level or in the learners' native language(s) – what the instructor will do to help all learners be successful, as well as what learners will need to do to make their learning experience in a multi-level class successful.

Share your thoughts about how this could be done and how helpful it could be for learners.

8. Identify differentiation and multi-level instruction strategies from resources in the PD MAP that you are using to help your learners or that would likely be successful with your learners.

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This diagram is from:
Tomlinson, Carol Ann. The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1999.