



COLLABORATIVE TEACHING

Session D

Planning Differentiated Instruction Through Tiered Lessons



Planning Differentiated Instruction Through Tiered Lessons

PURPOSE



In this session, participants will learn how to develop tiered lessons for differentiated instruction in a mixed ability classroom. Teachers will work together to create three levels of learning activities for a single lesson. Each participant will leave with a lesson ready to use in the classroom along with resources for developing additional lessons.

Pre-requisite: It is strongly recommended that Session D participants have a basic understanding of differentiated instruction from previous workshops, study groups, or other learning activities.

Activities At-A-Glance



This 3-hour session includes the following five activities:

Activity 1: *Welcome and Introductions* (5 minutes)–Trainers introduce themselves and their role.

Activity 2: *Reflection Activity: Differentiated Instruction Is Like a Ladder Because...* (15 minutes)–Table groups complete a simile related to differentiated instruction.

Activity 3: *Poor Scholar's Soliloquy* (30 minutes)–The whole group reads a brief story about a student who did not do well in a traditional classroom. Questions about the story are posted on a chart. The importance of differentiated instruction is emphasized through table group responses.

Activity 4: *Developing a Tiered Lesson, Part 1* (30 minutes)–The steps for developing a tiered lesson are introduced as participants review the corresponding sections of a sample lesson. Trainers conduct a practice activity for identifying concepts; Big Ideas; and what students should Know, Understand, and be able to Do.

Activity 5: *Developing a Tiered Lesson, Part 2* (80 minutes)–Participants complete their own tiered lesson. Trainers explain follow-up activities and in-service requirements.



Materials:

- Handout 3: *The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy*
- Handout 4: *Scholarly Attributes*
- Charts with prepared questions (see step 3 below)

Activity Steps:

1 _____ 5 min.

Ask participants to check if they have a number on the back of their handout packet. Tell participants that they will be reading a corresponding, numbered section of Handout 3: *The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy*, aloud to the whole group. If they are not comfortable reading aloud, they should take a moment to ask another group member to read their assigned section of the story. As readers share the story about a middle school student, ask the whole group to follow along, taking note of the student's background knowledge, interests, and learning preferences. Ask the person with paragraph number 1 to begin reading and to sit down when finished. Encourage readers 2–11 to be ready so the reading will flow smoothly.

2 _____ 10 min.

Assign partners or triads depending upon the number of participants at a table.

Ask partners or triads to complete Handout 4: *Scholarly Attributes*. Ask the group to take five minutes to review the *Poor Scholar's Soliloquy*. They should then identify and write down the student's attributes that fit in each of the three columns. After five minutes, have partners compare their list with those from other groups at their table.

3 _____ 10 min.

Groups are asked to discuss, at their tables, their responses to the following four questions listed on a chart:

Small Group Chart Questions:

- Are any of your students (past or present) like the student in our story?
- Why is it important for us to know our students?
- Using differentiated instruction principles, how could the poor scholar's teachers have engaged him more in learning?

After five minutes, reveal the following question, written on a separate chart, and solicit responses from the whole group:

Whole Group Chart Questions:

- How do these questions relate to the similes that you created earlier in the session? Refer to the simile charts posted along the walls.

Summarize the story with the group: *“The Poor Scholar’s Soliloquy” is as relevant today as it was when written in the 1940s (Cory, 1988). The story illustrates that traditional classroom instruction is often not as effective as instruction that takes place through meaningful content, challenging tasks, and authentic problem solving. Many of our students have trouble learning through the “de-contextualized” instruction often practiced in classrooms today. Knowing how your students learn best, their interests, and their readiness for learning is the best preparation for planning differentiated instruction. Next, we’ll explore a process and format for developing lessons that meet the needs of all your “scholars”!*

4

5 min.

Before moving on to the next activity, ask the groups if they can identify specific instructional strategies modeled or used during this activity. Refer to the Strategy Box below for examples.

Strategy Box:

- Assigning readers/roles—Use numbers to assign students who can read aloud or perform other tasks during an instructional activity (or use colored dots to indicate different student roles or tasks)
- Popcorn read aloud (stand and read, then be seated)
- Cooperative learning—pairs and pairs share



The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy

by Stephen M. Corey, University of Chicago

Childhood Education, February 1988, Vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 150-51

1 No, I'm not very good in school. This is my second year in the seventh grade and I'm bigger and taller than the other kids. They like me all right, though, even if I don't say much in the school room, because outside I can tell them how to do a lot of things. They tag around me and that sort of makes up for what goes on in school.

2 I don't know why the teachers don't like me. They never have. Seems like they don't think you know anything unless you can name the book it comes out of. I've got a lot of books in my own room at home - books like Popular Science, Mechanical Encyclopedia, and the Sear's and Ward's catalogs, but I don't very often just sit down and read them though like they make us do in school. I use my books when I want to find something out, like whenever Mom buys anything second hand I look it up in Sear's and Ward's first and tell her if she's getting stung or not. I can use the index in a hurry to find anything I want.

3 In school, though, we've got to learn whatever is in the books and I just can't memorize the stuff. Last year I stayed after school every night for two weeks trying to learn the names of the presidents. Of course, I knew some of them like Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln, but there must have been forty altogether and I never did get them straight. I'm not too sorry though because the kids who learned the Presidents had to turn right around and learn all the Vice Presidents. I'm taking seventh grade over but our teacher this year isn't so interested in the names of the Presidents. She has us trying to learn the names of all the great inventors.



4 I guess I just can't remember names in history. Anyway, this year, I've been trying to learn about trucks because my uncle owns three and he says I can drive one when I'm sixteen. I already know the horse power and number of forward and backward speeds of twenty-six American trucks, some of them Diesel's; and I can spot each make a long way off. It's funny how that Diesel works. I started to tell my teacher about it last Wednesday in science class when the pump we were using to make a vacuum in a bell jar got hot, but she said she didn't see what a Diesel engine had to do with our experiment on air pressure, so I just kept still. The kids seemed interested though. I took four of them around to my uncle's garage after school and we saw the mechanic, Gus, tearing a big Diesel truck down, boy does he know his stuff.

5 I'm not very good in Geography either. They call it economic geography this year. We've been studying the imports and exports of Chile all week, but I couldn't tell you what they are. Maybe the reason is I had to miss school yesterday because my uncle took me and his big trailer truck down-state about two hundred miles and we brought almost ten tons of stock to the Chicago Market.



COLLABORATIVE TEACHING SESSION D: Planning Differentiated Instruction Through Tiered Lessons Handout 3 page 2



6 He had told me where we were going and I had to figure out the mileage; he didn't do anything but drive and turn where I told him to. Was that fun. I sat with a map in my lap and told him to run south or southeast or some other direction. He made seven stops and drove over five hundred miles round trip. I'm figuring now what his oil cost and also the wear and tear on the truck—he calls it depreciation—so we'll know how we made out.

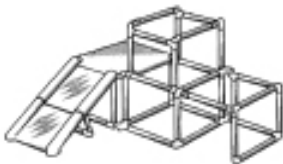
7 I can even write out all the bills and send letters to the farmers about what their pigs and beef cattle brought at the stockyards. I only made about three mistakes in seventeen letters last time, my aunt said. She's been through high school and reads them over. I wish I could write school themes that way. The last one I had to write was on "What a Daffodil Thinks of Spring," and I just couldn't get going.

8 I don't do very well in school in arithmetic either. Seems I just can't keep my mind on the problems. We had one the other day like this: If a 57 foot telephone pole falls across the cement highway so that $17 \frac{1}{6}$ feet extend from one side and $14 \frac{9}{17}$ feet from the other how wide is the highway? That seems to me like an awfully silly way to get the width of a highway. I didn't even try to answer it because it didn't say whether the pole had fallen straight across or not.

9 Even in shop I don't get very good grades. All the kids made a broom holder and a book-end this term, and mine was sloppy. I just couldn't get interested. Mom doesn't use a broom any more with her new vacuum cleaner, and all our books are in a book-case with glass doors in the parlor. Anyway, I wanted to make an end gate for uncle's trailer but the shop teacher said that meant using metal and wood both and I'd have to learn how to work with wood first. I didn't see why but I kept still and made a tie rack at school and the tail gate after school at my uncle's garage. He said I saved him \$100.

10 Civics is hard for me, too. I've been staying after school trying to learn the "Articles of Confederation" for almost a week because the teacher said we couldn't be good citizens unless we did. I really tried, because I do want to be a good citizen. I did hate to stay after school, though, because a bunch of boys from the south end of town have been cleaning up the old lot across from Taylor's Machine Shop to make a playground out of it for the little kids from the Methodist Home. I made the jungle gym from old pipe and the guys made me Grand Mogul to keep the playground going. We raised enough money collecting scrap this month to build a wire fence around the lot.

11 Dad says, I can quit school when I'm fifteen and I'm sort of anxious to because there are a lot of things I want to learn how to do, and as my uncle says, I'm not getting any younger.



Scholarly Attributes

Working with your teaching partner(s), list all the attributes you can think of for the boy in “The Poor Scholar’s Soliloquy.”

Background Knowledge	Interests	Learning Preferences

