



Subject: English Language Arts
Grade Level: Elementary School
DI Strategy: Compacting/Tiering

Elementary Reading Compacting Lesson

Students come to first grade with a variety of abilities. Nowhere is this starker than when it comes to reading. There are students who have just learned to recognize their letters, ESOL students who know no English, and students who read quite well. Some of these students have been reading long before they entered school.

This year, I had one child who was able to read and comprehend far beyond her 6 years. Using the reading series with her, even doing the most advanced suggestions for first grade were not at the correct level of difficulty for her. As a result, I compacted the reading unit just for her. At the beginning of the reading unit, I gave this student (Jen) the unit test. I found what she needed instruction on, if anything, and I developed her plan from there.

On the most recent unit test, Jen demonstrated that she did not fully understand how to employ quotations in her writing. She functioned for part (most, but not all) of our reading time, as her own group. For this unit she had contracted to do two tasks. First, as part of our Veterans Day work, she interviewed her grandfather asking him about his service in WW II. She brainstormed a list of questions (on her own), and we agreed that she would ask three of her questions noting his answers on her report. She set a timeline for when it was due.

After I reviewed her work, making one correction, the second task was to read her report to the class using her voice and a “Grampa” voice.

I have students in my room working on blend sounds. I have beginning readers, fluent readers, and I have students like Jen. By compacting and tiering the reading curriculum to fill in her gaps, where they might exist, I can challenge and extend Jen’s understanding. Compacting the learning goals to focus on the ones Jen needs has made a real difference in her learning, and it has provided me with another tool for my toolbox.