

Characteristics of a Differentiated Class

Tomlinson, C. (1995a). How to differentiate and apply the key concepts of the subject being studied. All students

understand the key principles on which the study is based. Such instruction enables struggling learners to grasp and use powerful ideas and, at the same time, encourages advanced learners to expand their understanding and application of the key concepts and principles. Such instruction stresses understanding or sense-making rather than retention and regurgitation of fragmented bits of information. Concept-based and principle-driven instruction invites teachers to provide varied learning options. A "coverage-based" curriculum may cause a teacher to feel compelled to see that all students do the same work. In the former, all students have the opportunity to explore meaningful ideas through a variety of avenues and approaches.

2. On-going assessment of student readiness and growth are built into the curriculum.