DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION STRATEGIES FOR ALL STUDENTS
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WHAT IS ADULT EDUCATION?

Adult Education is instruction, often at no cost, for adult students who want to improve their employability, education, or English language skills. Adult Education programs offer basic reading, writing, math, and problem-solving classes, English language lessons, employment preparation and training, Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) preparation, and other basic educational services for adult students. Adult Education includes Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) as well as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL / ESL).

Adult Education programs are for adults 16 years of age and older who are not in school, who have academic skills below the 12th grade level, and/or who need help learning English. The goal of Adult Education is to help adults reach their full potential as workers, family members, and citizens.

Adult Education is funded in part by the federal and state governments, with local and community support. Many programs receive grant funding from private and corporate sources. The New York State Education Department’s (NYSED) Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) unit oversees Adult Education programs in New York. ACCES works with public schools, community-based organizations, colleges, correctional facilities, and other agencies to provide Adult Education services.

In Rochester, the Office of Adult and Career Education Services (OACES) is a workforce preparation organization that helps adult students learn the skills they need for success in the workplace and outside the classroom.

With unique focus on the education and employment needs of New York State’s adult citizens, several vital interests and goals can be best served through:

• Ensuring that the needs of adults and out-of-school youth are met through efficient and effective access to relevant services, programs, and opportunities offered by the NYSED.

• Encouraging full participation of adults with disabilities.
• Enhancing post-secondary transitions by developing the capacity of individuals to engage in post-secondary education leading to high-quality employment opportunities.

• Promoting workforce investment through unified collaboration with the New York State Department of Labor and State and local Workforce Investment Boards to assure that individuals have access to a “one-stop” source for a full range of services leading to high-quality employment opportunities.

• Supporting individuals experiencing poverty and relying on public services to develop their capacity to earn income and develop assets toward greater economic independence.

• Utilizing a more comprehensive and effective representation for adults in coordinating services and program initiatives with New York State agencies such as the Departments of Labor and Health, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the Office of Children and Family Services, and the State University of New York (SUNY).

There are multiple literacies addressed by Adult Education.

• Survival Literacy

  • Oral/Speaking and Written Literacy
  • Cultural/Social and Civic Literacy
  • Workplace and Employment Literacy
  • Health Literacy
  • Financial Literacy
  • Technological and Digital/Electronic Literacy
  • Geographic Literacy
  • Media Literacy
  • Environmental Literacy
  • Scientific Literacy

The importance of each of these literacies in an individual’s life varies based on specific circumstances. They all, however, have the potential to greatly affect the life of every adult and his/her family. Literacy begins within the family and is reinforced,
whether positively or negatively, in subsequent generations. Adult Education seeks to reinforce, promote, and support literacy to help adults reach their full potential as workers, family members, and citizens and in turn continue the cycle of literacy into the future.

Adult Education provides for the Community in numerous ways:

• Adult Education programs benefit businesses, workers, and job seekers. Businesses encourage Adult Education in order to provide and sustain a highly skilled and specialized workforce—a workforce with the skills to perform a variety of tasks or workers with “cross-functional” skills. Workers may receive promotions, gain more power in the job market, or become more valuable employees by enrolling in Adult Education programs.

• Adult Education training facilities often house state-of-the-art equipment such as computers and computer-based training equipment.

• Adult Education programs benefit families. Increased literacy and skills translate to a higher earnings potential for the household. Parents’ literacy levels directly correlate to their children’s educational success (according to the National Center for Families Learning).
What Teachers Need to Know

How can classroom teachers maximize the learning potential of their adult students while at the same time attend to differences among them? Instead of expecting students to adjust to the lessons they plan, teachers need to plan their lessons to adjust to the students at hand. To do this effectively, teachers need to understand and know their students, including their current skill levels, strengths and challenges, interests and preferences, and needs and goals. The challenge is for teachers to ensure that the needs of all students are equally valued and equally served. Differentiated instruction is an approach that does just this.

Meeting Students at Diverse Levels

The goal of a differentiated classroom is maximum student growth and individual success. Differentiated instruction is an approach that enables teachers to plan strategically to meet the needs of every student. Designed differentiation is the deliberate act of modifying instruction or an assignment in order to customize the effect to match the particular developmental level and skills of a student or group of students. The ideal is to provide equivalent learning activities that cater to the students’ strengths but bring all of the students to the same learning objective. On one end of the spectrum is the one-size-fits-all learning activity, while on the other end is the completely individualized learning plan for each student.

Differentiated instruction has recently gained ground in adult education. The cornerstone of differentiation is active planning: the teacher plans instruction strategically to meet students where they are and to offer multiple avenues through which they can access, understand, and apply learning. In differentiating lessons to be responsive to the needs of each student, teachers must take into account not only what they are teaching (content), but also whom they are teaching (individual students). They need to know the varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of each of their students and then design learning options to tap into these three factors. Evidence indicates that students are more successful in school
and are more engaged if they are taught in ways that are responsive to all of these factors. In adopting differentiated instruction, teachers should address these three characteristics for each student within the classroom.

**Principles That Govern Effective Differentiation**

Below are some fundamental principles that help guide and support differentiation. Understanding and adhering to these principles facilitates the work of the teacher and the success of the student in a responsive classroom.

- **A differentiated classroom is flexible.** Demonstrating clarity about learning goals, both teachers and students understand that time, materials, modes of teaching, ways of grouping students, ways of expressing learning, ways of assessing learning, and other classroom elements are tools that can be used in a variety of ways to promote individual and whole-class success.

- **Differentiation of instruction stems from effective and ongoing assessment of student needs.** In a differentiated classroom, student differences are expected, appreciated, and studied as a basis for instructional planning. This principle also reminds us of the tight bond that should exist between assessment and instruction. As teachers, we know what to do next when we recognize where students are in relation to our teaching and learning goals. We are also primed to teach most effectively if we are aware of our students’ learning needs and interests. In a differentiated classroom, a teacher sees everything a student says or creates as useful information both in understanding that particular student and in crafting instruction to be effective for that student.

- **Flexible grouping helps ensure student access to a wide variety of learning opportunities and working arrangements.** In a flexibly grouped classroom, a teacher plans student working arrangements that vary widely and purposefully over a relatively short period of time. Such classrooms utilize whole-class, small-group, and individual explorations. Sometimes students work in similar readiness groups with peers who manifest similar academic needs at a given time. At other points, the teacher ensures that students of mixed readiness work together in settings that draw upon the strengths of each student. Sometimes students work with classmates who have like interests. In other situations, students of varied interests cooperate toward completing a task that calls on all of their interests.
Sometimes working arrangements are simply random; students work with whomever is sitting beside them, or they count off into groups, or they draw a partner’s name. Finally, in a flexibly grouped classroom, students themselves sometimes decide on their work groups and arrangements while at other times the teacher makes the call.

- **All students consistently work with “respectful” activities and learning arrangements.** This important principle provides that every student must have tasks that are equally interesting and equally engaging while providing equal access to essential understanding and skills. In differentiated classrooms, a teacher’s goal is that each student feels challenged most of the time and each student finds his or her work appealing most of the time. All students grapples squarely with the information, principles, and skills which give them power to understand, apply, and move on to the next learning stage most of the time in the discipline being studied. Differentiation does not presume different tasks for each student, but rather just enough flexibility in task complexity, working arrangements, and modes of learning expression so that students find the way in which they learn a good fit for them much of the time.

- **Students and teachers are collaborators in learning.** While the teacher is clearly a professional who diagnoses and prescribes for learning needs, facilitates learning, and crafts effective curriculum, students in differentiated classrooms are critical partners in classroom success. Students hold pivotal information about what works and does not work for them at any given point of the teaching learning cycle; they know their likes and preferred ways of learning and can contribute greatly to plans for a smoothly functioning classroom. Students can learn to make choices that enhance both their learning and their status as a student. In differentiated classrooms, teachers study their students and continually involve them in decision making about the classroom. As a result, students become more independent in the learning process.

**Student Characteristics for Which Teachers Can Differentiate**

Students vary in at least three ways that make modifying instruction a wise strategy for teachers. The three primary differences are:

- Their readiness to work with a particular idea or skill at a given time.
- Pursuits or topics that they find interesting.
• Learning profiles that may be shaped by gender, culture, learning style, or intelligence preference.

**Readiness**
Readiness refers to a student’s knowledge, understanding, and skill relative to a particular sequence of learning. It is influenced by a student’s cognitive proficiency as well as prior learning, life experiences, and attitudes about school. Readiness can vary widely over time and according to topic and circumstance.

To differentiate in response to student readiness, a teacher constructs tasks or provides learning choices at different levels of difficulty. Some ways in which teachers can adjust for readiness include:

• Adjust the degree of difficulty of a task to provide an appropriate level of challenge.

• Add or remove teacher or peer coaching, use of manipulatives, or presence or absence of models for a task. Teacher and peer coaching are known as scaffolding because they provide a framework or a structure that supports student thought and work.

• Allow students to study the same concept by completing activities appropriate to their readiness levels.

• Make the task more or less familiar based on the proficiency of the student’s experiences or skills for the task.

• Vary direct instruction by small group need.

• Provide small group sessions or one-to-one teacher and peer support or coaching.

**Interest**
Interest arises from topics that evoke curiosity and passion in students so that they want to invest time and energy to learn. When a student’s interests are tapped, he/she is more likely to be engaged and to persist in learning.

To differentiate in response to student interest, a teacher aligns key skills and material for understanding with topics or pursuits that intrigue students. For example, a student can learn much about a culture or time period by carefully analyzing its music. A social studies teacher may encourage one student to begin exploring the history, beliefs, and customs of medieval Europe by examining the music of the
time. Another student may be more engaged by a study of science in the Middle Age.

Some ways in which teachers can differentiate in response to student interest include:

- Use adults or peers with prior knowledge to serve as mentors in an area of shared interest.
- Provide a variety of avenues for student exploration of a topic or expression of learning.
- Provide broad access to a wide range of materials and technologies.
- Give students a choice of tasks and products, including student-designed options.
- Encourage investigation or application of key concepts and principles in student interest areas.

**Learning Profile**

Learning profile refers to how a student learns best. To differentiate in response to a student’s learning profile, a teacher addresses learning style, culture, gender, student talent, and/or intelligence profile. Teachers differentiate by learning profile when they provide learning activities that offer students choices for demonstrating mastery of learning such as journals, videotape presentations, role plays, oral histories, or project-based learning. Some ways in which teachers can differentiate in response to student learning profile include:

- Create a learning environment with flexible spaces and learning options.
- Present information through auditory, visual, and kinesthetic modes.
- Encourage students to explore information and ideas through auditory, visual, and kinesthetic modes.
- Allow students to work alone or with peers.
- Ensure a choice of competitive, cooperative, and independent learning experiences.
- Balance varied perspectives on an issue or topic.
- Provide authentic learning opportunities in various intelligence or talent areas.
Elements of Curriculum That Can Be Differentiated

In response to student characteristics of readiness, interest, and learning profile, teachers can differentiate or modify learning experiences in the three areas of content, process, and product.

- **Content**: The information that must be learned.
- **Process**: The combination of activities and input from the teacher that engage the student in the content.
- **Product**: The outcomes of student learning that demonstrate understanding or mastery.

In addition to these three areas, the learning environment is another area where differentiation can occur. The physical learning environment, including the “climate” of the classroom, overall layout and feel, materials that reflect diverse cultures, routines that allow for students to receive assistance when the teacher is not available, and the way the class is structured to allow some students to work quietly while allowing for other students to engage with one another, can affect students in different ways.

**Content**

A teacher can differentiate content. Content refers to what students need to learn: the major concepts, principles, and skills that are taught. All students should be given access to the same content. Teachers should adjust the degree of complexity using diverse instructional processes to teach the content. In this way, all students learn the same concepts but in different ways.

Content includes both what the teacher plans for students to learn and how the student gains access to the desired knowledge, understanding, and skills. In a differentiated classroom there are many instances where essential facts, materials to be understood, and skills remain constant for all students. Some of the ways a teacher might differentiate access to content include:

- Use math manipulatives with some but not all students to help students understand a new idea.
- Use texts or novels at more than one reading level.
- Present information through both whole-to-part and part-to-whole approaches.
• Use a variety of reading-buddy arrangements to support and challenge students working with text materials.

• Re-teach students who need another demonstration, or exempt students who already demonstrate mastery, from reading a chapter or from sitting through a re-teaching session.

• Use texts, computer programs, tape recorders, and videos as a way of conveying key concepts to varied students.

Process
A teacher can differentiate process. Process refers to the way in which the content is taught. A familiar synonym for process is activity. Therefore, process is the activity that helps students understand and eventually “own” the concepts and skills being taught. An effective process generally involves students in using an essential skill to come to understand an important idea; it is clearly focused on a learning goal.

The key to differentiating process is flexible grouping in which students are sometimes grouped by readiness levels, sometimes by interest, and sometimes by learning profiles. For example, a teacher might group students with a similar readiness level for reading instruction and then regroup them by interest to discuss current events or a movie they have all viewed. By varying the groups in which students participate, teachers prevent labeling students as members of the “fast group” or the “slow group,” thus encouraging a respect for difference among students. This approach also supports the growth of a strong sense of community among everyone in the class. It would be difficult to differentiate instruction without using flexible grouping.

As another example, a teacher can differentiate a process by providing varied options at different levels of difficulty or differing amounts of student interest. He/she can offer different amounts of teacher and student support for a task. A teacher can give students choices about how they express what they have learned during a research exercise; for example, providing options of creating a political cartoon, writing a letter to the editor, or making a diagram as a way of expressing what they understand about relations between the British and colonists at the onset of the American Revolution.

Products
A teacher can also differentiate products. Products allow students to demonstrate whether they have learned the key concepts and skills
of a unit and to apply the learning to solve problems and take action. Different students can create different products based on their own readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences. Students should be given a choice of four or five products to allow them to demonstrate mastery of learning. Students also may elect to work alone or in small groups on their products.

Some examples of products are a portfolio of student reports or written work, an oral presentation, a group discussion on key concepts, a short book in which the key concepts are explained and described, a game centered around the characters and theme of a book, an exhibition of solutions to real-world problems that draw on knowledge, understanding, and skill achieved over the course of a semester, an end-of-unit project, or a complex and challenging paper-and-pencil test. A good product should be related to real problems, concerns, and audiences and should synthesize rather than summarize information. It should cause students to rethink what they have learned, apply what they can do, extend their understanding and skill, and become involved in both critical and creative thinking. Among the ways to differentiate products are to:

• Allow students to help design products around essential learning goals.

• Encourage students to express what they have learned in varied ways.

• Allow for varied working arrangements such as working alone or as part of a team to complete the product.

• Provide or encourage use of varied types of resources in preparing products.

• Provide product assignments at varying degrees of difficulty to match student readiness.

• Use a wide variety of assessment types.

• Work with students to develop quality rubrics that allow for demonstration of both whole-class and individual goals.

Additional Techniques for Differentiating Instruction

To manage effectively the differentiation of process to students of different skills and needs, teachers need to employ a range of instructional strategies such as:

• Scaffold the learning activity from hard to medium to easy.
• Set up stations in the classroom where different students can work simultaneously on various tasks; stations naturally invite flexible grouping.

• Have students set agendas or personalized lists of tasks to complete in a specified time, usually two or three weeks.

• Structure problem-based learning to have students actively solve problems either individually or in small groups much the same way that professionals perform their jobs; this also supports building a community of students.

• Assign tiered activities to allow students to work on the same concepts but with varying degrees of complexity, abstractness, and open-endedness.

• Use entry points so that students can explore a topic through as many as five avenues.
  o narrative (presenting a story)
  o logical-quantitative (using numbers)
  o foundational (examining philosophy and vocabulary)
  o aesthetic (focusing on sensory features)
  o experiential (hands-on)

• Use choice boards from which students can select one of several work assignments that are printed on cards and affixed to a board.

• Employ compacting; the teacher assesses students’ knowledge and skills before beginning a specific unit of study to allow students who do well on the pre-assessment to move on to more advanced work.

• Break assignments and activities into smaller more manageable parts and provide more structured directions for each part.

• Encourage students to use different tools to perform the same task such as paper/pencil, manipulatives, or computer.

• Use flexible pacing to allow for differences in students’ ability to master the key concepts.

• Encourage independent study for students who want to work on their own on topics of interest to them.

• Use portfolios as a means for reflecting on student growth over time.
Differentiated Strategies for Assessment

Differentiated assessment is an on-going process of evaluation where the teacher gathers information and data before, during, and after instruction to better facilitate the learning. This process ensures success for all students in the differentiated classroom. Data is provided from a variety of sources and assists in giving an overall view of student achievement. It is essential when assessing students in the differentiated class that the assessment is authentic. It must therefore offer students a variety of tasks demonstrating real-life skills to assure the teacher that the student has acquired the skills or concepts which have been presented, is based on standardized criteria to provide validity, and guides students for roles in adult life.

Formative Pre-Assessment Tools

In a quality class, the teacher performs assessment before the learning takes place. This ensures that the teacher plans the lessons to best meet the needs of the students. The following are examples of formative pre-assessment tools.

Ponder and Pass
On a chart the students write the facts they know on the given concept, information they want to learn, and questions they want to explore. The paper is then passed around the room.

Signal and Action Response
Students perform an action which indicates their level of understanding of a concept, for example:

- Waving hands = “I Know It”.
- Shrug of shoulders = “I Have a Hunch”.
- Thumbs down = “I Have No Idea”.

Take a Stand
The teacher places numbers around the room and groups are formed by having students move to a number based on their understanding. Students within each group discuss what they know about the concept or what they want to know.
Knowledge Base Corners or Squaring Off
The students form groups by moving to a corner based on their understanding of a concept. The teacher predetermines the level of understanding for each corner. The students discuss the topic with their group members. For example, the corners could include “Not a Clue”, “I Know a Little Bit”, “I Know a Lot”, and “I’ve Got It”. Another option would be “Little League”, “Minor League”, “Major League”, and “World Series”.

Content Boxes
The teacher provides the students with graphic organizers based on the new unit of study. The graphic organizers are divided into categories and subcategories connected to the topic. The students complete the information they already know.

Content Surveys
The teacher poses questions based on the unit of study to provide background information on the topic. For example, “How does this topic relate to you?” or “What do you want to know about the upcoming topic?”.

Brainstorming
Brainstorming can be used to give the students a voice in the upcoming unit. For example, list the terms, facts, or concepts you know about our new topic.

ELO (Evening Learning Opportunities)
Students are asked to gather information on an upcoming topic; the assignment is to be completed independently at home. Work should not be graded and is not considered homework. For example, be a detective and locate a recipe that uses tablespoons, teaspoons, and a cup to measure ingredients; bring a copy of the recipe to school to share.

Pretest
The test reveals the background knowledge-base of the students.

Standardized Testing Data
Analyze and interpret previous standardized testing data related to the unit of study.
Boxing
Students draw a box in the center of a page. They then draw a smaller box inside the first box. In the outside box the students print what they know about the topic. In the inside box the students print what they want to learn or what is their goal for the unit.

Yes/No Cards
Students have cards with “Yes” written on one side and “No” written on the other. The students are asked questions and hold up the appropriate side of the response card.

Assessment During the Learning
In order to maintain a high quality learning environment, it is necessary for the teacher to perform assessments during the learning. The on-going assessment provides essential information which helps to facilitate the learning. The following are differentiated strategies to help support this type of assessment.

Observation
The teacher continuously notes evidence of learning by collecting data on student progress or lack thereof. The teacher judges if a student can properly perform a task previously demonstrated or apply a concept covered in a prior lesson to a new or different assignment. This is one of the most effective formative assessment tools available to the teacher.

Know it! Show it!
Some examples of how students show it are:

- Tell a partner the answer to a question from the teacher; compile all the answers.
- Say the correct answer together as a class.
- Come to consensus as a group and create a platform.
- Tab the answer with a sticky note flag.
- Place a game piece on the answer.
- Demonstrate with a manipulative.
- Role-play to create a simulation.
- Demonstrate and tell the process used.
• Tell the step-by-step procedure used.
• Mark in class notes using a unique symbol or font.
• Point to the answer or example on/in a graph, passage, text, SMART board, book, picture, sentence, computer, transparency, diagram, journal, bulletin board, document reader, or chart.

**Response Cards**
Cards are given to each student. On one side of the card is an answer such as, “I Know” or “I Understand” while the reverse of the card has the opposite answer such as, “I Don’t Know” or “Lost”. When the teacher asks a question, the students show the correct side according to their understanding.

**High Five**
Students use a five point ranking to indicate their understanding.

• 5 = “I Understand It and Can Explain It”
• 4 = “I Can Use It but Cannot Explain It”
• 3 = “I Am Growing but Need Help”
• 2 = “I Am Beginning to Understand”
• 1 = “I Am Lost”

**A Bump in the Road**
A student writes a problem or question on the top of a piece of paper. The student passes the paper amongst three to five classmates to get their suggestions or answers to the question. Each person must initial their response to overcome the bump in the road.

**Sketches from the Mind**
Students make simple sketches to represent key words or as symbols to identify facts or concepts.

**Checkpoint Tests**
The teacher uses periodic checkpoint tests after reading or demonstrating a skill. This gives the teacher a quick assessment of the ability level of the students.
**Thumb It**
Students indicate with their thumb their knowledge on the concepts.

- **Upside** = “Know a Lot”
- **Onside** = “Know Some”
- **Downside** = “Know Very Little”

**Face the Fact**
Students indicate their responses to teacher questions with emoticons such as happy face, straight face, or sad face. The emoticons can be drawn on paper and students hold up the appropriate face.

**Reaching for the Top**
Students extend an arm straight up in the air. They move the opposite hand up the straight arm as a gauge of their understanding. The higher the second arm is placed, the greater the understanding.

**Formative Assessment After the Learning**
It is obviously essential for the teacher to assess the students after the learning to ensure growth has taken place. The following examples are intended to provide immediate feedback on progress.

**Effective Questioning Techniques**
- **Open Ended Questions**: These questions require the students to think and formulate their answer. Sample questions could be “Explain How”, “Describe”, “Tell More About”, “What Is Your Opinion of”, etc.

- **Reflection Questions**: These questions will require students to analyze and reflect on their work. Sample questions could be “What Discoveries Have You Made?”, “What Is the Most Important Thing You Learned?”, “What Do You Need to Learn Next?”, etc.

**Post-Sharing Celebrations**
- **Wraparound**: Each student writes a piece of important information on a piece of paper. Students are then put into groups where they take turns sharing the information they wrote down.

- **Carousel Gala**: The teacher hangs chart paper with headings around the room. The students are divided into groups and assigned to one of the papers. The students write what they know about the topic on
the paper. The teacher then has the students rotate to the next paper where they add information that is not already on the chart.

• Rhythmic Fanfare: The students are divided into groups. Each group is required to make a song, poem, jingle, rap, or chant about specific information from the unit of study. They present these to the rest of the class.

**Assessing With Journals**
The student reflects on his/her work through journal entries.

**Jazzy Journal Assessment**
Students may use one of the following examples as their journal entry.

• Design a sequence.
• Sketch or draw a picture.
• Create a caricature.
• Use a graphic organizer.
• Make a graffiti list using various fonts and colors.
• Create a song, rap, jingle, rhyme, chant, or cheer.
• Use metaphors or similes.

**Performance Assessment**
The content is shared through a wide variety of methods such as speeches, lists, stories, brochures, etc.

**Teacher-Made Tests**
• True-false
• Multiple choice
• Fill in the blank
• Open-ended questions
• Performance tests
• Skills tests
• Problem based
Portfolios
Portfolios are a collection of student work. Often the teacher picks some of the items for the portfolio and the student chooses some of his/her own contributions.

Wraparounds II
The students sit in a circle and they take a turn telling:

- Something the student will use from the information or activities learned today.
- Something the student will remember from today.
- A significant “AHA!” moment from today.
- “I Have Learned“.
- “I Hope to Learn“.

Conversation Circles
The students are put into groups of three. The first student begins talking and continues until the teacher says stop. The second student continues where the first student left off. On the signal, the third student picks up from the second student.

Donut
The students draw a donut shape. On the outside the students print “I Am Learning” and on the inside they print “I Know”. They fill in the donut accordingly and share their answers with the class or a group.

Challenges and Conclusion
The greatest challenge to implementing differentiated instruction relates to planning time. Planning time is necessary for teachers to assess the students’ needs, interests, and readiness levels. They also require time to determine key concepts and organizing questions. Lastly, time is needed to design appropriate activities for each student. The next challenge relates to classroom management and the changing role of the teacher from dispenser of knowledge to facilitator of learning. The third challenge concerns the need for teachers to acquire and use strategies that may be new to them.

A teacher who is comfortable and skilled with the use of multiple instructional strategies is more likely to effectively reach out to
a diverse group of students than is the teacher who uses a single approach to teaching and learning. Numerous instructional strategies invite attention to student readiness, interest, and learning profile. An appropriately differentiated classroom offers suitable levels of challenge to match each student’s abilities, interests, and preferred learning profile while maximizing the potential of all.

**Additional Resources**

Pieces of Learning
www.piecesoflearning.com

**Sources**


Edutopia
www.edutopia.org

National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy
www.ncsall.net

UNC School of Education
www.learnnc.org