

## Standard II Element C

### LEVEL 2 PRACTICES

#### THE TEACHER:

- 3 ***Implements a variety of inclusion, intervention, or enrichment practices to address unique learning needs and interests.***

Implementing a variety of practices to address students' unique learning needs and interests requires the teacher to differentiate based on where each student begins and how he is progressing towards meeting the learning objective of a lesson. Depending on a student's progress towards the objective, his understanding of procedural skills and conceptual understandings, his social and emotional development, his learning preferences, interests, and culture, the teacher will need to provide different ways in which the student can access the content and skills being taught. In addition to analyzing student data, the teacher may also utilize surveys and inventories for identifying student needs.

**Differentiated content** adopts the concept of "readiness." Some students will need to go back to prerequisite **content** in order to move ahead, when advanced learners may need to move ahead before their classmates are ready to do so, and when student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) direct the teacher to change the content itself.

What Differentiated Instruction Is Not	What Differentiated Instruction Is
<p><b>Modifying grading systems:</b> Modifications of grading systems may make it possible for struggling students to receive higher grades, but they are usually not designed to provide equitable access to learning objectives or grade-level standards.</p>	<p><b>Variety of assessments:</b> Providing a variety of ways in which students may demonstrate their learning allows students to meet grade-level expectations based on their levels of academic readiness and interests. This differs from modifications to grading systems in that the criteria for student mastery of an objective does not change, but the vehicle by which students demonstrate mastery is differentiated.</p>
<p><b>More work for the "good" students or "extra activities" when students complete work:</b> More work for students who have already mastered skills or concepts may provide additional practice, but it does not extend the learning unless the work is at a different skill level or challenge. Providing "busy work" for students who finish assignments early only serves to keep them busy, not to further their learning.</p>	<p><b>Extension activities:</b> Extension activities can provide opportunities for students to apply learning to a variety of scenarios and real-life experiences. Extension activities that advance student learning require students to transfer their learning to new situations.</p>

*Refer to these internal resources for additional information:*

- [Research on Differentiation of Content](#)  
Document defines content and discusses what is needed for it to be differentiated, how teachers can accomplish the differentiation, and why it is important to do so.
- [Examples of Modifications of Content](#)  
Document provides examples of this professional practice.

*Refer to these external resources for additional information:*

[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)



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- Article: “Differentiated Instruction in the English Classroom Content, Process, Product and Assessment” by Barbara King-Shaver and Alyce Hunter  
<http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/E00577/chapter4.pdf>.  
 Article provides resources for getting to know one’s students and suggestions for how to manage a differentiated classroom that can be helpful for teachers of all content areas. Specific suggestions are included for middle and high school English classes.

See also Professional Practices under [Level 1 Practices for this element](#).

**4 Implements learning plan(s) to address student needs.**

Teachers should be proactive in soliciting input from colleagues that can support the learning of all students. It begins with reviewing the learning plans of all students including gifted, ELL, Special Education or 504 plans. This may include scheduling time for colleagues to observe students, collaboratively analyzing student data, obtaining resources from colleagues, and observing or co-teaching with colleagues.

To design instruction that addresses the learning needs of all students, the teacher must be willing to seek and implement recommendations of specialists and colleagues with knowledge and experience in addressing a variety of student needs. This may include specialists from student support services or other teachers.

Student Support Services	Teachers
Physical and Occupational therapists	Special education teachers
Speech language pathologists	Gifted and talented teachers
School orientation and mobility specialists	Second-language teachers
School psychologists	Specialists, such as music, art, band, chorus, and physical education teachers
Audiologists	Interventionists
School nurses	Instructional coaches
School social workers	Content area specialists
School counselors	Previous year’s teachers

When teachers have opportunities to collectively analyze student data and collaborate on strategies and interventions to meet identified needs, teacher and student growth can increase.

Benefits of teachers working together to address student needs:

- Teachers’ understanding of essential content and of the needs of their students is deepened.
- Instructional strategies can more appropriately be aligned with students’ needs and content goals.
- Teachers have opportunities to implement strategies and then reflect on their effectiveness in order to identify next steps.

**5 Encourages contributions of students across a range of ability levels.**

When students experience the classroom as a safe, supportive place where everyone’s contributions and thinking is valued and respected, they can become motivated to engage in the process of learning.

For this type of environment to exist, students must be provided opportunities to contribute to the lesson. The teacher may do this in a variety of ways, such as class discussions, collaborative learning, student writing, and

[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)



presentations. It is then the manner in which the teacher responds to students during these activities that communicates dismissal or acceptance and respect for their work.

To encourage students to contribute, the teacher should highlight student progress and create an environment in which students are encouraged to learn from their peers. The following questions can assist the teacher in creating this type of environment:

- How can I ensure each student has opportunities to contribute to the lesson?
- How will I help each student see that he or she can make a positive difference in the learning of others?
- How will I communicate that I value each student's unique abilities?

See also [Standard II, Element B](#) and [Standard III, Element F](#).

Refer to this internal resource for additional information:

- [A Teacher's Words Matter](#)  
Document provides examples of phrases that can communicate to students they are valued and respected for their contributions and thinking.

### *Planning/Coaching Questions*

- What is the best way to obtain information on my students' needs?
- How have you adapted the physical environment to support individual student needs?
- How do you plan instruction that addresses the learning needs of all students?
- How do you apply the knowledge of specialists and colleagues to plan instruction that addresses student needs?
- How have you obtained information on my students' interests?
- How do you utilize students' interests when planning lessons and materials students will utilize?
- How do you ensure all students participate in class activities?
- How did you plan instruction and tasks that provided choices to motivate students to participate?
- How do you encourage students to self-advocate?

[Click here to go back to the table of contents and view the resource guide in its entirety.](#)



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