

## THE DIFFERENTIATED CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Coaches can use the following form to help teachers understand the many areas in which they can adapt their instruction to meet students' unique differences. Although this is set up as an observation form, a coach can also encourage teachers to use the characteristics to reflect on their practice.

Check the appropriate box next to each item. Use the comment box to provide ideas for improvement in specific areas. If the form is completed during multiple observations, use tally marks. Review the results with the teacher as soon as possible to identify specific areas for improvement and to praise strengths.

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade Level/Subject Area:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Observer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Evidence of implementation

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	LITTLE OR NO	COMMENTS
<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>				
Presents an inviting, relaxed environment for learning.				
Provides comfortable desks and work areas.				
Contains individual, designated personal spaces for extra books and other items.				
Is designed for quick and easy groupings of tables and chairs.				
Is arranged for teacher and student movement during work sessions.				
Provides work areas for individual needs, including knowledge/ability levels.				
Reflects current content or skills through student displays and artifacts.				
<b>TEACHER BEHAVIORS</b>				
Work with total groups, individuals, and small groups.				
Monitor individuals and small groups.				
Use a variety of ongoing assessment tools such as checklists, surveys, and anecdotal records.				
Apply assessment information to guide instruction.				
Address academic, emotional, social, and physical student needs.				
Provide time for students to actively process information.				
Give specific feedback to individuals and/or small groups.				
<b>STUDENT ENGAGEMENT</b>				
Exhibits on-task behavior while working alone.				
Works effectively in small groups.				
Works on their individual knowledge or ability levels.				
Uses materials/resources on the student's own level of success.				
Feels respected and emotionally safe.				
Uses self-discipline.				

**HOW TO BE A CATALYST FOR DIFFERENTIATION**

The following acrostic provides a way to view the key components of differentiated instruction. Staff developers can personalize this list by allowing time for grade-level teams or interest groups to develop an acrostic that describes their differentiated classroom.

**D I F F E R E N T I A T E**

- D**etermine the standards to be taught.
- I**dentify student needs with strong assessment tools before, during, and after learning.
- F**ormulate plans that link the targeted standards with individual needs.
- F**ind effective strategies and activities to teach the information.

- E**ngage students in activities that employ their interests and the ways they learn.
- R**elate learning to the students' worlds.
- E**ncourage risk taking with wise choices.
- N**urture the social and emotional aspects of the students.
- T**arget the learners' needs with flexible grouping designs.
- I**gnite each student's desire to learn.
- A**adjust assignments to match the learner's abilities, knowledge levels, and interests.
- T**ailor lessons with student-focused activities.
- E**ntice and ignite lifelong learners.

Evidence of implementation

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	LITTLE OR NO	COMMENTS
<b>MATERIALS/RESOURCES</b>				
Include a variety of reading levels that are related to the subject or topic.				
Are accessible to students.				
Support the standards and topic.				
Are age-appropriate.				
Are up-to-date.				
Are available in an adequate number for the class size.				
Include appropriate reference sources and materials.				
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES</b>				
Use a variety of assessment tools before, during, and after learning.				
Use a variety of instructional strategies and activities to teach standards.				
Meet the diverse needs of learners.				
Engage students in various flexible grouping designs.				
Use centers and/or stations for individual and small group instruction.				
Engage students with projects and/or problems-solving activities.				
Present students with choices in learning activities.				

**Source:** "11 practical ways to guide teachers toward differentiation," by Carolyn Chapman and Rita King, *JSD*, Fall 2005.