From presentation at Literary Institute Summer ’08 Chrisalyn Monroe

**Guidelines and Sample Lessons for Tiering for Differentiation**

Scaffolding vs. tiering

Scaffolding is whatever kind of assistance is needed for any student to move to the next level of knowledge and skill. In a good differentiated classroom, the teacher is constantly raising the stakes for success for any individual, then doing whatever is necessary to help the student succeed in taking the next step

• Make sure students understand the learning goals and how each segment of their work connects to the goals.

• Use multiple modes of teaching and a wide range of strategies– tiered assignments, learning contracts,

• Teach in small groups, reteaching/extending teaching.

• Provide a variety of resource materials, use graphic organizers, manipulatives, study guides.

• Use varied groupings of students– flexible grouping.

• Ask probing and clarifying questions.

• Help students develop effective study groups.

• Describe what quality looks like and guide students in doing so, give clear criteria for success-scoring guides.

• Model processes and procedures.

• Involve learner in establishing goals.

Tiering is a set of activities that are specifically designed with the students readiness, interest, or learning profile in mind. These activities hold the same standards and expectations for all students for the knowledge, understandings and skills that they are to achieve, but are designed to challenge each student according to their personal needs.

***Guidelines for teiring***

There are 5 major organizational points to tiering instruction:

1. Choose a concept that students should know or understand
2. Choose whether to tier according to readiness, interest, or learning profile. Assess student's profile, readiness, and interest.
3. Choose to tier by content, process or product.
4. Choose materials that equally address the KUD but offer varying levels of thinking skills
5. Create an activity that is clearly focused on the concept.
6. Adjust the activity to provide different levels of difficulty.
7. Match students to appropriate tiered assignment.

**Common Questions**

Is adapting programs the same as tiered instruction?

Adapting programs is a start, however varying the level of difficulty of questions for certain students and allowing higher level learners to play enrichment games is not enough. The goal is for tasks to appropriately challenge all levels of students so as to meet optimal learning and for all students to achieve success.

Is tiered instruction only for students below grade level?

The idea is that tiered instructions meets the needs of all students. Often gifted students are not appropriately challenged. With tiered instruction the gifted students' needs will be met and they will achieve a new level of success.

Will the tier groups always be the same?

Unless groups are based on individual intelligence tests, groups will vary greatly each time you choose this teaching strategy. Your groups may vary according to the type of tiering you do or the concept you focus on.

How can you fairly assess tiered assignments?

In the education of children we continually assess the individual's progress. Tiered instruction lends to this perfectly. With assignments that appropriately challenge students 'real' progress occurs. Like any other teaching strategy we must use a wide range of assessment tools.

**When designing tiered assignments,**

**keep these suggestions in mind:**

For students who are struggling with a topic (Level 1), you would want to give them an assignment that has the following features:

* Requires less difficult independent reading.
* Has materials based on the average reading level of the participants, which is usually below grade level
* Has spare text and lots of graphic aids.
* Has a low level of abstraction, ie. as concrete as possible.
* Requires fewer steps to complete the assignment.
* Converges on ‘right answers‘ to solve problems
* Scaffolds from knowledge and comprehension levels of thinking to higher levels for independent work
* Includes supportive strategies such as graphic organizers or teacher prompting to help students infer and draw conclusions (ie. Use higher level thinking skills)

For average learners (Level 2), the assignment should include the following features:

* Includes independent reading materials from the textbook or other on grade level sources
* Uses concrete concepts to help student s transition to more abstract concepts
* Includes questions or problems that are a mix of open ended and “right answers”
* Can have more steps
* Expects students to infer and draw conclusions with less teacher support. Teacher should count on being on hand if necessary to prompt students in this area

For advanced or gifted learner (Level 3), the assignment should include the following features:

* Includes reading materials from sources more complex than the textbook if possible
* Requires more lengthy sources because students can read faster than lower or average students
* Focuses on abstract concepts as much as possible and uses open-ended questions exclusively.
* Requires students to infer and evaluate.
* Assumes student have knowledge, comprehension, and application abilities, and that they will be challenged only if you ask them to analyze, synthesize and evaluate.

Tiered Activities

**To Alter the Depth of a Lesson**

**Subject Area:**  Language Arts **Grade Level:**  7 – 8

**Topic:** Persuasive Essay

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Basic** | **Intermediate** | **Advanced** |
| **Outcome/**  **Performance Indicators** | Students will write a cohesive paragraph with a main idea and supporting details. | Students will state a point of view and cite multiple reasons to defend that viewpoint. | Students will expand the quality of their essay by adding multiple, credible sources of support. |
| **Assessment** | Students will describe their opinion about a topic by writing 5-6 detailed sentences explaining their opinion – to be assessed using the NYS independent writing rubric. | Students will use the Learning Activity as a rough draft to develop a multi-paragraph persuasive essay – to be assessed using the NYS independent writing rubric. | Students will write a persuasive essay using multiple reasons, logical explanations and credible sources to support their point of view – to be assessed using the NYS independent writing rubric. |
| **Instruction/**  **Learning Activity** | Students will receive a rubric to help them design and evaluate the cohesiveness of a paragraph.  Students will identify their point of view and list 5-6 reasons in support of their opinion. | Teacher will explain/describe the essential elements of a persuasive essay using a graphic organizer.  Students will identify a point of view, list 4-5 reasons to support it, and explain each reason with detailed bullets. | Students will learn how to evaluate the credibility of a source and locate multiple sources, quotes, references, etc., to increase the quality of their arguments.  Students will develop criteria to identify credible sources. |
| **Resources** | List of issues and problems (appealing to students) that have alternate points of view. | List of issues and problems (appealing to students) that have alternate points of view. | Opposing viewpoints series, editorial pages of D&C and USA Today. |
| **Homework** | Students will collect good and bad examples of cohesive paragraphs from newspapers, magazines and younger students’ work. | Students will collect good and bad examples of persuasive editorials in newspapers and periodicals. | Students will search the web for multiple, credible sources to support their argument. |

**Pre-assessment:** Quick write (short writing sample) a current “hot topic” that is controversial

Subject: Science Grade: Seventh

Standard: #7 The Mathematical World

Key Concept: Mathematical statements can be used to describe how one quantity changes when another changes. Rates of change can be computed from differences in magnitude and vice versa.

Generalization: Work, mechanical advantage, and efficiency can be calculated

to determine how a change in one quantity affects other quantities in the equation.

Background: Students have been studying a unit on force, motion, and energy. They have covered the definition of work and how to calculate work. They can identify six simple machines. The teacher has given a short quiz on this material and has grouped the students according to their scores on the test and their math ability. Pairs, triads, or quads work well.

This lesson is tiered in ***process*** according to ***readiness***.

Tier I: ***Basic***

Materials: spring scale, meter stick, a variety of objects. Students practice finding the amount of work done when each object is lifted, using the formula, Work = Force X Distance. Students may also be given a worksheet of problems that use the calculation of work as the focus.

Tier II: ***Grade Level***

Materials: Students should be given simple machines or pictures of simple machines and asked to determine whether the machines have the mechanical advantage of force, of distance, or of changing direction. Also give students a worksheet for practice in calculating mechanical advantage ( MA = Output force/input force). Students should choose one of the problems or one of the machines and set up an investigation to illustrate one of the forms of mechanical advantage.

Tier III: ***Advanced***

Students should choose a particular type of compound machine (lawn

mower, electric mixer, etc.) and research the output and input forces. From

those figures, they can calculate the efficiency of the machine (E = output

force/input force x 100%). Students should plan an experiment to determine

the efficiency of their machine.

Assessment:

Teacher observation and student interviews during the investigation will

serve as formative assessments. Each group’s calculations will be assessed

for accuracy. Experimental design should be assessed with a rubric.

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Seventh

Standard: #6 Measurement

Key Concept: Students work with measurement of perimeter and area.

Generalization: Students work with the relationship between perimeter and area of shapes.

Background:

This lesson should be presented fairly early in the year. Students should be familiar with the definitions of perimeter and area.

This lesson is tiered in ***content*** according to ***readiness***.

Tier I: ***Basic Learners***

Pairs of students are given eight squares which are a variety of colors or you could have the students make their own squares from card stock or you may already have an appropriate manipulative for the students to use. Students are given a worksheet which contains a series of questions about perimeter and area related to the eight squares. Questions about the greatest and least perimeter, greatest and least area, specific areas, and specific perimeters should be

included on the worksheet. In addition, students should be asked to draw specific examples for each question.

Tier II: ***Grade Level Learners***

Pairs of students are given twelve squares which are a variety of colors or you could have the students make their own squares from card stock or you may already have an appropriate manipulative for the students to use. Students are given a worksheet which contains a series of questions about perimeter and area related to the twelve squares. Questions about the greatest and least perimeter, greatest and least area, specific areas, and specific perimeters should be

included on the worksheet. In addition, students should be asked to draw specific examples for each question.

Tier III: ***Advanced Learners***

Pairs of students are given twelve hexagons which are a variety of colors or you could have the students make their own hexagons from card stock or you may already have an appropriate manipulative for the students to use. Students are given a worksheet which contains a series of questions about perimeter and area related to the use of the twelve hexagons. Questions about the greatest and least perimeter, greatest and least area, specific areas, and specific perimeters

should be included on the worksheet. In addition, students should be asked to draw specific examples for each question.

Assessment:

Each worksheet should be graded accuracy. An extension for each tier would be to ask questions which involve a greater number of their shape or pertain to another shape.

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**Tiered Lesson Plan:  Causes of the Civil War**   


**Standard**   
This lesson will cover national standard of US history era five/standard thirteen/level four/number two:  "Understands events that fueled the political and sectional conflicts over slavery and ultimately polarized the North and the South (e.g., the Missouri Compromise, the Wilmot Proviso, the Kansas-Nebraska Act)" ([www.mcrel.org)](http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=5&StandardID=13)

**Background**   
Prior to giving this assignment the students will receive lectures and readings explaining the rising conflicts prior to and throughout the 1850’s.  They will receive material through lectures and readings on the following historical figures and events: Nat Turner, Elijah Lovejoy, William Lloyd Garrison, Henry Clay, John Calhoun, Stephan Douglas, Fredrick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Toms Cabin, John Brown and Harper’s Ferry, Dred Scott Case, Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln/Douglas debates, Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Presidential Nominating Conventions of 1860.

**Tiered by process**   
This lesson will be tiered by process.  Different groups of students will receive different assignments to exhibit their understanding of the ideas presented.  The easier assignments will be longer in length to accommodate for the difference in the difficulty of assignments.

**Tiered by readiness**   
This lesson will be tiered by readiness.  The students who are able to think synthesize and evaluate the facts given them, will be given an evaluation assignment.  The students who are able to analyze the facts will be given analytical problems.  Finally, the students who learn only by memorization and comprehension will be given a basic assignment.

**Guide in tiering**   
I will tier this lesson by groups of readiness, in ways that I think will be the most beneficial for the different students.  I will take into account, their ability to evaluate history, analyze history, or comprehend history.  I will group the students as I feel it will be the best way for them to learn.  Although I will be dividing the assignments into three different groups of types of students, the students will NOT be working in groups to answer these questions.  The will work as individuals, and they will present individual ideas and views.

**Make up of tiers**   
**Tier I** will be made up of students who I feel will benefit best from a simpler form of learning, such as defining and giving the significance of various key terms or people and answering basic questions.  Some of the terms they will be expected to identify will be:

Slavery, Nat Turner, Elijah Lovejoy, William Lloyd Garrison, abolitionists, Henry Clay, John Calhoun, Stephan Douglas, popular sovereignty, Fredrick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Toms Cabin, John Brown and Harper’s Ferry, Dred Scott Case, Abraham Lincoln, republicans, democrats, Lincoln/Douglas debates, Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Presidential Nominating Conventions of 1860, etc.

**Tier II** would be comprised of students that I felt capable of taking historical facts and analyzing them to show how these people/events led to the escalation of conflict that led to the civil war.  I would give these students various questions that asked them to link certain events to the causes of the civil war.  Some example questions that I may ask of these students are:

1) How did the publishing of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Toms Cabin help lead to civil war?   
2) What did the Dred Scott Case decide?  What did it mean for slaves and former slaves?  Did the Supreme Court overstep its constitutional limits in their decision?   
3) What were the differing points of view in the Lincoln/Douglas debates?   
4) What key figure in this time period favored popular sovereignty?  How did other key figures react to his ideas?   
5) What were the views of the abolitionists?  What were the differences in views held by Lovejoy, Garrison, and Douglass?   
6) What role did John Brown and Harper’s Ferry play in escalating the rift between North and South?   
7) What caused the Democratic Presidential Appointing Convention in Charleston, SC to break up?  What were the effects of this?

These students will be expected to answer these questions in a complete manner.  Most answers should consist of at least one or two paragraphs, sometimes more.  They will be expected to show full understanding of these terms, and how they led to an escalation of conflict between the North and the South.

**Tier III** students will be those students who I feel have a good grip on the ideas presented and can think critically and explain how these key terms/figures/events eventually led to the civil war.  I would ask these students to present a 3-4 page essay on how the key points of the lecture and readings ended up causing the civil war.  These students will be expected to provide their own ideas on why these situations occurred and what the effects of these events were.  These students will be given more freedom to handle the material.  Their own ideas will shape their responses and mold the essay.

**Assessment**   
These students will be eligible to earn equal points on their respective assignments.  For example, this assignment may be worth 50 points.  The Tier I students would have 25 terms to identify at two points apiece.  The Tier II students would have 10 questions at five points per question.  The Tier III students’ essays would be worth 50 points in itself.  In this way, the students doing the harder work would only be expected to present one essay, and be able to receive the same credit as the students who must do 25 easier identifications.

On the test, I would assess their knowledge through basic multiple-choice questions to measure their understanding of key concepts and ideas.  These questions would all have been covered in lectures or assigned readings.  I would then give about 25 identifications (worth five points apiece) and 5 essays (worth 10 points apiece).  The students would be responsible for completing a combination of these totaling to 30 points.  In this manner, the students who learned by knowledge and comprehension would have the option of using the method by which they were assigned to show their knowledge of the key concepts. Those who were able to analyze and/or evaluate the history would have the option of writing essays to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject. This way no student would have an unfair advantage over others because of the differing assignments.   
 

Social Studies Tiered by Process

Title - Differentiated Learning Egyptian Project   
By - Natalie Runice   
Primary Subject - Social Studies   
Secondary Subjects - Art, Language Arts, Computers / Internet, Multidiscipline   
Grade Level - 6-8   
  
This is a differentiated learning project that wraps up our study of Egypt. The students must choose a combination of 10 points of activities. I do not allow my students to do extra points for extra credit. The projects get more difficult, and more time consuming as the point value increases. Try to encourage your higher level students to complete the 8-point activity. You can change this project to fit your own curriculum. This is a FABULOUS idea for differentiated instruction.   
  
I made the project out of 100 points. I multiplied the point value by "10", (i.e., the "8" point activity is worth 80 points".) The students worked on their project for four days in class. My students really got into this project. They loved being able to choose what interested them the most.

Egyptian 1,2,5,8 Project  
  
You must choose activities that equal a total of 10 points. Doing more than 10 points for extra credit is not an option!  
  
One Point Activities

A. Define the following vocabulary words found in Unit 3 (chapters 7,8,9). Define them using your own words. Credit will not be given if the definitions are taken directly from the text.  
  
Delta, pharaoh, Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, Hyksos, scribes, pyramids, mummies, hieroglyphics, papyrus, Great Pyramid  
  
B. Create an afterlife checklist. Provide at least 10 items you would need to bring to your afterlife, and provide reasons for why you would need this item. Be sure and decorate your checklist! Share your checklist with the class.  
  
C. Decorate a picture of King Tut that will serve as an honor to him and his service to the Egyptians. Do not only use colored pencils and/or markers. You must find different objects to enhance the picture (i.e. glitter, beads, jewelry, colored rice, etc) I will provide you with the picture that you need to decorate, you provide items to decorate the picture.

Two Point Activities

A. Create a crossword puzzle using terms and information about Egypt. You must have a minimum of 12 clues.  
  
B. Create a colorful map of Egypt. Label the following places, AND tell me about their significance or how they relate to Egypt: (You will be sharing your map with the class)  
  
Nile River, Nile Delta, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Sahara Desert, Thebes, Giza, Memphis, Phoenicia, Mesopotamia.  
  
C. Research the Aswan High Dam. Give a brief summary of the dam (about 1 paragraph). Conclude by stating whether or not you believe the dam should have been built, and provide at least three reasons why you think the way you do.  
  
D. Follow the recipe for Egyptian Bread. Make the bread in your own home, and bring it in for tasting on our presentation day. If you choose this activity, a letter will be sent home for your parents to sign, agreeing that they will assist you with the baking, and provide the ingredients.  
  
E. Choose five pharaohs from Egyptian history. Write one quote for each of the five pharaohs you have chosen. Write a quote that the pharaoh MAY have been heard saying. Present your quotes to the class. The class will try to guess which pharaoh you are portraying.  
  
F. Make a Venn diagram of the differences between the Egyptian Civilization and the Mesopotamian Civilization. Based on what you have listed, create a symbol to represent each civilization. Share your symbols and diagram with the class. IF YOU DO THE 8 POINT ACTIVITY, YOU MAY NOT CHOOSE THIS OPTION, YOU MUST CHOOSE A DIFFERENT ACTIVITY.

Five Point Activities

A. Create a game based on the Egyptian number system. The game needs to be colorful and neat! Make the game so that when you present it to the class, everyone can participate.  
  
B. Create a hieroglyphics crossword puzzle. You must develop symbols for at least 15 of the 26 letters of our alphabet. Your clues must be in hieroglyphics format, but the answers can be translated into regular English. The crossword puzzle must utilize terms and information about Egypt. You must have a minimum of 8 clues.  
  
C. Make a pyramid pop-up book. Your book must include information about Egyptian pyramids (including, what they were used for, how they were made, what you would find inside, different areas of the pyramid). Your book must have illustrations, text describing the illustrations and the pyramids, and at least one pop-up per page. Your book can be no smaller than four pages. Share your book with the class.  
  
D. Find a partner to write a script, and role-play the decision-making duties of the pharaoh. The pharaoh's most important task was to establish truth, order and justice throughout the land. In ancient Egypt, pharaoh's word was law. One of you will act as pharaoh. The other will present two cases to the "pharaoh" in front of the class. Partners must write out a detailed description of the case to be presented before the pharaoh (to be handed in). The pharaoh must them make a ruling based upon the merits of the case presented.  
  
Case ideas: (These are only ideas -- feel free to think up your own cases)

* + A slave has attempted to escape from a cruel master
  + A servant refuses to do as commanded
  + Someone is overheard questioning one of the pharaoh's decisions
  + A farmers wants to be excused from work on the pharaoh's pyramid
  + A wealthy lord kills your servant with his chariot.

Eight Point Activity

A. You need to complete both Part I & II

Part I

Create an essay comparing and contrasting the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Write about how they are similar and different. Your essay must include, but is not limited to, what did they wear, eat, whom did they worship, what did they contribute to society, how did they communicate, who ruled their civilizations? Compare and contrast Egyptian and Mesopotamian trade, schooling, and dress. Which civilization do you think was more successful? Why? Which civilization contributed more to our common way of living? Give evidence to support your claims.

Part II

Choose one pharaoh from the Ancient Egyptian time period. Write an essay detailing the life of the pharaoh. Did they marry? Whom did they marry? Did they have children? Tell about how and when they became pharaoh. Describe some of the significant events that occurred during their years of reign. How did they impact Egyptian civilization?

Your essay (parts I & II combined) must be a minimum of 1 ½ pages (approximately 800 words), single spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, and can be no longer than three single spaced pages.