

[REDACTED]

Low Incidence Disabilities

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Rationale for Differentiated Lesson Plan

Let me begin by saying that I created my lesson plan with respect for the Universal Design for Learning and each one of the students in my class who has low incidence disabilities. In order for me to have accommodated properly according to the disabilities, it was much easier for me to do so when creating a case study for each one of those students. Therefore, in order to fully understand why I chose to use certain accommodations, it is necessary to know the case studies of each one of the students with disabilities that I developed. When creating my case studies, I did research on the nature of cerebral palsy and how it can be represented in each individual case. I did the same for ASD with respects to the disability presented in boys versus girls. Because of the broad nature of both of these disabilities it was easiest to accommodate when I knew exactly what I was accommodating for. The case studies will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Jennifer is the female student in the class who was diagnosed with ASD. She struggles with communication when it comes to discussing emotions of herself and others and explaining her wants and needs. Jennifer's sensory issues are presented in difficulty in adjusting to changes in routine and an issue with focusing and following directions. Jennifer is normally passive and may have trouble understanding what to do or say which can cause her to be lost in class often. The necessary accommodations that I believe will help this student are choice, a sensory area in

the room for calming, being informed of changes in routine when the day starts, and checking for understanding frequently by having the student reiterate what she is supposed to be completing. Along with this, placing Jennifer in smaller groups such as one-on-one will help increase her engagement rather than big groups where she may fall back. Placing her with someone who she likes will help her use her voice more and giving her responsibilities in the class can help her feel more engaged and in control of her learning environment.

Joey and Daniel are the other two boys diagnosed with ASD. Daniel is twice exceptional (Autism and Gifted) and therefore needs to be challenged in order to keep him engaged throughout the lesson. I provide extension activities for this student and allow him to move ahead of the class at his own pace. Joey's main struggle is socialization, with a complete lack of interest in others. For someone like Joey, peer-mediated strategies would be most useful to implement to help develop his social skills, which is why I chose to incorporate plenty of group work in this lesson. In theory, we would be using peer-mediated strategies and the classroom group work would be opportunities for practice. Along with this, Joey has trouble communicating orally and therefore writing and drawing pictures is preferred. My accommodations for this student include giving him responsibilities in the class and using group work all throughout the lesson where I encourage him to work with others. I give Joey a choice on how big he wants the groups to be and how he prefers to complete assignments.

Lastly, are the Cerebral Palsy students. Mike is a paraplegic who uses a wheelchair. He has full functioning arms which helps with the range of ways he could complete an activity, but moving around the classroom can be challenging. I provide this student with preferential seating where there is enough space for him to move freely into groups when it is time for group work.

Chris has spastic cerebral palsy. He can walk with the assistance of lofstrand crutches and can talk although speech may be slow. Chris's disease makes motor movements challenging for him, such as holding a pencil and grasping objects. Chris does have an assigned paraprofessional to assist him throughout the day. Due to the nature of the disease, both students struggle with spatial learning and I plan to accommodate for this when they do the Pangea Puzzle by beginning this puzzle for them by putting three pieces together to get them started. I plan to accommodate both of these students by intentionally including them in class discussion by calling on them to answer questions. When it comes to their assignments, all assignments will be placed on the iPad so that, specifically Chris, will not have to write, rather he can type or use speech-to-text. Along with this, I adjust my assessment expectations for these students by allowing them to complete the evidence assignment in bullet points rather than sentences, if needed.

One key aspect of the Universal Design for Learning is taking into account the learning needs of all students and making the lesson accessible for them. Along with this, the use of technology is a helpful tool in order to make assignments and lessons versatile. Stated in the description of this lesson plan, "A UDL curriculum is designed to be innately flexible, enriched with multiple media so that alternatives can be accessed whenever appropriate"(Looney, 2020). Taking this into account, I made the decision to use the note-taking app "Notability" on the Ipad in order to make the completion of the assignments accessible to all students. Notability offers a variety of features such as recording for lectures, speech-to-text, a writing tool, a typing tool, a highlighting tool, and a scissor tool. The variety of tools made accessible to these students allows them to choose to write, type, or orally type their answers on the assignments. Along with this, students will be engaging in an activity that was normally created to be a cut-out puzzle. This

assignment provides students with a hands-on activity that engages them in the content they are learning while they use the strategies of finding evidence in a text. With my Cerebral Palsy student in mind, I decided to make the puzzle digital as well on Notability. That way all students can complete the puzzle by dragging and dropping, rather than cutting and pasting. The use of Notability is the most important differentiated aspect of my lesson that makes these assignments accessible for all students to meet the objectives in ways they can learn, but students who prefer to complete any of these activities on paper, rather than on the iPad, may choose to do so.

When it comes to my lesson development, I take into account the multiple means of representation. The lesson teaches students how to find evidence in a text by using strategies before and during reading that can help them find evidence in a text. I represent these strategies by using a graphic organizer to provide a visual, specifically targeting my students with ASD, but helping all students to visually see the concepts and how they are connected. For the guided practice, I provide an example of how this should be done, by modeling my thinking and guiding students through the process with the use of questioning. I engage the students in this section by asking them to pair with me in practicing the strategies learned in the lesson development. All students have access to the excerpt for the example on their iPads so they are able to follow along and try it themselves as I guide them. In this section, I provide Jennifer with an already marked up example with steps and a blank example so she has a visual to help her easily follow along and try it herself. I also provide a chronological graphic organizer mapping out the steps for the other students with ASD because of their need for visual learning. These accommodations are available for any other student who needs it.

When it comes to my independent practice, I chose two activities that would engage the students by using the strategies to find evidence and then using the evidence to engage with the lesson content. The activities connect to each other in a way that teaches students the common core objectives about using specific information from a text to explain (RI 4.1,4.3), but by giving them two ways to express their learning: the written assignment and the puzzle. Both assignments include using information from the text to support a claim and they must find the necessary information from the text in order to complete both assignments accurately. Both will be assessed as students will have needed to complete the written assignment to help them perform better on the puzzle.

I have created this lesson plan with the learning needs of all students in mind by using a form of technology, Notability, that provides a diverse way of accomplishing the same assignments. The use of notability will engage all students and their diverse learning needs by also providing them with choices of how they would want to complete an activity, whether it be writing, orally, or typing. Not only do students have a choice of how they want to complete these assignments, but I also provided two different ways that students could express their learning of the strategies and the content, the written assignment and the puzzle. I predict that as I implement this lesson in a classroom, the needs of students with disabilities will be met so that they can be held to the same standards as their peers. Not only have I tailored the whole lesson to targeting their needs, but I also provide additional accommodations where I feel like my lesson could lack (i.e. during the guided practice for Jennifer). I plan that this lesson will be successful in making sure all students can access the skills and content needed to accomplish the assignments and maximize their learning.