INCREASING ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS THROUGH DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTIONS

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Procedure

1. Introduction: Project summary and Objectives

2. Class Profile
   a. Age group and level
   b. Result of students’ M.I. analysis
   c. Results of learning styles analysis
   d. Students’ needs

3. Learning styles, teaching strategies and materials
   a. Sample original lesson using traditional plan
      – Introduction and objectives
      – Practice activity
      – Independent activity
      – Closing activity
      – Evaluation
   b. The same lesson with modified instructions (Differentiated Instruction)
      – Introduction and modified objectives
      – Practice activity
      – Independent activity
      – Closing activity
      – Evaluation

4. Rationale for the created alternate activities
   - Students’ learning styles and needs
   - How the learning objectives for the individual are aligned with the learning objectives for the rest of the class
   - How / why they are going to support the student’s success

5. Conclusion: Differences between the original lesson and the modified lesson

6. References

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Target Audience

- Regular classroom teachers
- Special needs teachers
- Students with learning difficulty and special needs
Overview

- Do you teach English as a foreign or second language to high school students and adult workers? Teachers often find it hard to get students of English as a foreign or a second language stay focused and get involved in the activities which are designed to develop their academic language. Are you looking for ways to make students responsible for their learning?
- The presenter shares tips and strategies used in my own classes to create mini-lessons and assessment tools to increase students’ motivation, address the needs of a class with Multiple Intelligence and different learning styles in order to tackle the issue of learning difficulty and disability, and therefore improve the academic success of normal students and those with special needs.
- The activities are based on reading. The presenter provides effective strategies to get students engaged in different activities on the same unit. The tasks are designed for students with different learning styles in order to develop their academic language, linguistic, social and communicative skills. The participants will leave the session with ideas to differentiate their instruction in order to maximize the potential for students’ success.

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Objectives

- Demonstrate the ideas behind Differentiated Instructions and Tiered Instructions.
- Make the most out of the each student’s Multiple Intelligences in their learning.
- Highlight the differences between the traditional lesson to the modified lesson.
- Maximize learning through the less teacher-centered but more student-centered instruction.
- Demonstrate that different learning styles and different teaching strategies help students with learning disability and special needs increase academic success.
- Demonstrate that students with special needs can remain focused on the instruction and get engaged in their learning as their peers.
- Increase motivation, maximize the potential for success of special needs learners.
- Develop students’ critical and creative thinking skills.
Challenges in teaching students with special needs and in the use of differentiated instructions:

1. The objectives: the class curriculum need to be finished in time. Too much need to be covered within a short period of time. It is therefore impossible to spend too much time on single objectives. As a result, it may be difficult to ensure that all students’ needs are met.

2. Time: for more preparation time; necessity for more classroom time when giving the instructions; individual students work at their own pace (slow / fast) and it affects time management.

3. Duration: some activities may take longer than the others, might be less challenging too.

4. Classroom size and arrangement: classroom may be too small and limit students’ movement.

5. Teaching style: too much lecturing, teacher-centered, rather than student-centered.

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• Essential Tips on how the challenges will be resolved:

• 1. To meet the objectives: Design long term objectives (monthly, weekly) and daily objectives. Design tasks according to learning styles and choose teaching strategies accordingly.

• 2. Time management: Use technology (computer, web resources, projector, ...) to reduce preparation time. Assign more capable students as team leaders and each team leader makes sure team members understand instructions. Give enough time for each team to perform tasks.

• 3. Duration: Ask the team to do the activity again if it is finished before time, or add another more challenging task.

• 4. Classroom size and arrangement: Be ready with adaptations if space limits movement and collaborations.

• 5. Teaching style: Adapt more student-centered styles instead of too much lecturing; giving opportunities for student’s research, collaborations and sharing.
Identify your Class Profile:

- Analyze the students’ Multiple Intelligence.
- Identify the students’ Learning Styles
- Analyze your students’ strengths, weaknesses and needs.
Differentiate the Teaching Strategies according to students’ Learning Styles

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<tr>
<th>VARK Learning Styles</th>
<th>Teaching Strategies</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Visual Learners</td>
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<td>2. Auditory Learners</td>
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<td>3. Reading /Writing preference Learners</td>
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<td>4. Kinesthetic or Tactile Learners</td>
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Differentiate the Classroom Arrangement

- Analyze students’ learning styles by using the quiz on Multiple Intelligences for Adult Literacy and Education by Dr. Terry.
- Divide the class into teams of two or three students, each team member may not necessarily have the same learning styles.
- Each group has different predominant learning styles. Each team has a leader who is going to be responsible for instruction in a specific area of the room. The teams rotate through work stations or centers in specific areas of the room for instruction. The team leader who has the predominant feature for the task delivers instruction and also serves as a facilitator to the other team members who have different learning styles.
- Each group work on the same lesson unit, but focuses on different skills, based on their interests.

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Differentiate your teaching materials

- Materials on the same topic: a text,
- an audio file,
- a video segment,
- pictures,
- slides.
- Materials for the students’ projects:
- posters,
- paper,
- markers,
- scissors,
- scotch tape,
- Other necessary materials:
- audio file player,
- video player,
- computer,
- internet connection
Create Tiered, Differentiated Workstations or Centers

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Assess and Evaluate Students’ Performance

- Prepare a checklist:
  - To evaluate and assess the class objectives.

- Create rubrics:
  - To check students’ performance.
How will I assess if struggling learners have made a progress?

- Ongoing individual assessment:
  - Prepare and compile individual student’s performance sheet, with strengths and limitations as regards skills (communication, socializing, writing, ...) as well as individual learning preferences, behavior. To be completed while listening to the individual student’s performance during team work.

- Classroom assessment:
  - Follow up: quick writing for five minutes while focusing on a specific goal
  - Ask students to answer questions to each other at the end of the tasks, write the answers down, and justify the answers.
  - Ask some questions to the class and they write the answers within a limited time and the answers will be checked or collected.

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