# Tiered Instruction

What is it?

A strategy in which the teacher seeks to have each learner challenged at the correct level of difficulty (readiness) as all students learn the same fundamental skills and concepts. The teacher can tier by varying the level of challenging or supportive content, process, or assignment. Tiering can happen in a variety of ways.

How to "Dial Up or Down" the Degrees of Difficulty

Create degrees of difficulty so students are challenged at the correct level of difficulty (CLD)
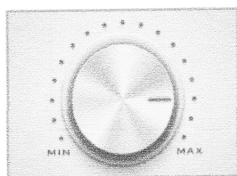
Things teachers can change:
- Materials or hand-outs
- Number of scaffolds
- Teacher placement
- Level of thinking/questioning
- The assignments

Critical Attributes

- Offers 2 or 3 levels of engagement/cognitive challenge in one lesson
- Can tier by *input* - materials; *process* - supports or scaffolds; or *output* - product or level of thinking required to complete task
- Challenges students at the correct level of difficulty

Why use it?

Tiered instruction allows each student to work at the correct level of difficulty.

What are the guidelines for successfully implementing this strategy?

1. Decide what concepts and skills will be the focus of the lesson.
2. Formatively assess students on those concepts and skills.
3. Create or use an assignment designed to teach those concepts and skills.
4. Think of the assignment as a ladder with two or three rungs (advanced, middle, basic). Then decide what rung the current assignment is on.
5. Modify the assignment to provide different degrees of difficulty to either the process, product or content.
6. Determine which assignment each student will receive based on the formative assessment.

There are many ways to tier.
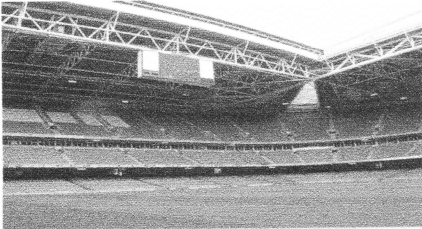
Teaching Learning Succeeding

Why do we use Tiering?

- Allows for reinforcement or extension of concepts and principles as needed
- Gives students appropriately challenged task (**CLD**)
  - Avoids having work that is too hard or too easy
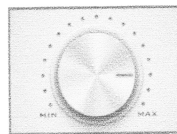
Teaching Learning Succeeding

Many Ways to Tier

- **Input –** Materials students used or received

- **Process –** What the students and teacher did

- **Output –** Products or thinking produced in the lesson

Teaching Learning Succeeding

"Dial Up or Down" Degrees of Difficulty

Create degrees of difficulty so students are challenged at the *correct* level of difficulty (CLD)

Things teachers can change:
- Materials or hand-outs
- Number of scaffolds
- Teacher placement
- Level of thinking/questioning
- The assignments

Teaching Learning Succeeding

Many Ways to Tier a Lesson

Ways to Tier	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
Input: Materials students used or received				
Process: What students & teacher did; supports/ scaffolds				
Output: Products or thinking produced in the lesson				
Possible applications to my classroom				

Video Analysis for Strategy: Tiering

Teacher Name: _____   **Brief Description of Lesson:**

Grade/Subject: _____

Specific Question(s) to Consider:	
Assessment Driven: Targeted Check • Critical Content? • Individual Data?	
Responsive Instruction	
Engagement at the Correct Level of Difficulty	
Management Considerations:	
Your Notes:	

Tiering Lesson Production Guide

Note: This planning guide is written to accommodate three tiers. Based upon your assessment data, you may have more or less.

Grade/Subject: _____   Chapter/Unit: _____

1. What content or skill will be the focus of this lesson?

2. What formative assessment will students take to determine which tier is appropriate?

3. Do you have an assignment you currently use to address this content or skill? If not, what assignment will you give during the tiered lesson?

4. As you think about the assignment you have created, which tier would it be appropriate for? Students who need extra support, students who are on track, or students who need a challenge?

5. How will you modify the assignment to provide different degrees of difficulty to either the process, input, or output?

   Students who need extra support -

   Students who are on track -

   Students who need a challenge -

Reminder - Your formative assessment results will determine which student gets which assignment.

p. 189 Tiering example is located in the online DI Workbook

Subject: Art
Grade Level: 8th Grade / Middle School
DI Strategy: Tiered Scaffold with Split Screen

My 8th grade class dove into a fun photography and cartooning lesson. The goal of the lesson is to have the students create a cartoon version of themselves that incorporates symbolic personal traits, then take a series of 3 photos using the character showing movement to be displayed as a triptych.

I began with a scaffolded worksheet corresponding to the lesson introduction. Together we talked about traits and characteristics (that fall into emotional and social categories rather than physical) and made a giant class word bank. From the word bank the students pulled out 6 traits for themselves, then narrowed it down to 3. Those 3 traits then needed to be translated into images or symbols which need to be included on their character. The students were then set free to create themselves as a cartoon (group 1).

Walking around the classroom I was able to silently note to myself students who were struggling to draw themselves as a cartoon. I pulled the small group (group 2) to a counter with me at the side of the classroom. There, I was able to give the group more detailed specific instructions on how to begin drawing a cartoon. Two of the students felt comfortable after a few minutes of extra instruction and went back to their tables. The others stayed and worked with me for the remainder of the class period. For the following class I created guiding worksheets for those students and set them at their seats before the class arrived so the students could work more independently.