

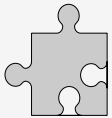
Inclusion, RTI, & Differentiated Instruction along with Administrative Leadership and Support 4 Pieces of the Puzzle That provides Access and Success for ALL Learners

This handout will provide an explanation as to how Inclusive Practices, Response to Intervention (RTI), and Differentiated Instruction (DI) along with Administrative Leadership and Support effectively work together to ensure access and success in the general education curriculum for ALL students. This is a valuable tool for explaining how these **4 powerful pieces** fit together to create a positive learning environment that accepts and nurtures individual differences, while enhancing student achievement and performance.



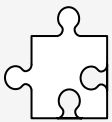
Administrative Leadership & Support

- The underpinning to access and success for all students rests on building a master schedule for planning/collaboration, as well as providing staff development in RTI, co-teaching and collaborative problem solving.



Inclusion / Collaborative Planning & Problem Solving

- These processes are essential for educators to be efficient and effective.
- Face-to-face meetings to identify challenges, develop solutions and track student progress are critical.



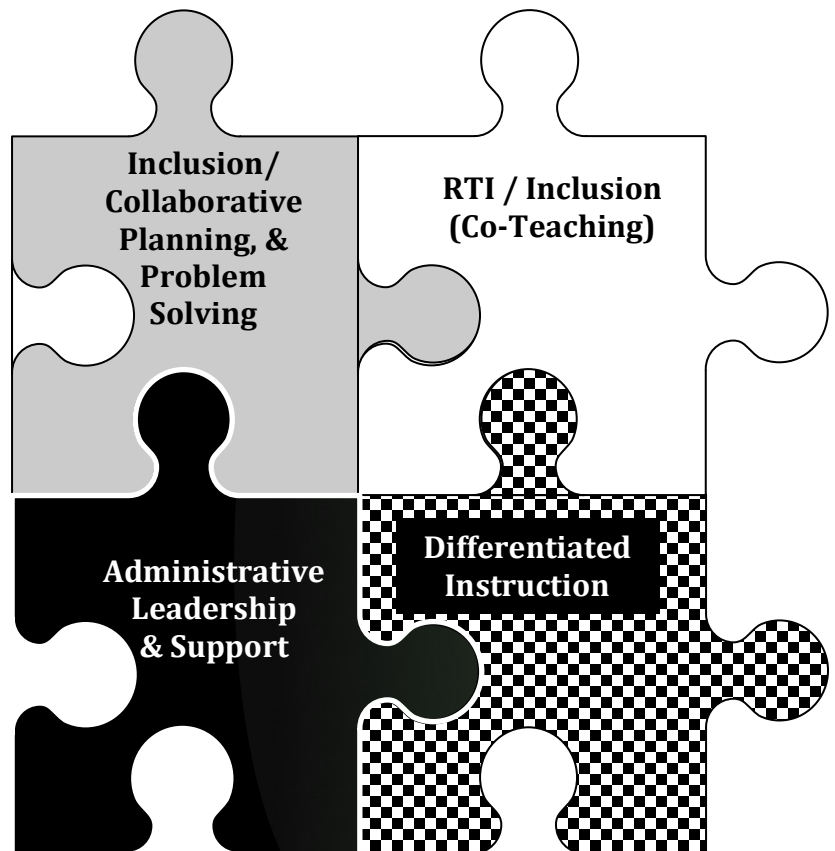
RTI / Inclusion (Co-Teaching)

- Masters of "content" (general educators) and masters of "access" (special educators) work as a team.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) provides research-based strategies targeted to student's needs.



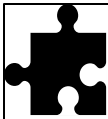
Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiated Instruction (DI) is essential in adapting instruction for all students.
- DI provides multiple pathways to access content and show what students know.



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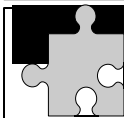
Administrative Leadership and Support

Administrative leadership and support, foundational to facilitating change and success with the best practice initiatives of RTI, co-teaching, and DI, has five dimensions. To orchestrate a blending of these practices, leaders-school principals, district central office administrators, grade-level team leaders, special education/related services directors, department chairs – must attend to:

1. Building a vision of collaborative planning and problem-solving for differentiating teaching through RTI and co-teaching;
2. Developing educators’ skills and confidence to differentiate instruction, collaboratively plan, problem-solve, and co-teach;
3. Creating meaningful incentives for educators to take the risk to embark on a journey to provide various models of in-class support, collaboratively plan, and differentiate instruction (e.g., building master schedules that provide common planning time);
4. Reorganizing, scheduling, and expanding human and other resources;
5. Action planning for specific activities and sequences of steps to ensure vision, skills, incentives, and resources, in fact, are put into place.

Administrator Actions to Promote DI through Inclusive Practices and RTI

- Publicly articulate the rationale for collaborative planning, inclusion, problem-solving, RTI and DI.
- Redefine staff roles so all are expected to participate in collaborative planning, co-teaching, problem-solving and ID (i.e., in the job description of teachers and support personnel).
- Assess the staff’s need for collaboration (e.g., With whom do I need to collaborate to successfully adapt instruction? From which colleagues can I acquire skills through modeling and coaching?).
- Create a master schedule that facilitates collaboration in planning and teaching (e.g., common prep and lunch periods).
- Establish professional support groups to help staff learn about and begin to practice problem-solving, co-teaching, and differentiation and to analyze data.
- Establish school-wide (and district-wide) RTI teams.
- Institute staff development to create common conceptual language, framework, skills, and dispositions (e.g., through courses and workshops, mentoring and peer coaching systems, professional learning communities (PLC’s), book studies, job shadowing, clinical supervision, and the pairing of new collaborative planning/teaching teams with veteran collaborators).
- Educate school and community members about the accomplishments of collaborative problem-solving, RTI, DI, and inclusive practices which include co-teach teams.
- Periodically provide additional time for collaborative planning (e.g., hire substitutes, use in –service time, provide release time.)
- Provide incentives for collaborative planning and problem-solving (e.g., recognize the efforts and accomplishments of collaborators, provide release time to observe one another in action, send them to conferences, and make presentations about their accomplishments).



Inclusion / Collaborative Planning Processes

Use a Structured Team Meeting Agenda Format

For inclusion/co-teaching and RTI to lead to DI, school personnel need to collaboratively plan.

There are multiple benefits to collaborative planning:

- ✓ Educators who collaboratively plan and teach can expect improvements in students’ academic/social skills.
- ✓ Team members capitalize upon the unique and specialized knowledge and skills of their teammates.
- ✓ Team members experience increased higher-level thinking and generate more novel solutions and interventions.
- ✓ Educators feel empowered when they jointly plan and make decisions.

Co-teachers and RTI planning teams are more likely to experience success in executing a lesson/unit or in designing an intervention if they use a structured Team Meeting Agenda format. Such a format ensures that team members practice the required elements of an effective cooperative planning process through;

- **Face-to-face interaction**- prompted and recognized with the public recording of who is present, late, and absent from the meeting, as well as the building of the next meeting’s agenda.
- **Positive interdependence** – occurs when leadership is distributed through rotating roles. Roles may be task-related (e.g., timekeeper, recorder) or relationship-oriented (e.g., encourager, observer).
- **Small group interpersonal skills** – prompted and monitored by way of a pause in the agenda for group processing of how the group is functioning, occurring both midway through and at the end of the meeting.
- **Individual accountability** – occurs when team members are assigned and commit to Action Items (e.g., data-collection, lesson planning, collecting and assembling differentiated materials) and when due dates are set in the Outcomes section of the agenda.

Team Meeting Agenda Template

Present:  _____ Absent: _____ Others who need to know: _____

<u>Roles</u>	<u>This meeting</u>	<u>Next meeting</u>
Timekeeper	_____	_____
Recorder	_____	_____
Others	_____	_____

Agenda Items: (Time limit)

- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____

Minutes of Outcomes

Action Items: _____
 Person(s) Responsible: _____
 By When? _____

Communicate outcomes to absent members and others by: _____

Agenda Building for Next Meeting:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Self-Assessing Team Meeting Effectiveness

Co-teaching, RTI and other collaborative planning teams can and should regularly assess the effectiveness of their planning meetings using the “Are we really a collaborative team? Self-Assessment Checklist.” We suggest that partners first complete the assessment individually and then share their results so as to compare perceptions, identify professional improvement goals, and celebrate team strengths and accomplishments.

“Are We Really a Collaborative Planning Team? Self-Assessment Checklist”

Directions: Place and “x” to indicate Yes if you agree with the question.

Structuring Face-to-Face Interactions

- Do we have regularly scheduled meetings that are held at times/locations agreed upon in advance by teammates?
- Do we use a structured agenda format that prescribes and identifies agenda items for the next meeting and sets time limits for each agenda item?
- When we meet, do we arrange ourselves so we can hear each other and see each other’s facial expressions?
- Is the size of our group manageable (six or fewer members)?
- Do we meet in a comfortable environment (e.g., with refreshments/snacks)?
- Do needed members receive a timely invitation? (Note: Needed members may change from meeting to meeting based upon agenda items.)
- Do we start and end our meetings on time?



Establishing Positive Interdependence and Individual Accountability

- Do we publicly discuss the group’s overall purpose and goals (e.g., use student progress data to collaboratively plan in co-teaching differentiated lessons)?
- Do we each bring what the team needs to be able to work toward the group goals (e.g., student progress data for analysis and problem solving, addresses of websites for possible use in the next co-taught unit)?
- Do we distribute leadership responsibilities by rotating roles (e.g., Recorder, Timekeeper, Encourager, Agreement Checker, Norm Enforcer)?
- Do we start each meeting with positive comments and devote time at each meeting to celebrate successes?
- Do we have fun at our meetings?

Practicing Group Processing of Small Group Interpersonal Skills

- Have we established norms for behavior during meetings (e.g., active listening when others speak, deferring judgment during brainstorming)?
- Do we explain the group’s norms or ground rules to new members?
- Do we create an atmosphere of safety for expressing genuine perspectives (negative/positive); and do we acknowledge conflict during meetings?
- Do we have a communication system for absent members and people who need to know about our decisions, but who are not regular team members (e.g., administrators, technology coordinator, paraeducators, parents)?
- Do we consciously identify the decision-making process that we will use for making a particular decision? (e.g., majority vote, consensus, unanimous decision)
- Do we consciously attempt to improve our interpersonal skills by setting time aside to reflect upon and discuss our interactions and feelings? (e.g., perspective taking, conflict resolution)

_____ **Total Collaboration Score (Out of 18)**

Inclusion / Collaborative Planning Processes (con’t): Creative Problem – Solving Processes

Creativity and problem solving are essential to crafting instruction that is responsive to the learning characteristics of a diverse student body. One problem-solving tool is the Problem-Solving Template for Mismatches Between Student Attributes and Classroom Demands. It is very useful for co-teaching and RTI teams as they activate their collaborative creativity to detect and generate solutions to students/instructional mismatches.

- The far left column prompts team members to first gather positive information (i.e. strengths, interests, learning preferences) as well as specific goals and needs regarding the student of concern.
- The second column prompts the team to examine the typical demands of a lesson, class, or unit of instruction, with particular attention to the content (i.e., curriculum, standards, materials), product (assessment and grading), and process (instructional processes) demands.
- The third column prompts teams to compare the information in the first two columns in order to identify mismatches between the student’s attributes and the typical classroom demands. There may be mismatches between how the student best accesses information (i.e., visual representations) and how content typically is delivered (i.e., verbal lectures), or between how the student best shows what he/she knows (e.g., demonstrations, authentic applications) and how achievement is typically assessed (e.g., timed written paper and pencil test), or between how the student makes sense of learning (e.g., interaction with peers through cooperative groups) and how instruction typically has occurred (e.g., independent, individual seatwork).
- The fourth column, used once mismatches are identified, is for recording multiple options for addressing each mismatch. Teams are strongly advised to consider the strengths, interests and preferences of a student in generating ideas. Further, to ensure a large pool of diverse potential solutions from which to choose, teams should generate at least three potential solutions per mismatch. Thus, for five mismatches, there would be at least 15 ideas from which to choose and include in an action plan for adjusting instruction.

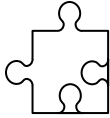
Problem-Solving Template for Mismatches Between Student Attributes & Classroom Demands

Student Attributes	Classroom Demands	Mismatches	Potential Solutions
Strengths and Interests	Content Demands (Curriculum, standards, and materials)	1.	1 a. b. c.
Learning Preferences (Multiple Intelligences, auditory, visual, kinesthetic)	Product Demands (Assessment procedures, grading)	2.	2 a. b. c.
Current Performance Data	Process Demands (Instructional Processes)	3.	3 a. b. c.
Goals (e.g., IEP) & Challenges		4.	4 a. b. c.
Other _____		5.	5 a. b. c.



RTI / Inclusion (Co-Teaching)

Why Inclusion? Why Co-Teach?



Co-Teaching offers a legal, cost-effective way to partner general educators (i.e., masters of content) and special educators/other support specialists (i.e., masters of access); it increases the probability of the curriculum being differentiated and students with diverse learning profiles succeeding in the general education curriculum.

What is Co-Teaching?

Defined as two or more people sharing instructional responsibility for the students assigned to them for instruction. Features of effective co-teaching include:

- The distribution of responsibility among co-teachers for planning, instructing, and evaluating the performance of their assigned students in mixed-ability classrooms.

- Application of co-teaching approaches at all three tiers of RTI to provide research-based instruction and intervention.

A common co-teaching arrangement is a general educator (a master of content) co-teaching with a special educator (a master of access). Although this is the prevalent configuration, anyone can co-teach. Co-teachers may include reading specialists, math coaches, speech and language pathologists, occupational or physical therapists, teachers of students who are English language learners (ELLs), teachers of students identified as gifted and talented, psychologists, counselors, administrators. Paraeducators and students themselves can provide other models of in-class support.

Co-Teaching Approaches

In successful co-teaching partnerships, co-teachers move in and out of four co-teaching approaches based upon student needs and curriculum demands. Furthermore, students view both co-teachers as knowledgeable and credible.

Supportive Co-Teaching – when one co-teacher takes the lead instructional role and the other rotates among the students providing support as needed. The co-teacher taking the supportive role watches, listens, and monitors as students work together, stepping in to provide one-to-one tutorial assistance when necessary while the other continues to direct the lesson. It is important to note that the roles may change over the course of the lesson. Whoever is in the supportive role should avoid becoming “Velcro-ed” to individual students. This is stigmatizing for students and the supportive co-teacher. Also, avoid locking one co-teacher into the supportive role, as this can breed frustration with the person’s expertise and creativity not being fully utilized.

Parallel Co-Teaching – when two or more people work with or monitor different groups of students in different sections of the classroom. Variations of parallel co-teaching include:

- ✂ **Split Class.** Each co-teacher is responsible for a particular group of students, monitoring understanding of a lesson, providing guided instruction, or re-teaching the group, if necessary.
- ✂ **Learning Centers or Stations.** Each co-teacher is responsible for guiding instruction at a center or station. Students or co-teachers may rotate.
- ✂ **Lab or Cooperative Group Monitoring.** Each co-teacher takes responsibility for monitoring and providing feedback and assistance to a given number of lab or cooperative groups of students.
- ✂ **Learning Style Focus.** One co-teacher works with a group of students using primarily visual strategies, while another uses primarily auditory strategies, and yet another uses primarily kinesthetic strategies.
- ✂ **Supplementary Instruction.** One co-teacher works with the class on a concept, skill, or learning strategy while the other: (a) provides extra guidance to students needing extra assistance, (b) instructs a targeted group to apply or generalize the skill, or (c) provides enrichment activities.

When using parallel co-teaching approaches, students are usually grouped heterogeneously and re-grouped frequently based upon data review. Thus, all students have their individual needs met, as well as the opportunity to benefit from the experiences of knowledge of different classmates and the expertise of different instructors. For Tier 2 and Tier 3 RTI interventions, students are homogeneously grouped (based on data not labels) for brief periods (30-45 minutes) to provide clearly differentiated targeted instruction in the high stake curriculum areas of reading and mathematics.

Complementary Co-Teaching – when a co-teacher does something to enhance, supplement, or add value to the instruction provided by the other co-teacher. The complementary actions facilitate access to the general education curriculum (e.g., one co-teacher paraphrases the other co-teacher’s statements, provides additional examples or analogies, creates visuals, or models note-taking strategies). When employing complementary co-teaching, be mindful of avoiding the “sage on the stage” syndrome of both co-teachers being at the front of the classroom and forgetting to roam, circulate and monitor the students.

Team Co-Teaching – two or more people do what the traditional teacher has always done – plan, teach, assess, and assume responsibility for all their assigned students. Team teachers divide lessons in ways that allow students to benefit from each co-teacher’s expertise. The key to successful team teaching is that co-teachers simultaneously deliver the lessons. It is as if they can finish each other’s sentences. The co-teachers are comfortable alternately taking the lead. As with complementary co-teaching, co-teachers must guard against getting caught up in co-delivering instruction at the front of the classroom and fail to closely monitor students (or dominate the class period with teacher talk, providing limited student-to-student interaction).

Please note: As co-teachers move from supportive to parallel, complementary, and team co-teaching, the amount of planning time, coordination of effort, trust, and knowledge necessary increases. While all four approaches have value and are appropriate at times, supportive co-teaching should be the one least used. It is the one that least capitalizes on the skills of the co-teacher in the more subordinate supportive role.

What is the role of the paraeducator in all of this?

- *
- *
- *
- *

Co-Teaching and RTI

At the base of the RTI approach, the overarching goal is to provide quality, differentiated instruction so that all students progress in the curriculum. Co-teaching is a vehicle for achieving this goal by teams of people with diverse expertise in content (i.e., classroom teachers and content experts) and access strategies (i.e., special educators and other specialists) applying all four co-teaching approaches, as needed. For higher levels of RTI intervention, parallel co-teaching will be the predominant approach used, since students are grouped and re-grouped for clearly differentiated targeted instruction, based upon careful data collection and analysis. This parallel instruction should be conducted in general education environments and all personnel have a role in providing parallel instructional interventions.

Co-Teaching (con't): Response to Intervention (RTI)

What is RTI?

RTI is a general education initiative to prevent school failure by providing research-based instruction in the general education classroom and swiftly applying targeted interventions to accelerate the learning of struggling students.

Key Elements of RTI

- Acknowledgement that the problem may lie in the “mismatch” between the student and his/her teaching/learning environment
- Early intervention versus a “wait to fail” approach
- Brings services to a student without having to label the student
- Regular, periodic (e.g., three times per year) screening of the entire school population
- Proactive, high-quality instruction in general education classrooms
- Regular team meetings to apply collaborative problem-solving methods
- Data-based decision-making by teams
- Supplemental high-quality instruction by classroom teachers and specialists matched to students’ strengths and needs
- Research-based interventions provided at increasing levels of intensity
- Continuous progress monitoring during interventions
- Fluid and flexible grouping of students
- Can replace the “IQ-achievement discrepancy model” historically used to identify a learning disability with documentation of a student’s failure to respond to increasingly intensified, specialized intervention.

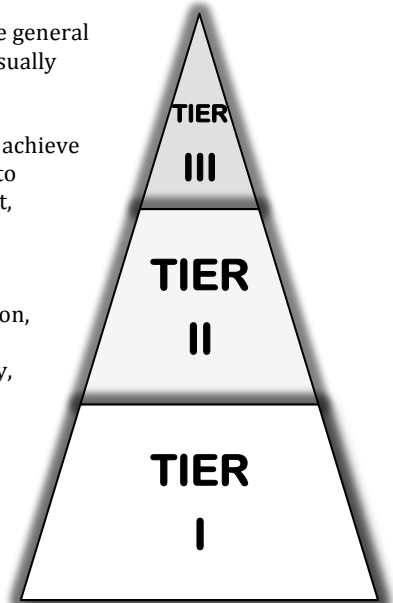
Three Tiers of RTI

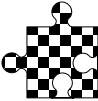
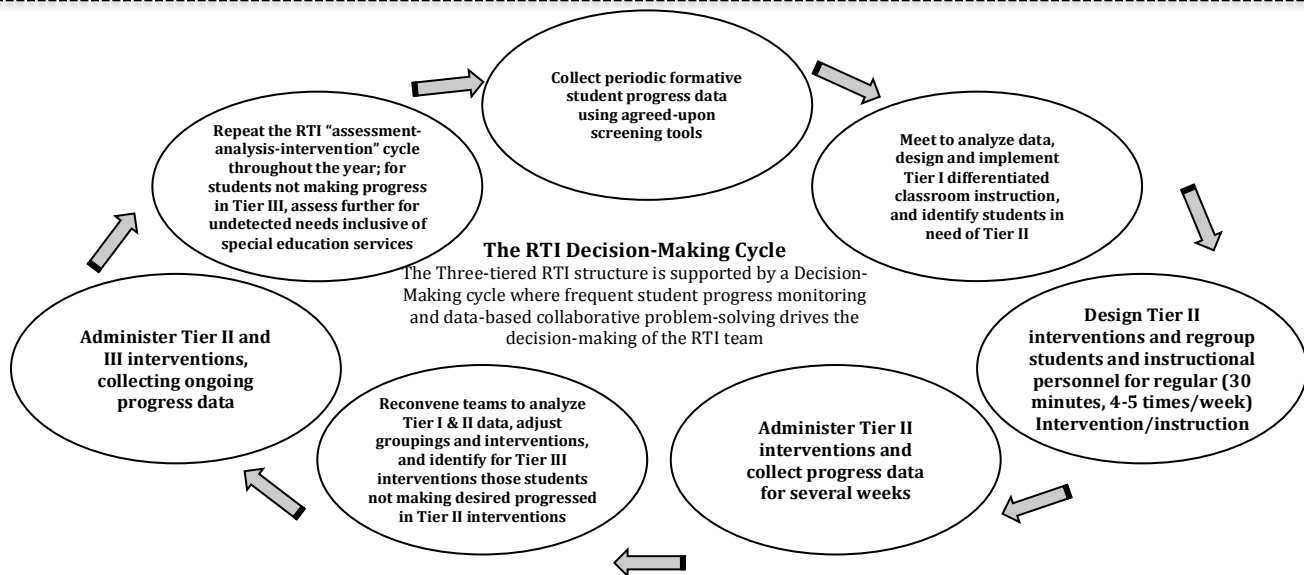
RTI is typically conceptualized and represented as a three-tiered “pyramid” approach to preventing failure of and quickly responding to students having difficulty making progress in the general education curriculum.

Tier 1 involves (a) regular (e.g., three times per year) school-wide screening of all students’ progress in the general education curriculum, and (b) classroom-based instruction with individual and group interventions that usually represent the core instructional program. Through the use of research-based methods that have been demonstrated to be effective with a wide range of diverse learners and differentiation of instruction to accommodate differences in students’ natural learning differences, approximately 85% of students should achieve predetermined benchmarks within expected time frames. Co-teaching can “double” teacher effectiveness to differentiate instruction at Tier I, as co-teachers mesh their diverse knowledge and skills regarding content, instruction, management of materials and technology, human relations and motivation, and collaborative planning and problem solving.

Tier II is designed to address up to 15% of students who do not make adequate progress in Tier I instruction, (failing to meet a predetermined expected benchmark performance level). Tier II interventions are specially designed to accelerate learning in the area(s) of identified concern (e.g., decoding, reading fluency, reading comprehension). Tier II instruction typically is delivered to small groups of three to six students with similar learning needs during an additional daily 30-minute instructional session. Progress monitoring occurs much more frequently (e.g., every 2-4 weeks) than at Tier I. the duration of interventions may range from several weeks to an entire academic year. At Tier II, parallel co-teaching among all members of the school community allows for the simultaneous delivery of differentiated interventions to students homogeneously grouped for specific interventions. Tier II parallel co-teaching does not mean instruction is necessarily offered outside of the general education classroom. In fact, it often looks like a classroom of three or four centers or stations with groups of students focusing on different learning.

Tier III addresses the 5% or less of students who do not make adequate progress with instructional services and supports at Tiers I and II. More intensive (i.e., more frequent, for longer periods of time) interventions are crafted and provided. Tier III interventions often are administered individually or in groups of two to three. If, at Tier II, the intervention time had been one 30-minute period, at Tier III that time might be increased to two, 30-minute sessions. Tier III interventions are long term, enduring over weeks and months, so as to ensure there is adequate time for interventions to yield positive outcomes. Tier III intervention is NOT special education or an automatic referral for assessment for special education. However, if Tier III interventions prove ineffective, assessment for special education eligibility may be considered as part of a deeper examination of the student. As with Tier II, Tier III interventions rely upon parallel co-teaching among the broad range of school personnel who share intervention responsibility.



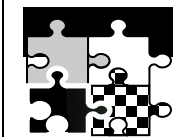


Differentiated Instruction

What is Differentiated Instruction? DI is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers have a responsibility to adapt their instruction to accommodate student differences. It acknowledges that students do not learn in the same way, at the same rate, or in the same amount of time. The goal of DI is to offer students multiple ways to access content, experience learning, and show what they know. The process of DI involves collecting data, considering options and making decisions at four instructional design points. The first design point is to gather “facts” about students’ attributes, including their varying background knowledge, cultures, life circumstances, readiness, language proficiency, learning preferences, and other strengths and interests. Equipped with this rich set of student data, educators then can consider differentiation options for the three remaining instructional design points of content, product, and process by asking the following three questions.

- In what ways might we provide multiple options for students to take in information (content and materials differentiation)?
- In what ways might we engage multiple learning processes to help students make sense of the ideas, concepts, procedures, and principles being taught (process differentiation)?
- In what ways might we provide multiple options for students to express what they know and be assessed on what they have learned (product differentiation)?

Differentiation Considerations		
Content	Process	Product
What are the national, state and/or district curriculum standards?	Instructional Formats: Adapted lectures; Hands-on, activity-based; Simulation or role plays; Group investigation; Discovery learning; Computer and web-based; Self-directed; Stations and centers; Integrated cross-curricular thematic unit/lesson; Service learning; Community referenced	What are the product options and how will they be assessed?
What are the academic/social/language goals of the learners?	Instructional Arrangements: Cooperative learning structures; Same or cross-age peer tutors; Teacher-directed small groups; Tutorials; Independent work; Whole group	What multi-level assessments and criteria will be used?
What recommendations from professional organizations?	Instructional Strategies: Research-Based Strategies; Taxonomies; Multiple Intelligence Theory; Integration of the arts	Which authentic products will be created and how will they be evaluated (e.g., rubrics)? Curriculum-based assessment
In what order will concepts/content be taught?	Social and Physical Environment: Room arrangement adapted; Use of space outside of classroom; Social Norms; Teach Responsibility; Positive Behavior Supports; Behavior Plans; Environmental Alterations	Collage Mnemonics Pod Cast Responding Photo Essay Simulation Oral Presentation Written Presentation Teaching Another DVD Editorial Probes
What multi-level and multi-sensory materials will best convey concepts and content to each student?	Co-Teaching Approaches: Supportive Parallel Complementary Team Teaching	Rap/Song Choral Blog Dance Model Role Play Oral history PowerPoint Commercial Diorama Summary of Interviews Other
In what ways can we use technology (e.g., text-to-speech software)?		
Will we differentiate level of knowledge of proficiency?		



Access & Success for All Students
 With administrative leadership, collaboration, co-teaching, RTI & DI all working together, success for **all** will be achieved!

Adapted from:
 Villa, R., & Thousand, J. (2011). *RTI: Co-Teaching & Differentiated Instruction*. Port Chester, NY: National Professional Resources.

References & Resources
 Friend, Marilyn D. (2005). *Including Students with Special Needs: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers*. Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina.
 Tomlinson, Carol Ann. (1999). *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of all Learners*. US: ASCD