

# 25 Formats for Differentiation

## Formats Offering Student Choice

- 1. Choice of assignments designed by learning preference (multiple intelligences)**  
*Example:* Students choose from a list of activities relating to a topic that reflect a variety of learning preferences: sing it, write it, diagram it, draw it, act it out, etc.
- 2. Choice of assignments skillfully designed by challenge and complexity level**  
*Example:* Teacher uses a tic-tac-toe, show-and-tell, two-by-two, or other such choice board presenting differentiated tasks with teacher-planned choices.
- 3. Journal prompts provided by the teacher and selected by the students based on interest \***  
*Example:* Students select from a list of writing assignments related to a theme, concept, or topic of study.
- 4. Choice of work style: individual, with a partner, in a small group \***  
*Example:* Students do the same task but have a choice of ways to complete it.
- 5. Availability of study guides like notetaking templates or graphic organizers**  
*Example:* Teacher-developed graphic organizers that capture key ideas from the text or lecture are used for preparation for assessments/exams.
- 6. Choice of topic by interest, same task \***  
*Example:* All students complete the same task (e.g., construct an informational brochure), however, they choose the topic for their product (e.g., choose from a list of key topics related to the rain forest).
- 7. Choice of activity by interest \***  
*Example:* All students choose to do particular parts of a group project (e.g., a newspaper project in which students choose the role of columnist, editorial cartoonist, editorial page editor, etc.).
- 8. Choice of topic, same task, leveled reading sources assigned by teacher**  
*Example:* A compilation of articles related to the selected topics are placed in colored folders classified by reading level. Students select a topic and are directed to the folder containing the resources matched to their reading readiness.
- 9. Choice of ways to share information \***  
*Example:* Students may write, present, draw, or diagram information.

## Teacher-Prescribed Formats

- 10. Tasks based on readiness demonstrated in preassessment**  
*Example:* Students are assigned to science labs involving different topics and different tasks based on their prior knowledge; all groups share their results with the class.
- 11. Tasks with similar content, different levels of difficulty or complexity**  
*Example:* Students work with the same content, but are assigned to different activities based on their learning needs.
- 12. Tasks assigned based on learning preference**  
*Example:* Bodily/kinesthetic students perform a skit, while visual/spatial students create a poster.
- 13. Readings or research in small groups assigned by prior content knowledge \***  
*Example:* One group explores introductory or foundational information; another explores more complex, in-depth, technical information. All groups share.

\* indicates formats that require little or no prep

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**14. Tasks supported by greater scaffolding**

*Example:* Students who need more support in their learning, or who need a complex task broken down into more accessible steps, are provided necessary templates, formats, or procedure checklists to increase their likelihood of success.

**15. Tasks supported with technology resources**

*Example:* Students who have extensive knowledge and interest in a particular topic are matched to online resources to extend their learning beyond the core curriculum. Other students use online sources to supplement or support text content.

**16. Tasks demanding different levels of abstraction**

*Example:* Some students are assigned more concrete applications to assist them in understanding; other students engage in tasks that demand more abstract thinking.

**17. Tiered graphic organizers**

*Example:* Students using the same content are assigned to particular graphic organizers differing in their degree of structure and level of complexity or abstraction.

**18. Essay questions or journal prompts tiered by level of difficulty**

*Example:* Essay questions reflecting varying levels of complexity or abstractness are assigned to particular students.

**19. Tasks tiered by demonstrated readiness**

*Example:* Students are assigned to particular activities based on their readiness levels (e.g., additional practice with vocabulary/skills, application of vocabulary/skills, extension of vocabulary/skills).

**20. Same project, student roles assigned by teacher \***

*Example:* Teacher assigns particular students in each group to take leadership roles based on their particular talents or learning preferences (e.g., the lead writer, the lead researcher, etc.).

**21. Paired reading and question responses with partner of similar ability, struggling readers with teacher \***

*Example:* Struggling readers can be better coached through reading and response by a teacher than by an age peer; other students may select to join the teacher's group if they wish.

**22. Mini-lessons on skills or content by invitation and self-selection \***

*Example:* Students who lack particular skills or content based on formative data are invited by the teacher to join the mini-lesson; other students may select to attend based on their own perceived needs.

**23. Work partners assigned based on same content knowledge \***

*Example:* Students work with partners who are at the same knowledge level related to the content being studied.

**24. Same topic, different reading sources based on reading readiness**

*Example:* All students read about the same topic but their resources vary by reading readiness.

**25. Same topic, primary or paraphrased readings**

*Example:* All students read about the same topic but some are assigned primary resources while others are given paraphrased readings (e.g., either Martin Luther King Jr.'s original speech or a summary of his key points, ideas, and themes).

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