



# Some Assumptions Behind Differentiated Instruction

- Learners in virtually all classrooms at all grade levels and in all subjects vary significantly in their readiness to learn particular topics at a given time, in their interests, and in ways they learn best.
- Readiness, interest, and learning profile are shaped by a learner's experiences, culture, gender, and biology.
- Most learners can achieve far more than we tend to think they can if teachers provide rich, engaging, supportive environments with a balance of continuously escalating expectations and joy in learning.
- Learners are generally more motivated to learn and make greater achievement gains when teachers respond effectively to their particular readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.
- Responding consistently to learners' learning needs is a powerful way for teachers to communicate to learners the importance of each student to the teacher and to the success of the class as a whole.
- To teach responsively, teachers need to develop consistently expanding repertoires of instructional strategies suited to both the needs of learners and the nature of the content they are studying.
- The complexity of the teaching and learning process requires that teachers continuously grow in instructional proficiency.
- Expert teachers teach responsively—with a focus on curricular requirements, needs of individual learners, needs of the class as a whole, and ways to ensure balanced focus on all three of these important elements.
- Responsive teaching is flexible teaching.
- Instructional strategies that help teachers increase flexibility in the context of high quality curriculum and a positive learning environment help learners achieve better and develop increasing confidence in themselves as learners.