

DI: Differentiated Instruction:

Enhancing Teaching & Learning



Differentiated Instruction (DI) is one of the most powerful and widely accepted approaches to enhancing the teaching and learning environment. This reference guide is designed to increase educators' understanding of DI and provide practical tools and strategies for its implementation in the classroom.

What is DI?

DI is an approach that empowers both the teacher and the learner. It effectively addresses the needs of a wide range of learners by providing multiple pathways in the teaching and learning process.

DI builds upon a solid core curriculum that reflects relevant standards. Data from formative and summative assessments is used to identify learners' abilities, readiness and interests. Additionally, this data informs teacher decision-making and leads to carefully crafted instruction and adjustment of the curriculum.

It is a comprehensive and flexible process that includes the planning, preparation and delivery of instruction to address the diversity of students' learning needs within the classroom. Through DI, teachers take into account who they teach, what they teach, where they teach and how they teach.

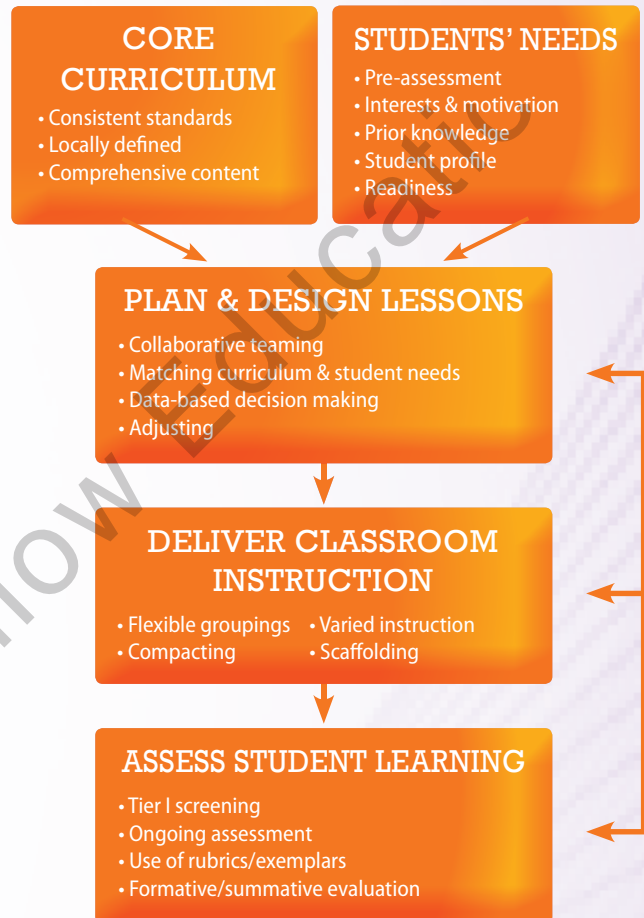
Guiding Principles

- All children can learn; intelligence is not fixed
- Children have differing talents, abilities and interests
- Children learn through multiple pathways
- Prior knowledge must be recognised
- Students must be actively involved in the learning process
- Students require emotionally and physically safe environments

Key Features

- Maximises student-centred instruction and activities
- Includes recognition of student diversity
- Provides choice for both students and teachers
- Incorporates collaboration/teaming
- Utilises flexible, ad hoc groupings
- Plans instruction with learning centres/stations
- Measures progress through ongoing assessment
- Uses multiple data for decision making
- Features teachers as facilitators of learning
- Maximises each student's opportunity for success
- Integrates technology for both instruction and assessment
- Implements research-based brain compatible strategies
- Provides appropriately challenging learning environments

Understanding DI



What Will We Teach? – Planning & Designing Lessons

- Teachers work collaboratively to articulate and map curriculum and assessments on horizontal year-level teams, and then between year levels on vertical teams.
- Teachers work independently to design coherent and cohesive curriculum for their particular class of students.
- Coherent instructional planning attends to the classroom environment, learning activities, instructional materials/resources, groupings/structure of the lesson and unit.

How Will We Teach? – Delivery of Instruction

- Teachers choose only specific learning activities & projects which advance students' understanding.
- Questioning/discussion techniques maximise student interaction.
- Active learning increases student engagement.
- Instruction is modified and differentiated to accommodate students' diverse needs.

How Will We Measure Progress? – Assessing Student Learning

- Products and assessments to measure students' understanding are determined during the planning process.
- Evidence of learning takes many different forms, such as reports, projects, exhibitions and demonstrations.