

In my classroom, I have a very diverse student population. They lie on both extremes of the spectrum; way over what their cognitive developmental level should be and way behind what is expected of them in 3rd grade.

Student 1: Behind in reading and writing expectations

Student 1 exhibits learning disability and has difficulty with reading and writing particularly. However, she has a comprehensive understanding of speaking and providing contextual summaries.

A difficulty she has in particular is confusing letters such as b and d. I differentiated learning for her by providing a sticker on her table that shows the distinction behind the two letters with being associated with the word that has the sound. Ex. D = dog so the d has a picture of a dog and B= bee. In doing so she is able to make connections between what the word sounds by associating with the picture and being able to apply that in her spelling. When it comes to spelling, another way I differentiate learning is by providing her a post-it with the word(s) she has difficulty spelling to model what the word looks like for reference. Another way I differentiate learning for her is by giving her a black laminated bookmark for her to use when ready to steady her pace and keep her place. This is helpful because she constantly skips sentences and words when reading out loud. When the class has partner reading, I serve as her partner when conducting those reading activities to give her extra 1:1 support.

Based on, “What is Differentiated Instruction?” by Carol Tomlinson, I provided “content differentiation” for this student by providing her with what she needs to learn and helping her access information. Since I utilize reading buddies, I am differentiating the content in a way that helps her learn best. Which is through 1:1 support from a teacher. Utilizing physical materials such as labels, post-its and bookmarks all help accommodate content in a way that allows her to process content.

Student 2: This student is diagnosed with ADHD and is on daily medication

Student 2 has a very hard time focusing, keeping on task, and containing classroom outbursts. He is one of the higher performing students but often gets distracted, off task, and distracts others.

For this student, I give him a divider to put up on his desk when it is quiet working time so that he may concentrate and not be distracted by peers and want to speak to them. He is given seat accommodations, as well, like standing up near his desk or coming to the rug. Since this student is above average intellect, he completes classwork fast. So this student is also encouraged to work on a quiet project such as writing a story or reading a book until his peers are done.

Another way instruction is differentiated is by giving lessons that allow him to utilize his interests so that he is able to focus his attention and stay on task. He can pick a way that interests him to convey what he has learned.

Based on the article by Carol Tomlinson, I differentiated the learning environment which is “the way the classroom works and feels”. I did this by providing the divider accommodation and seat accommodation. As well as, differentiating products which allow the student “rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit” by providing him options. Since he is able to choose how he wants to complete the assignment, it allows him to pay close attention to what he is doing.