TELL Domain: Environment
Title: Promoting Student Success with Differentiated Instruction and Projects

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Differentiated Learning in the Classroom

- Thematic Curriculum
- Student centered
- Appropriate pedagogy
- Proficiency appropriate activities
“The key word is development. Any good educational program is always under construction. Assessment, evaluation and reflection are the keys to finding what works and what doesn’t work and how to fix the latter.”

(Deborah Blaz, 2013)
Other Definitions of Differentiation

- Students connect better in their learning when their readiness level, interests, and/or learning profiles have been respected or valued (Gregory & Chapman, 2002)
- Differentiation puts students at the center of teaching and learning. (Toni Theison)
- Differentiation is an effective way for teachers to offer meaningful instruction delivered around challenging content and designed to meet the needs of students at their appropriate levels and to help them achieve maximum growth (Center for Advanced Student Learning, 2001)
Clubs: Student Centered Approach

6 clubs were designed

- Music
- Theater
- Film making
- Journalism
- Art
- Literature
Thematic Curriculum

Students explored the environment in which they live and compared it with the environment of India and Pakistan.

- Novice students learned about what kind of an environment animals and pets need to survive.
- Intermediate/Advanced students campaigned for making the Earth greener for future generations.
The Daily Schedule

9.00am-10.30am (Literacy skills)
10.30am - 10.45am (Break)
10.45am - 12.00pm (Communicative Skills)
12.00am - 1.00 pm (Lunch)
1.00pm - 2.45pm (Club Activities)
2.45pm - 3.00pm (Review & Reflective)
Why We Started Clubs

- Past activities did not encourage participatory activities
- Activities were more teacher-centered
- Time was lost learning communicative skills
- Make students responsible for their own learning
- Needed to initiate more interaction between Hindi and Urdu students.
Structure of Clubs

- Students attended meetings in the afternoon when they worked on elective projects alongside peers from the Urdu camp in the field of music, theater, movie-making, arts, etc.
- Every club was conducted by two teachers: one from the Hindi and one from the Urdu camp.
- In each club varied level of students were enrolled keeping their interests in mind.
- Students were responsible for designing and performing the task.
- Projects related to the topic of endangered animals and environment.
- Last day, student’s presented their project work to parents and members from the school and community.
Proficiency Level of the Students

- Each Club had Novice to Advanced level students (mainly heritage students)
- Teachers assisted specifically lower proficiency level students in learning when they were engaged with volunteer native-speakers from the community who were experts in one of the fields of the clubs
- Tasks were differentiated according to level, language, and age of the students
Think/Pair/Share one effective activity based on differentiation.
Performance Tasks-Art Club

- Art Club students learned Madhubani Painting, an Indian art form, and Truck Art, a Pakistani art form.
- End goal: create a photo story using the art forms on Environment.
Music Club

Music Club: Students produced a song on environment, wrote their own lyrics. Fahad Ahmad, a professional musician, came to give suggestions.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTUnvY99WzE
Students produced newsletter

- Students acted as photographers and videographers
- Novice students created captions and headlines
- Advanced/Intermediate students acted as reporters
- Collaborative Work
Theater

- Theater produced a short skit on the Environment
- Professionals from the community came to give advice
- Students were given autonomy to write the script, direct it and produce it according to their strengths and capabilities.
Film Making

- Students were given topics to choose from
- In groups they made short films on the topic of the Environment
Challenges

- Since we introduced clubs for the first time, it was a learning experience for us
- Students were disengaged with the topic “Environment”
- Different proficiency level of the students in one club still remained a challenge
- Students thought the day was too long to be engaged in a singular topic
What Went Well?

- Students explored personal interests while learning Hindi and Urdu
- Students worked collaboratively with the sister language of Hindi/Urdu
- Student Centered differentiated learning was accomplished successfully
- Increased motivation of students
Adapting to the Needs of the Students.

- Changes made as we went along
- Pre assessments and assessments
- Scaffolding for varying needs, interests and abilities
- Grouping and regrouping
Feedback

- Break into five or six groups
- One club is assigned to each group of teachers
- Task is to create at least 3 suggestions to make the club more effective