



# **Catering for Learner Diversity in the English Language Curriculum:**

## **Stretching the Potentials of Advanced Learners in the Secondary English Language Classroom**

**Learner  
Diversity**

**English  
Language**

**Advanced**

**Learners**

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# Pre-Class Reflection

- How do you cater for the needs of the more advanced learners in your lessons?
- What are the major challenges?

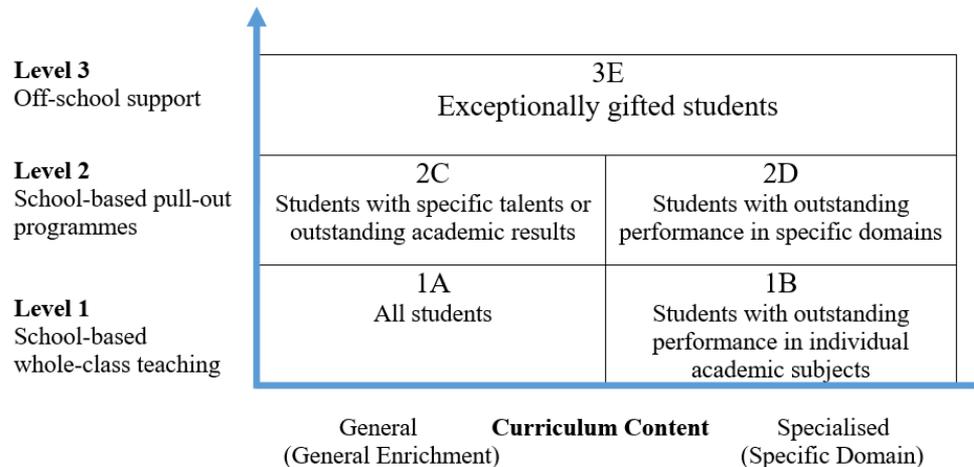
## **Brief Reflection:**

**Discuss the extent to which you agree with the following statements with a partner or in trios.**

1. Learner diversity exists in my class(es).
2. Advanced learners' abilities are mainly reflected in their target language proficiency.
3. Advanced learners' needs can be catered for only in small classes.
4. Advanced learners' needs are most effectively addressed through designing tasks at different difficulty levels.
5. When considering catering for learner diversity, more attention is paid to the weak and less to the advanced learners.

Some principles for catering for the needs  
of the advanced learners in the  
language classroom

# The three-tier Implementation Model for Gifted Education

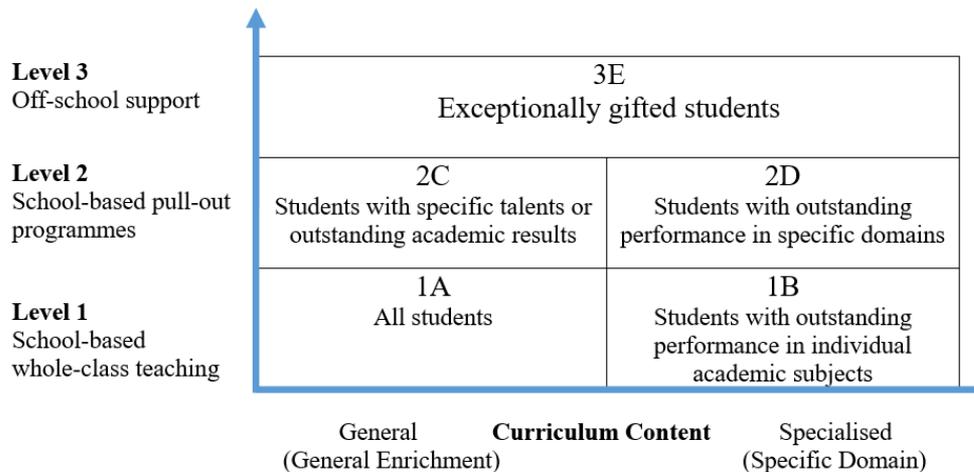


- Level 1 refers to using pedagogies that could tap the potential of students in creativity, critical thinking, problem solving or leadership in the regular classroom.

## Possible pedagogic implications:

- Open-ended tasks in the English language curriculum
- Streaming of students into different groups for different subjects

# The three-tier Implementation Model for Gifted Education

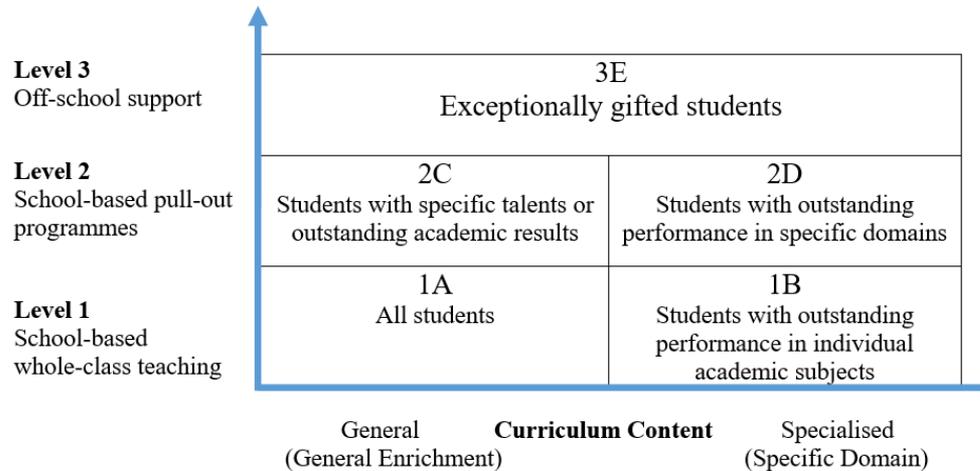


- Level 2 refers to offering pull-out programmes in disciplinary or interdisciplinary areas for the more able students within the school setting.

## Possible pedagogic implications:

- Project-based learning, English ambassador programme, English fairs/performance involving selected students

# The three-tier Implementation Model for Gifted Education



- Level 3 refers to provision of learning opportunities for the exceptionally gifted students in the form of specialist training outside the school setting.

## Needs and characteristics of advanced learners in the English subject

- What are the characteristics of the advanced learners in our secondary English language classrooms?
  
- Do they show:
  - more accurate and varied grammar and vocabulary?
  - better grasp of specific language skills like scanning and skimming?
  - higher motivation in accomplishing the language tasks?
  
- Do they also possess:
  - more critical attitude towards the topics of the activities?
  - more creative ideas?
  - better leadership skills?
  - ...

## Some differentiation strategies suggested by the EDB

- Integrating multiple disciplines into an area of study (e.g. LAC)
- Allowing in-depth learning of a self-directed topic (cf. phenomenal learning)
- Providing broadly-based curriculum content
- Providing learning activities that develop:
  - abstract and higher order thinking skills
  - independent thinking and open inquiry
  - problem solving skills
  - research skills
  - self-understanding



To be realised in tasks integrating the four macro language skills

## Some differentiation strategies suggested by the EDB (Cont'd)

- Presenting ideas and products that challenge existing ideas
- Evaluating outcomes through a range of measures which may include self or peer appraisal, observation, performance, products, criterion-referenced and/or **standardised testing**
- Flexible grouping
- Tiered instruction

## Some differentiation strategies suggested by the EDB(Cont'd):

### ■ Differentiated instruction: Multiple Approaches to:

<b>Content</b>	<b>Input – what students learn</b>
<b>Process</b>	<b>how students go about making sense of ideas and information, task conditions</b>
<b>Product</b>	<b>Output – how students demonstrate what they have learned</b>

*How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms (2nd Edition)* by Carol Ann Tomlinson, p.4

*Principles that govern effective differentiation*

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100216/chapters/Understanding-Differentiated-Instruction@-Building-a-Foundation-for-Leadership.aspx>

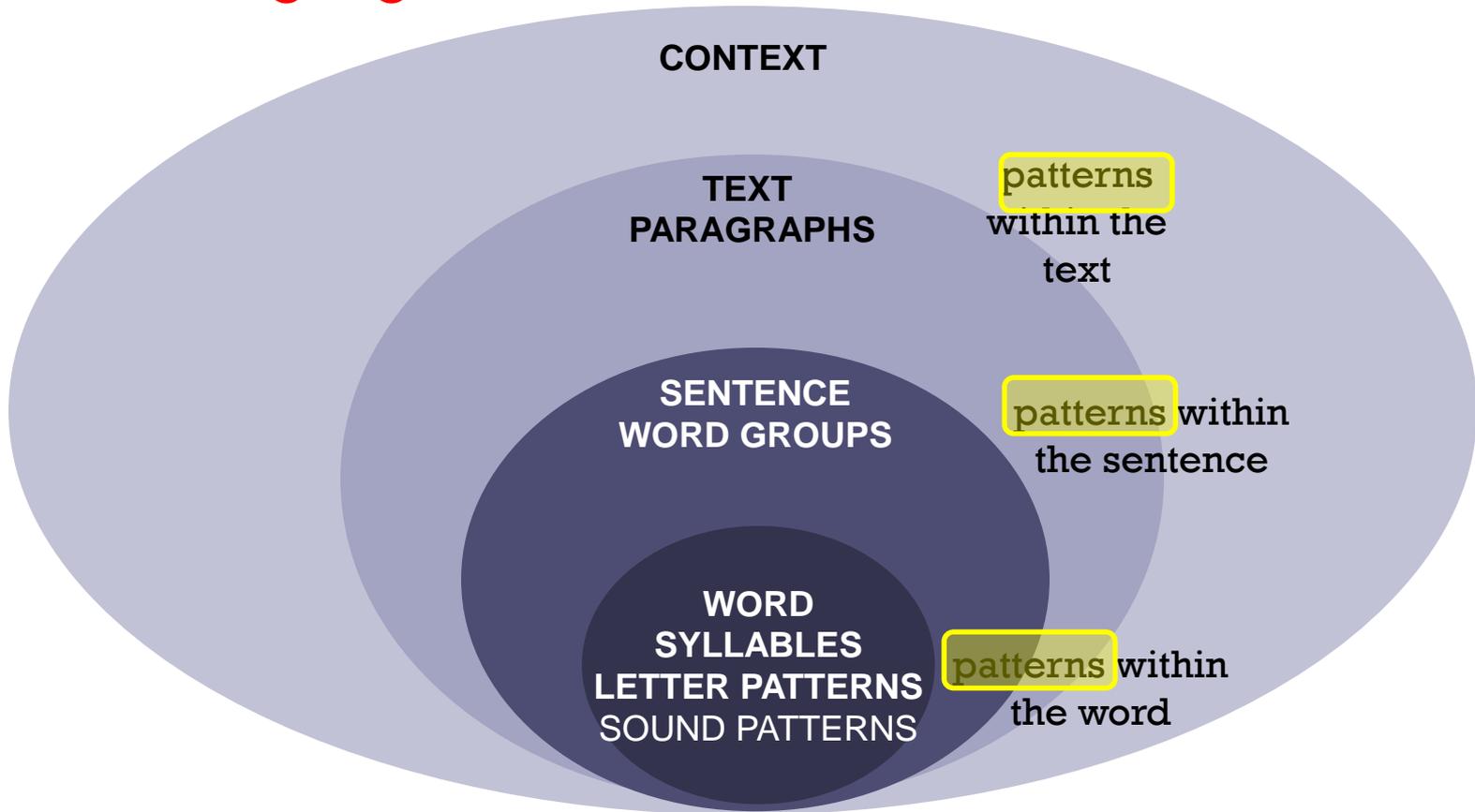
# Differentiated Instruction

## 1. Content Differentiation

# + A Functional View of Language in Context

(Rose, 2005) (The Genre Egg Approach)

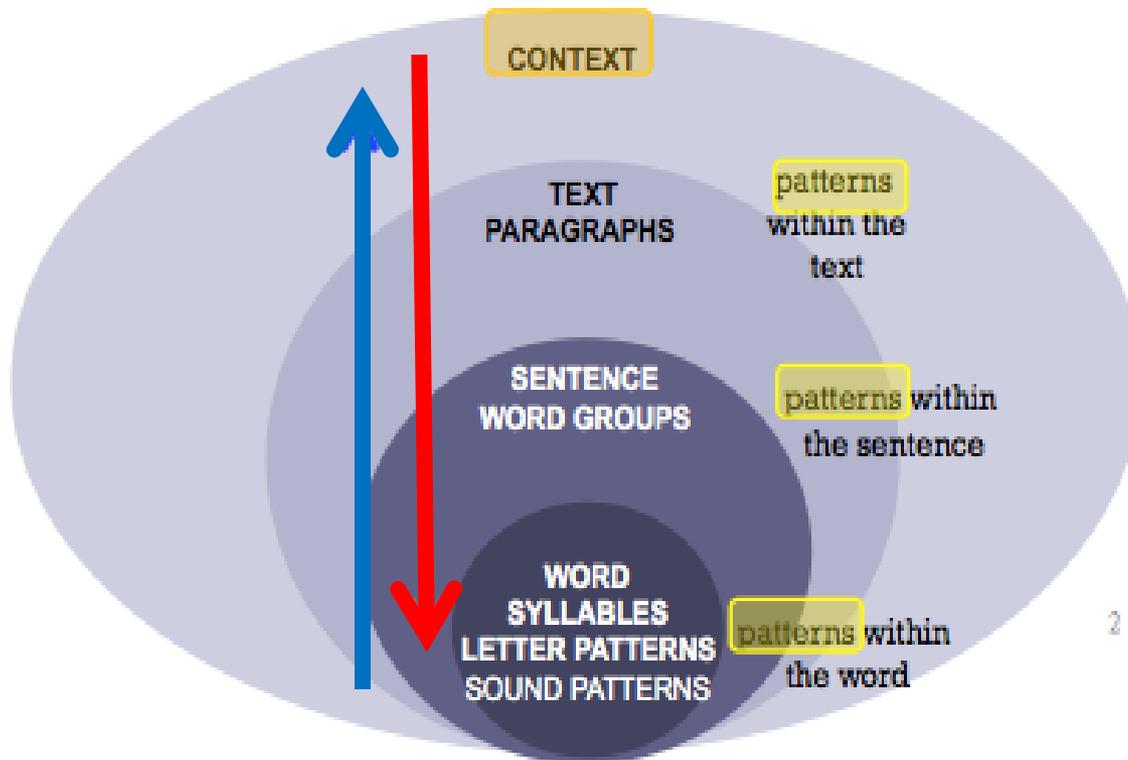
→ Scaffolding students for different levels of language of the target genre



# + Content Differentiation:

## ■ Example: Reading-to-write an expository essay

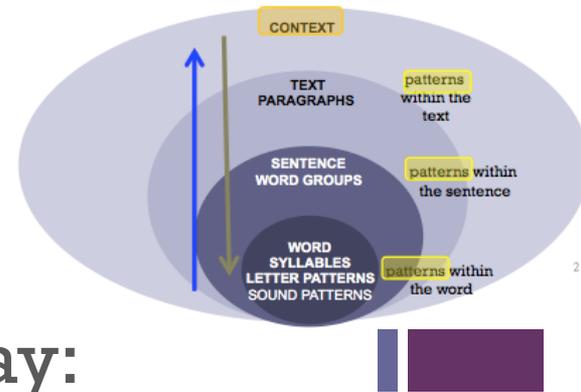
→ Presenting/guiding students to analyse language features and rhetorical structure of an expository text through both “whole-to-part” and “part-to-whole” approaches



*Elements of Curriculum that can be Differentiated – Content*

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100216/chapters/Understanding-Differentiated-Instruction@-Building-a-Foundation-for-Leadership.aspx>

# + For example...



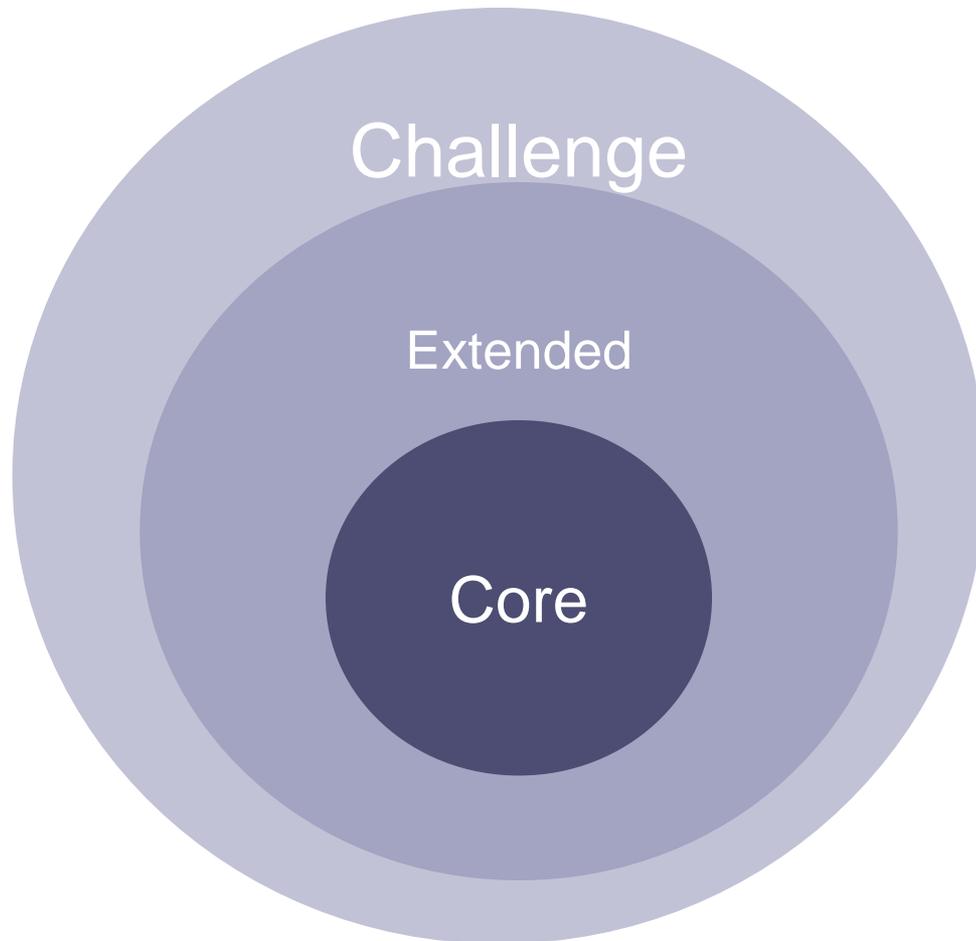
## ■ Reading to write an expository essay:

- **Context level:** Activating the **students' schemata of the writing topic** and encouraging their sharing of thoughts (through videos/ pictures/ pre-tasks)
- **Text level:** Showing several expository essays of different styles and guiding them to **analyse the rhetorical structures and features** with the students
- **Sentence level:** Guiding the students to identify **the sentence patterns for major academic functions** (e.g. stating arguments, providing justification etc.)
- **Word level:** Identifying **useful vocabulary** (words/phrases) from the sample texts and asking the students to suggest alternatives (i.e. building range)

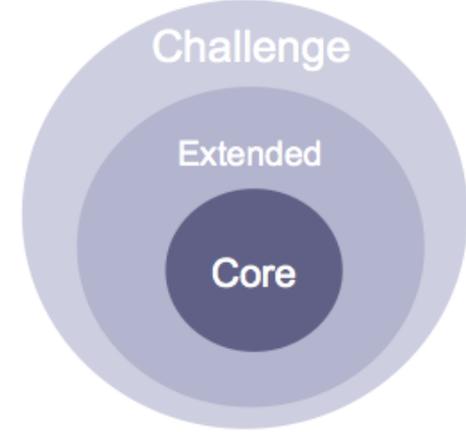
# Differentiated Instruction

## 2. Product Differentiation

# Product Differentiation: Core, Extended and Challenge levels of Students' Language Production



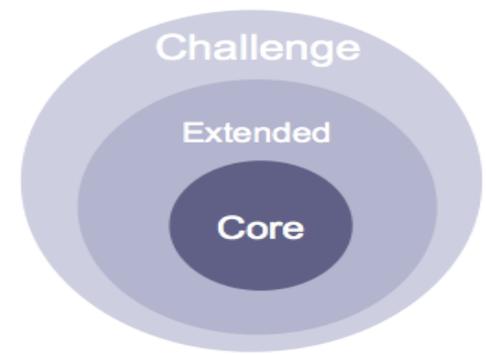
# + For example...



## ■ Speaking: **student presentation**

- **Core:** Get students to present what they know/they have learnt about a topic.
- **Extended:** Get students to present what they know and ask peers critical thinking questions on a topic.
- **Challenge:** Get students to present a topic in order to debate with other groups of students.

# Other ways of differentiating the Products:



- Providing product assignments at **varying degrees of difficulty** to match student readiness
- Using a wide variety of **kinds of assessments**
- Encouraging students to **express** what they have learned in **varied ways**
- Providing product assignments at varying degrees of difficulty to match student readiness
- Allowing for varied **working arrangements** (for example, working alone or as part of a team to complete the product)

*How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms (2nd Edition)* by Carol Ann Tomlinson, p.85

*Elements of Curriculum that can be Differentiated - Product*

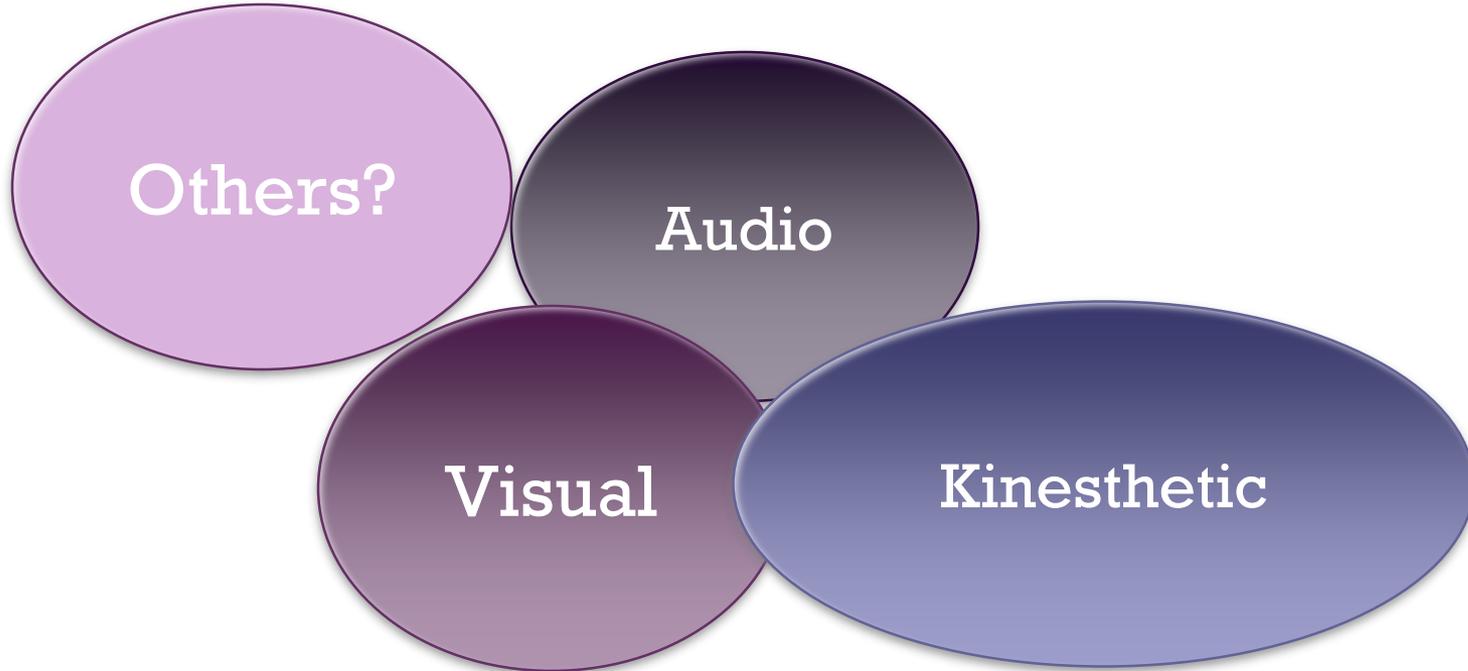
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100216/chapters/Understanding-Differentiated-Instruction@-Building-a-Foundation-for-Leadership.aspx>

# Differentiated Instruction

## 3. Process Differentiation

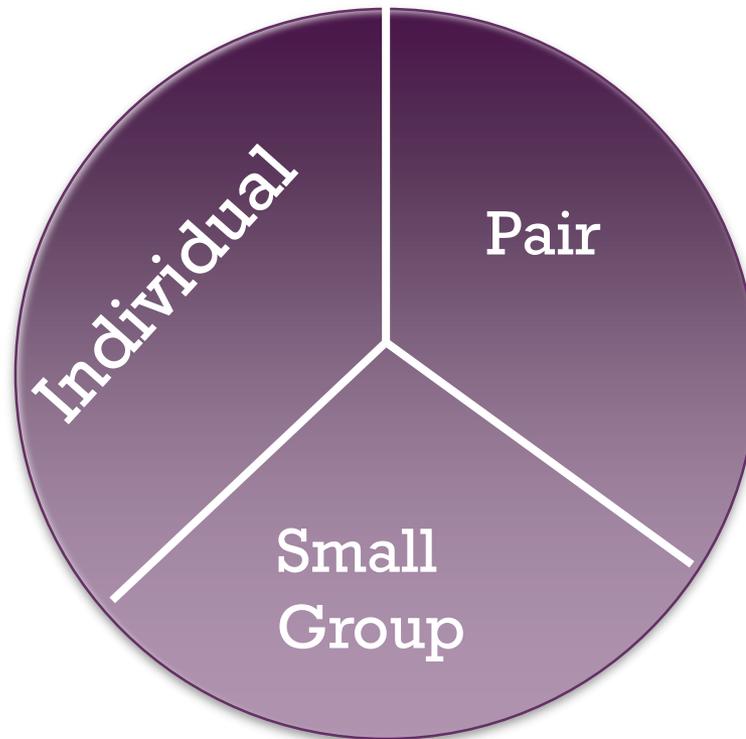
# + Process Differentiation: Audio, Visual and Kinesthetic Activities

→ Designing learning and teaching materials and activities to cater for and develop different learning styles



# + Process Differentiation: Flexible Grouping

→ Designing learning and teaching materials with different styles



## Process Differentiation:

Other ways of differentiating the learning process (the process/the activity in which the learner comes to make sense of, understand and “own” the key facts/concepts/generalisations/skills):

- Providing **varied options** at differing levels of difficulty/based on student interests
- Offering **different amount** of teacher or student **support** for a task
- Giving student **choices** about how they express what they learn

*How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms (2nd Edition)* by Carol Ann Tomlinson, p.80-81

*Elements of Curriculum that can be Differentiated - Process*

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100216/chapters/Understanding-Differentiated-Instruction@-Building-a-Foundation-for-Leadership.aspx>

## Examination of a teaching sequence Informed by the above principles

### Background:

- a sequence primarily targeting development of reading strategies
- integration of the other three macro skills
- open-ended tasks with flexible task conditions for promoting differentiated instruction (content, product, and process)

# Stage 1: Speaking, Listening and Pre-Reading (Content Differentiation)

## **Group Interaction 1 (3 min):**

What can be the relationship between a smartphone and a glass of iced coffee? Brainstorm as many ideas as you can and share your thoughts.

# Stage 1: Speaking, Listening and Pre-Reading

## Group Interaction 2 (2 min):

You'll see both in the video I'm going to show you. What kind of video do you think it is? What's its purpose? Who are the target audience?



**To what extent are these questions manageable for students at different levels of English proficiency? How would you expect answers from the advanced students to be different from the others? What kind of generic (in addition to language) skills can be targeted?**

# Stage 1: Speaking, Listening and Pre-Reading

## Video-watching (4 min) & Group Interaction 3 (3 min):

While you watch the first four minutes of the video on a product (a smart phone), think about these two questions:

1. What kind of video is it? Who made it? For what purpose?
2. What is the reason for showing some iced coffee in the video? Is it a good way for the producer to achieve his/her purpose? Why/why not?

Share your ideas with your friends for 3 minutes after watching. Did you make the right guesses before watching the video

Text interpretation and forming expectations on texts being **higher-order generic and language skills** to be fostered, and a way to **differentiate the content** for students

## Stage 2: While-Reading (Content and Process Differentiation)

**Group Interaction 4 (3 min):** Read the first paragraph of a text (a product review) and answer the following questions quickly.

1. How many models of smart phones are mentioned in the paragraph?
2. Which one do you think is the focus of the text? Why?
3. What do you think is in common between the text and the video we just saw? Do they share the same text type/purpose etc.?

**Forming pre-reading/watching expectations on texts (both print and non-print) being useful skills to understand or even evaluate them critically**

## Stage 2: While-Reading

**Detailed Reading (5 min):** Let's read the second paragraph of the text and answer some questions together as we read it aloud.

Sample detailed reading questions for advanced learners

1. What did smart phone developer have to prove? Why did the writer use the past tense in the first sentence?
2. Which expression means 'certainly'?
3. A 'flagship' in a fleet is the one the commander of that fleet is quartered. What does flagship mean in this context?

## Stage 2: While-Reading

Sample detailed reading questions for advanced learners:

4. The phrase 'not to mention' can be replaced by...?
5. A dual camera' is an example of ...?
6. What information do we expect to get from a book? What does it tell us about the meaning of the expression 'by-the-book'? Is it a positive or negative comment about the smart phone? What tells us so? Which adjective in the paragraph means the opposite as 'by-the-book'?

...

## Stage 2: While-Reading

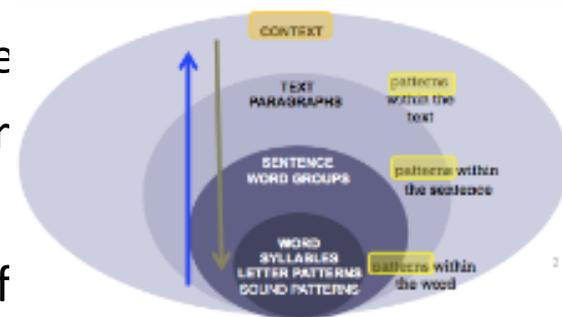
### Why detailed reading?

- Fostering simultaneous global (for **abstract** ideas) and local (for specific details) reading
- Space for **open inquiry** (vs closed questions in traditional reading comprehension exercises)
- **Higher order reading** (i.e. reading between the lines, identifying semantic and syntactic clues for inferencing/interpreting etc.)
- **Problem solving** through identifying syntactic and semantic clues for determining implicit meanings (e.g. the writer's attitude)

## Stage 2: While-Reading

**Individual Reading (5 min):** Skim and scan the following paragraphs of the first half of the text on your own and share your answers to the following questions with a partner.

1. Why does the 'summary' section come at a rather front position?
2. Among the different aspects of the smartphone review which do you think is the one that appeals to the writer most? Why?
3. There are some other sections following the first part of the text. What do you think they are?



**Guiding students to analyse the language features and the rhetorical structure of the text in relation to its purpose along the genre egg model for **content differentiation****

## Stage 2: While-Reading

### Individual Reading:

Hand-on Task: Do you think these questions are challenging enough? Any suggestions on even more challenging questions for the most advanced students?

1. Can you identify any examples of metaphor used by the writer? How does that help conveying his meaning?
2. Why does 'two' in '(or two)' refer to?
3. Can you identify any features/components of smartphone reviewed where there's no negative comments from the writer?
4. What does the writer mean when he says 'if only the company spent just a little more time on the smartphone's single speaker'?
5. How does the writer compare the two smartphone products mentioned? Which phrase suggests that to us?

## Stage 2: While-Reading

### Why individual reading after collaborative reading?

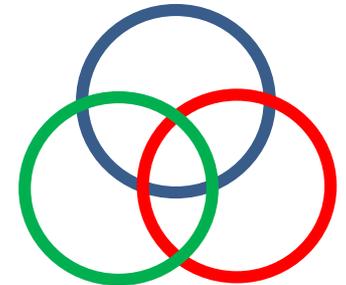
- Developing **self-understanding** through connecting their understanding of the text to their everyday experience and/or existing knowledge about the topic of the reading text
- Raising students' awareness of the typical stylistic features and the rhetorical structure of the target genre (i.e. understanding the 'texture' of the text/genre) and thereby understanding a text at different levels of language (c.f. the genre egg model), which is a **higher-order** and transferrable reading skill

## Stage 2: While-Reading

### Venn Diagram Task (30-40 min)

Comparing texts of the same genre: A smartphone review

Read/watch either the print or non-print version of at least one more review on the phone and complete a Venn Diagram comparing the reviews on an A3 paper.



**Evaluating outcomes through a range of tasks:**  
**Online graphic organiser**

[http://www.classtools.net/education-games-php/venn\\_intro](http://www.classtools.net/education-games-php/venn_intro)

<https://teachbytes.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/venn-diagram.jpg>

## Provide Students with Some Suggestions on Texts about Product Review

Good idea to provide suggestions? Why/why not? The students' choices being respected? Potential to develop **research skills** of the advanced students?

## Stage 2: While-Reading

Alternatives in setting the review reading task for achieving **Tiered Instruction**:

Asking students to:

- rate the credibility of the three product reviews
- compare the rhetorical structure of the three texts
- judge any bias of their delivery
- Identify sentence structure and figurative language/imagery for expressing the writer's opinions (including metaphors, similes, personification, exaggeration).

## Stage 2: While-Reading

The “**Equaliser**” Model for planning differentiated lessons / designing tiered activities/tasks

→ differentiating students’ readiness in terms of rate, depth, pace, structure of learning etc.

*How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms (2nd Edition)* by Carol Ann Tomlinson, p.47

## Stage 3: Post-Reading and Pre-Writing

**Text analysis 1 (15 min):** With reference to the print reviews you have read, complete the following table identifying the rhetorical structure of this particular text type:

Section	Why is it important to the text?
Title	- Stating the product reviewed - A brief comment to attract readers' attention

## Stage 3: Post-Reading and Pre-Writing

**Text analysis 2 (15 min):** With reference to the print reviews you have read, complete the following table identifying the main language features (e.g. tense, sentence pattern, vocabulary etc.) of each of the sections you have identified:

Section	Main language features
Title	- Noun phrases in capital letters - Short adjectives connected with and/but

**Good idea to combine this with the previous table?  
Can we do text analysis with less advanced students?**

## Stage 4: While-Writing

**Review Writing Task (60 min):** Write a review on a product or a service of your choice:

- a product that you possess (e.g. mobile phone, tablet, clothing items etc.)
- a service you are using (e.g. dental care, YouTube Channel) or one you are interested in buying/subscribing (you may do an Internet search for its information and reviews)
- a product/service that does not exist in the world

Any variation in **creativity, generic and language skills** catered for in the task?

## Stage 4: While-Writing

Step 1: With reference to the purpose and the rhetorical structure of the review genre (Stage 3), design a graphic organiser for the major sections and sub-sections of your review text:



a mind map vs a concept map

Mind map

Source: <https://3gabw67dxh21mxkv33nf9htx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/guide-to-effective-mind-mapping.png>

Concept map

Source: <http://cmeimg-a.akamaihd.net/640/cpcd/upload/3000/500/40/2/173542.jpg>

## Stage 4: While-Writing

Step 2: Match the language features at and beyond the word level you have previously identified (at Stage 3) with the corresponding sections of your review text. Add abbreviations and symbols representing those features in appropriate positions of the graphic organiser you have designed.

Step 3: Follow the blueprint shown in your graphic organiser and write the review. You will share your graphic organiser and text together with the rest of us, so make sure the two align with each other. Proofread both before you submit your work.

**Does this kind of **language scaffolding** help only low ability students? How about their advanced counterparts?**

## Stages 3&4: Pre- & While-Writing

### Torrance Incubation Model of Creative Teaching and Learning:

**Step 1: Heighten Anticipation** – get the students' attention, arouse curiosity and motivate them to learn

**Step 2: Deepen Expectations** – lead the students to expect and to create meaningful learning

**Step 3: Extend the Learning** – make the students learn within and beyond the lesson

An Instructional Model for Enhancing Incubation, by E. Paul Torrance, in the Journal of Creative Behavior, 13(1), pages 23-35 (1979)

Torrance's Creativity Skill Set:

<https://creativity-school.weebly.com/torrance-incubation-model-tim.html>

## Stage 5: Post-Writing and Speaking

**Peer review appreciation (20 min):** Get into trios. Take turns to share your review and the graphic organiser with the other two members. Do not just read aloud the text. The other two members will give you feedback using the two-stars-and-a-wish format.

## Stage 5: Post-Writing and Speaking

**TV Advertisement Production:** Among the three products that your group has reviewed, select one to produce a TV advertisement on. Each group will then take turns and ‘act out’ the advertisement in 1 minute. While you are preparing for the advertisement, consider the following questions:

1. To what extent is a TV advertisement similar to/different from a written review? Compare and contrast the two in terms of purpose(s), target audience, organisation of content etc.
2. What would be the language features typically found in TV advertisements? How can meanings be communicated most effectively and efficiently in them?

You may answer these two questions in the form of a graphic organiser.

A possible **Tier 2 task** extended from a **Tier 1 teaching and learning cycle**

## Stage 5: Post-Writing Alternative

**Poster Production:** Among the three products that your group has reviewed, select one to produce a poster to promote it. Each group will then take turns and present the poster in 1 minute. While you are preparing for the advertisement, consider the following questions:

1. To what extent is a poster similar to/different from a written review? Compare and contrast the two in terms of purpose(s), target audience, organisation of content etc.
2. What would be the language features typically found in a poster? How can meanings be communicated most effectively and efficiently in them?

You may answer these two questions in the form of a graphic organiser.

## A Wrap up

### **Possible dimensions to look at for differentiated instruction:**

- **Content**
- **Process**
- **Product**

### **Stretching the Potentials of Advanced Learners:**

- **Tiered instruction**
- **Varying task conditions (process& content) in addition to task types (product)**
- **Using multimodal input and output**
- **Encouraging higher order and abstract thinking**
- **In-depth learning of self-directed topics**

**Thank You**