



## Differentiating your Delivery

Strategies and Activities to Support and to Stretch Pupils

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TSP Programme Officer

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### Session Aims

- To understand what differentiation is and why it is needed
- To gain a range of strategies and activities to both support and stretch pupils in tutorials
- To apply these strategies and activities to your own tutorials and tutorial content.

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### Starter Activity: Mindmapping

Differentiation

Stretch

Support

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What words do you associate with 'Differentiation'?

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**Starter Activity: Mindmapping**

Differentiation

Stretch

Support

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**Key Terms: Differentiation**

**Differentiation** means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Whether teachers **differentiate** content, process, products, or the learning environment, this a successful approach to instruction.

"**Differentiation** is simply a teacher attending to the learning needs of a particular student or small groups of students, rather than teaching a class as though all individuals in it were basically alike."

— Carol Ann Tomlinson.

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## Key Terms: Scaffolding



**Scaffolding** refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.

"Scaffolding is actually a bridge used to build upon what students already know to arrive at something they do not know. If scaffolding is properly administered, it will act as an enabler, not as a disabler." (Benson, 1997)

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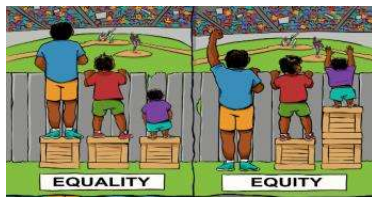
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How does this image speak to **differentiation** and **scaffolding**?




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On a scale of 1-5, how confident do you feel about differentiating material in your tutorials?

1 = not confident at all, help!  
5 = smashing it, I know exactly how I will differentiate material for pupils in my tutorials.

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### What is differentiation?



- Differentiation is anything you do to ensure that individual students achieve their potential:
  - Stretching
  - Supporting
  - Special educational needs
- You can differentiate by:
  - Task
  - Grouping
  - Support
  - Resources
  - Questioning




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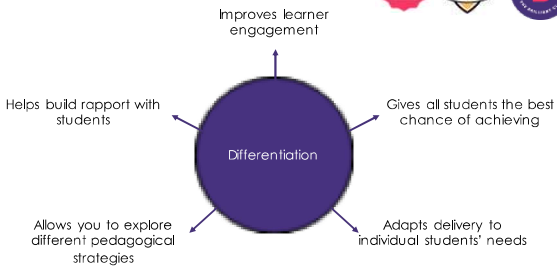
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### Why is Differentiation Important?


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### How do you know when to differentiate tasks/activities for a pupil?



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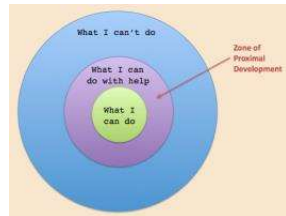
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### Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky developed a theory about the 'zones of proximal development', which posits that to make progress, pupils need to move from being unable, to doing something with support, in order to make progress towards doing something independently.




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### Differentiation – Supporting

Differentiation	Strategy
Task	Lower-order thinking skills – gap-filling activity
Grouping	Less-able students work with tutor
Support	Modelling / Verbal rehearsals
Resources	Sentence starters or writing frame
Questioning	'What?' or 'How?' questions

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### Strategies – Scaffolding Techniques

- Sentence Starters
- Word Matches
- Model/Demonstrate - my turn, your turn
- Give pupils time to discuss in pairs first – support one another
- Incorporate Visual Aids
- Worksheets with progressively more challenging tasks
- Scaffold by resource: check reading ages of different resources you use.
- Chunking: Break big questions/tasks down into smaller sections. Pupils complete each of them and, overall, complete the original task.
- Provide a Checklist or Success Criteria

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### Differentiation – Stretching



Differentiation	Strategy
Task	Extension or Independent task – higher order thinking skill
Grouping	More-able students 'teaching'; pair work
Resources	Incorporate university-style learning
Questioning	'Why?' and 'How?' questions



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### Strategies – Differentiation Techniques for stretching pupils



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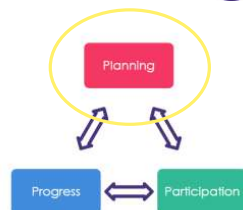
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### Strategies – Differentiation Techniques for pushing the more able pupils



- Design tasks so that students complete their learning independently. E.g., read and summarise an article without prompting or guiding questions.
- Emphasise university-style learning. Model tasks on similar ones they would complete at university.
- Differentiate by resources. E.g., can you give some pupils a BBC article and others a short, academic text?



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### Strategies – Differentiation Techniques for pushing the more able pupils



- Give each student a role in a group task: orator, developer, questioner, summariser. (Developer is the most challenging role)
- Give each student a different piece of information which means they have to work together to reach the answer.
- Self-directed learning: students self-select activities they complete with the understanding they complete at least 1 directed by you.

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### Strategies – Differentiation Techniques for pushing the more able pupils



- Build in higher level vocabulary. Ask students to rephrase an answer (verbal or written) using higher-level vocabulary. See how pupils develop in ability to use this vocabulary.
- "What do I still want to know?" tasks – pupils identify gaps in their knowledge, how they could extend knowledge further and have independent research time to feedback on this.

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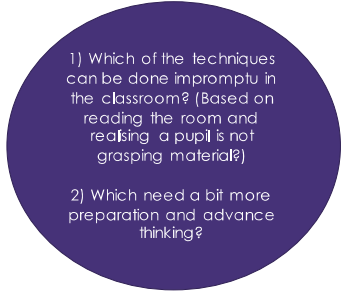
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- 1) Which of the techniques can be done impromptu in the classroom? (Based on reading the room and realising a pupil is not grasping material?)
- 2) Which need a bit more preparation and advance thinking?

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# Effective Questioning & Level of Challenge

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**How would you rank these questions from support to stretch?**

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## Effective Questioning for Stretching and Supporting – Arts/Hum scenario

What is your definition of feminism?

Think about the female character in the text we've studied. What were her actions and her roles in the novel?

How does this character's actions align with your definition of feminism?

To what extent is this novel a feminist text?

Consider if this novel has any ambiguous or conflicting presentations of feminism.

All the novels we've studied consider themselves to be "feminist" texts. To what extent do you agree with this branding?

How can literature serve as a social and political critique?

Support

UG

Stretch

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Effective Questioning for Stretching and Supporting – STEM scenario

How can we make a home more energy efficient?

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Effective Questioning for Stretching and Supporting – STEM scenario

What does energy efficient mean?

How can we make a home more energy efficient?

To what extent are these strategies applicable in all types of housing?

What do homes use to save heating or save water usage?

What rules and guidance does there need to be about energy efficient homes in 5, 10 or 15 years time?

What more can we do to improve how much heat a home retains?

Why do we need to make homes more energy efficient?

Support

SK

UG

Stretch

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Your Turn

- Think of an activity you have in one of your tutorials.
- Plan supporting and stretching resources for that activity.

**Prompts:**  
Consider differentiating by:

- Grouping
- Task
- Resources
- Questioning

**Support:**

- Work on this in pairs
- Use the scaffolding resource sheet.
- Use Bloom's taxonomy for question starters.

**Stretch:**  
Present your ideas to a partner and share feedback on them. What could be improved further?

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On a scale of 1-5, how confident do you now feel about differentiating material in your tutorials?

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**Key Takeaways**



Differentiation will be needed in every classroom.



You can differentiate by grouping, resources, questioning, task – but NOT NECESSARILY OUTCOME.



Some differentiation tactics can be done instantaneously (e.g. amending questioning) but some need to be planned in advance (e.g. worksheets).

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a) What is your main takeaway from this session?  
b) what do you want to know more about?

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### Further Resources

- ✓ Benjamin Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*
- ✓ Leo Vygotsky, *The Zone of Proximal Development*
- ✓ 10 Differentiation Ideas – Teacher Toolkit
- ✓ [Differentiation in the Classroom: Content, Process, or Product? – Model Teaching](#)
- ✓ [Strategies for Differentiation in the Classroom That Actually Work \(twinkl.co.uk\)](#)
- ✓ Search for differentiation strategies by subject

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### Badges





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