

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE AND ENGAGING SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES
INSTRUCTION IN AN ERA OF RISING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS

By
Blythe B. Raikko

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
AT NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

December 3, 2012

APPROVED BY: Derek L. Anderson, Ed.D.

DATE: December 4, 2012

Table of Contents

Abstract.....4

Chapter I: Introduction

 Statement of Problem.....5

 Research Question(s).....9

 Theoretical Framework.....10

 Definition of Terms.....11

Chapter II: Review of Literature.....15

 Differentiated Instruction to Address and Engage Diverse Students.....16

 Teacher Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction.....20

 Differentiated Instruction as a Focus for Professional Development.....21

 Student Engagement when Given Challenge and Choice.....23

 Deciding when to Teach Differentiation.....27

 Differentiation and the Pressure to Perform.....30

Chapter III: Results and Analysis Relative to the Problem.....35

Chapter IV: Recommendations and Conclusion

 Recommendations.....39

 Top Ten Differentiated Instructional Strategies.....40

 Elements to Consider When Developing Thematic and Integrated Thematic Units.....42

 Recommended Secondary Social Studies Sources.....43

 Differentiated Instruction Thematic Unit Templates.....46

 Areas for Further Research.....44

 Summary and Conclusion.....45

References.....55

Abstract

Differentiated Instruction, Thematic Instruction and Integrated Thematic Instruction combine to offer a potentially exciting and rewarding research-based, standards-based approach to teaching and learning in an era of rising accountability for students and teachers. The purpose of this study is to explore the effects Differentiated Instruction, Thematic Instruction and Integrated Thematic Instruction have on student engagement and learning. In an era of high-stakes testing and increased demands on both students and teachers, something needs to change. DI, TI, and ITI are vehicles for improved instruction and deep, meaningful, and relevant learning.

Chapter I - Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The social studies curriculum is in trouble. Social studies classes are perceived as boring and useless by many students, social studies is not assessed at the level of other core academic areas, and increasing state standards have eroded many teachers' beliefs that creative practices can be used due to the pressure to "get through" the material. Budgetary cuts, often in the form of teachers, have contributed to the problem as teachers have more duties, which often lead to less time for class preparation and, therefore, less engaging lessons and units. State standards must certainly be met, but more importantly, the purpose of social studies must be met. The National Council for the Social Studies states, "The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (NCSS, 2010, p. 1). The cultivation of responsible citizens is important in any governmental system; it is intrinsic to a democracy. Today, the real problems lie with the amount of material to be taught and the task of convincing students, and policy makers, that the social studies curriculum is important in their world. The desire of federal and state governments to "improve" education has spawned unintended side effects that have changed the focus and perhaps the intent of teaching and learning in the United States.

The federal government's first endeavor to improve education for the nation's youth came in 1965 with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was part of Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty (Graham, 2010). ESEA has been reauthorized several times, with major revisions in 1994 and 2002. The 2002 reauthorization, better known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), marked a dramatic increase in the role of the federal government in

guaranteeing the quality of public education for all children in the United States and significantly expanded the role of standardized testing in American public education. The NCLB requires that students in grades three through eight be tested every year in reading and math (NCLB Executive Summary, 2002). NCLB 2002 also stipulates that schools are required to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and continual progress as determined by each individual state. By the 2013-2014 school year, all students (including special education students, limited English Proficient students, and all other at-risk sub groups) must attain 100% proficiency in mathematics and reading in order for that school to reach AYP.

In an effort to comply with NCLB's directives, Michigan has required all public school districts to assess student achievement through a series of standardized tests known as the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) and the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). The MEAP has been in existence since 1969 for assessing student progress (Coleman, 1983), but the program has found new significance in meeting the testing requirements for the federal mandates and serving as one measure of meeting AYP. The MEAP is given to students in grades three through nine every October. The areas of testing include reading and math every year, yet social studies is tested only in grades six and nine. In addition to the MEAP, the MME is administered to grade eleven students. The MME consists of three sections: the American College Testing Plus Writing exam, the WorkKeys section, and a state developed test in math, science, and social studies (Michigan Department of Education, Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability, 2011). The American College Test, better known as the ACT, measures college preparedness. The WorkKeys section is a job skills assessment that also incorporates reading and math and was developed by the state. In eight years of state and federal mandated testing of students, students are only tested three times in social studies. In 2011, a draft proposal for the

reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was released. Although the document is 860 pages long, history and civics are only mentioned twice (Munson, 2011).

The National Council for the Social Studies (2007) has lamented the negative side effects of NCLB and the subsequent high stakes state assessments. In an effort to boost performance in language arts and mathematics, teachers, especially in the elementary schools, have relegated social studies to the back burner thus forcing middle school and high school teachers to fill in gaps (Hinde, 2005). Due to the increasingly large scope of mandated curriculum, teachers are pressed to “get through” the material. This rush is leaving social studies students unengaged, unmotivated to learn, and uninterested in democratic procedures that are necessary for a democracy to work (White, 1995).

Although history and social studies are repeatedly ignored by policy makers and relegated to the bottom of the academic priority list, proper implementation of the Common Core State Standards may help to improve the standing of history and social studies due to the intense focus on teaching literacy across all disciplines (Stout, 2012). In an effort to dramatically reform public education across the nation, the Obama Administration introduced a \$4.5 billion incentive program entitled *Race to the Top (RTT)*. Federal funds are tied to state adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which look to streamline math and literacy goals for K-12 education. The standards are based on the mantra “fewer, clearer, higher” and place an emphasis on critical reading and analysis of multiple forms of informational text across all disciplines. According to the CCSS Myths vs. Facts webpage (2011), “College and career readiness overwhelmingly focuses on complex texts outside of literature. These standards also ensure students are being prepared to read, write, and research across the curriculum, including in history and science.” A history curriculum, loaded with analysis of rich primary sources,

including foundational United States documents like the *Declaration of Independence* and Preamble to the *US Constitution*, in addition to maps, photographs, art, graphs, cartoons and quality secondary sources beautifully align with the Common Core State Standards' call for an increased focus on informational texts (Stout, 2012). The CCSS do not dictate what content must be taught with rigid specificity. Rather, the CCSS, with its underlying mantra of “fewer, clearer, and higher,” offer a broad based framework that targets big ideas, develops cognitive skills, such as problem solving, collaboration, and academic risk-taking, and also allows for local flexibility (Phillips & Wong, 2010). The Common Core State Standards offer an opportunity to completely redesign state and national assessments, using the standards and college-ready goals as guides. The creation and nation-wide adoption of higher quality, standards-based, next generation assessments could dramatically change education in the United States (Phillips & Wong, 2010; Strickland, 2012).

Implementation of the Common Core State Standards may feel intimidating and as social studies educators, we are already facing daunting realities on a daily basis; our jobs are becoming more difficult with continuous cycles of “reform”, reduction in funding, and incessant increases in administrative and societal expectations. Teachers cannot work much harder; we have to work smarter and we have to work together.

Four years ago, we, Kris O'Connor and Blythe Raikko, were assigned to teach on the same sophomore team at Marquette Senior High School, Kris as an English teacher and Blythe as the U.S. History teacher. Over the course of the year, we discovered that we shared the same educational ideals, energetic approach to teaching, classroom management style, rapport with students, and love of our profession. The following school year, the stars aligned and we both were assigned identical teaching schedules. Each taught one section of Advanced Placement U.S.

History and four sections of U.S. History; the U.S. history classes were taught during the same class periods. This gave us the opportunity to collaborate; it was quickly evident that we were so in sync that our teaching dramatically improved when it was a collective effort. Soon we were developing unit and daily lesson plans, co-teaching, and our students were working together so often that they grew to see us as interchangeable facilitators of learning. This collaboration positively affected, and still affects, our teaching and our students. When it came time for us to finish our Master's program, it was inevitable that we would collaborate on this endeavor as well. Chapters I and IV were written collaboratively, and Chapters II and III were written independently.

When selecting a research question, we wanted to choose a topic that was applicable and relevant to our daily existence. In 2010, Differentiated Instruction became a school-wide focus for our faculty at Marquette Senior High School. After becoming involved with the Differentiated Instruction Leadership Team, we were hungry to further our level of understanding and implementation of these tools. Differentiated Instruction emphasizes big picture thinking and planning, this was the catalyst for us to rethink our approach to teaching U.S. History. Student engagement, a key component to any successful class, traditionally can be a struggle in social studies classrooms. The idea of thematic, as opposed to chronological, instruction intrigued us. The more we researched these two academic interests, the more we realized that they could be successfully wedded. For our capstone projects toward earning our Master's Degrees, Blythe will delve into Differentiated Instruction, and Kris will explore the role of Thematic Integration. Our goal in this process is to create a research-based, user-friendly template for incorporating thematic and differentiated instruction into units of study. These units

will foster high levels of student engagement and facilitate deep and lasting learning that is desperately needed in order to restore social studies to its rightful place as a valued curriculum.

Research Questions:

For this project, we will seek answers to the following overarching question: What are the characteristics of effective secondary social studies instruction in an era of external curricular mandates and rising accountability for teachers and students? Blythe was part of an initial cohort of teachers that received exposure to various differentiated practices and will continue her exploration of DI as she researches sub-question #1.

- 1) How can secondary social studies teachers use effective differentiation practices to engage all learners while meeting standards?

As a teacher who has taught both American Literature and US History, Kris has long been interested in integrating these two curriculums. Her research will focus on thematic, in addition to integrated thematic instruction in responding to sub-question #2.

- 2) How can secondary social studies teachers plan thematic and integrated thematic units to meet all mandated standards and engage students in deep, meaningful, and relevant learning tasks?

Theoretical Framework

Constructivist learning theory is multifaceted, but all of the interpretations have the element that the student is an active participant in their learning (Elkind, 2004). Constructivism is derived from the work of Jean Piaget (1967), Lev Vygotsky (1978), John Dewey (1944), and many others who studied how learners acquire knowledge (cited in Acikalin, 2006). The basic elements of constructivism incorporate the ideas that learners “construct” their own learning; it is an individual process based on prior knowledge and the process is affected by outside influences.

The learning process is also social in that we gain understanding to further interact with others. Vygotsky (1978) argued that individuals learn in their own zone of proximal development and students can master new skills and become increasingly independent thinkers and problem solvers if supported and challenged by teachers who move them slightly outside of their comfort zone. Differentiated instruction, based on student readiness, interest and learning profile, allows for the needs of an academically diverse group to be met and advanced all within the confines of a single classroom (Tomlinson, 1999). Another important element of constructivism is that learning takes place when students are immersed in “real world” situations (Windschitl, 2002). Thematic instruction promotes in depth study of a topic and encourages active and social learning with application to life outside of the classroom. The elements of thematic and differentiated instruction and learning fit well into the basic tenets of constructivism.

Definition of Terms

Whereas the following terms are used often in the educational world, a few have varying meanings or are used, incorrectly, interchangeably. Michigan’s Department of Education defines for Michigan’s social studies teachers many of the following terms, others were gleaned from research. In this literature review, the following definitions will be used.

Academic diversity. “Students with identified learning problems; highly advanced learners; students whose first language is not English; students who underachieve for a complex array of reasons; students from broadly diverse cultures, economic backgrounds, or both; students of both genders; motivated and unmotivated students” (Tomlinson et al, 2003, p. 119).

Civic efficacy. “The readiness and willingness to assume citizenship responsibilities and to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a democratic society” (MDEOSI , 2007, p. 8).

Common Core State Standards. “Define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate from high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs” (RIDE, 2011, p. 1). The Standards have been adopted by 48 states, including Michigan.

Curriculum integration. “Proposed as a way of organizing...life skills considered essential for all citizens in a democracy. Curriculum is organized around real-life problems and issues...applying pertinent content and skills from many subject areas or disciplines.” (Vars & Beane, 2000).

Differentiated Instruction (DI). An approach to teaching in which teachers proactively modify curricula, teaching methods, resources, learning activities and student products to address the diverse needs of individual students and small groups of student to maximize the learning opportunity for each student in a classroom (Tomlinson, 1999).

Envisionment-building. Comprehension is seen as the development of "meanings-in-motion," meanings that contain questions as well as already formed ideas that change over time (Langer, 1997).

Flow Theory. A state of deep absorption that is intrinsically enjoyable where an individual operates at full capacity and the process itself turns out to be intrinsically rewarding and is based on the symbiotic relationship between challenge and skills needed to meet those challenges (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Shernoff et al., 2003).

Holistic Education. “ Holistic educational philosophy includes [sic] 1) the education of the whole child, mind, body, and spirit, 2) all things are interconnected and related...and 3) the transformation of the way students think from separate, fragmented thoughts and ideas to a connected, caring and self-aware whole (Cook, 2004, p. 5).

Interdisciplinary Curriculum

“While the disciplines are defined in terms of their particular theories, concepts, and methods, interdisciplinary studies is defined not by the knowledge that it produces but, rather, the process of synthesis: "In interdisciplinary courses, whether taught by teams or individuals, faculty interact in designing a course, bringing to light and examining underlying assumptions and modifying their perspectives in the process. They also make a concerted effort to work with students in crafting an integrated synthesis of the separate parts that provides a larger, more holistic understanding of the question, problem, or issue at hand" (Orillion, 2009, p. 1).

Integrated Thematic Instruction. “A common theme is developed and addressed in more than one content area” (Barton & Smith, 2000, p. 54).

Professional Development. “The professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically. Professional development includes formal...and informal experiences (cited in Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p.11)

Social Studies. “The integrated study of the social sciences to prepare young people to become responsible citizens” (MDEOSI , 2007, p. 8).

Thematic Instruction. “Organizing all or part of instruction of a particular group of students around a theme” (Barton & Smith, 2000, p. 54).

Traditional Education. “Teacher-centered, uses single-subject curriculum, and emphasizes testing as the ultimate way to determine knowledge” (Cook, 2004, p.10).

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Current population trends across the nation reflect significant changes in student demographics from a generation ago. Public school educators are increasingly faced with the reality of reaching academically diverse learners, each with special needs and circumstances. Students with various learning and physical disabilities sit beside students on accelerated academic programs, as well as next to an increasing number of English language learners. The homogeneity of previous generations has been supplanted by widespread diversity in American classrooms. However, in many contexts, teachers do not appear to have adjusted their methods to meet the needs of an evolving clientele despite what their updated school mission statements may state (Crouch, 2012; Subban, 2006). The pledge that all children can and will learn is merely rhetoric if teachers lack deep knowledge of the learners that they are working with and do not possess wide-ranging pedagogical skills designed to reach all students (Tomlinson et al., 2003).

While many teachers acknowledge the presence of diverse learners in their classrooms, the reality is that most teachers do not devise Differentiated Instruction (DI) plans that address learner variance (Levy, 2008; Tomlinson et al., 2003). DI is not a strategy or something teachers do when they have time. It is a philosophy that shapes how teachers view and execute their craft (Tomlinson, 2000). Successful implementation of DI must begin with the construction of intentional and transparent units of instruction that identify essential questions and essential understanding and are standards-based. These key components drive instruction and assessment with high expectations for all students. Differentiated Instruction provides multiple approaches for students to process rigorous content, and actively create a variety of products to showcase and measure what they have learned (Kirner, 2009; Levy, 2008; Tomlinson et al., 2003).

Differentiated Instruction to Address and Engage Diverse Students

In recent years the components of Differentiated Instruction (teaching based on student readiness, interest, learning style, and choice) have become more commonly adopted; however, the impact and effectiveness of differentiation is lacking empirical validation (Edyburn, 2004). Very little has been written specifically regarding the impact of Differentiated Instruction in secondary social studies classrooms. Hootstein (1999) surveyed a stratified sample of 58 high school social studies educators to determine instructional practices that effectively addressed academic differences (defined as interest, ability, readiness and levels of motivations), as well as to determine why some approaches were more effective than others and what barriers curtailed teachers' abilities to differentiate.

The first portion of the Differentiated Practices Survey asked participants to review a list of 15 instructional methods and record the frequency in which they utilized each method on a scale of 1-5 (1-never to 5-almost daily). Next, the 15 instructional methods were rated for effectiveness using a Likert scale. Teachers were then asked to select the three most effective instructional methods and provide anecdotal evidence for their success. Qualitative data were coded and responses were inductively broken into categories that were ultimately refined by the consensus of the research team (Hootstein, 1999).

In most secondary social studies classrooms, teachers acknowledged the challenge of addressing moderate to high levels of academic diversity. Most (83%) teachers believed honoring academic differences was important or highly important. Yet, teacher-centered instructional strategies, such as lecture and teacher led discussions, were most frequently used and were rated most effective. Independent projects, offering some element of student choice, were rated as the 6th most effective strategy yet, they were merely the 11th most frequently used

instructional approach. Respondents indicated infrequent use (once a month or less) of tiered assignments, learning contracts, and peer tutoring. Social studies teachers were likely to use a lecture based format more frequently than English teachers. Independent projects, student-led discussions and peer tutoring were reported less often in social studies classrooms than in other content areas. Although secondary social studies teachers realize the extent of academic diversity in their classrooms, they fall back on dissemination of information through traditional teacher-led instruction rather than student-centered approaches which respondents indicated they see value in but fail to implement routinely. Lack of adequate training and the pressure to cover vast amounts of content in a short period could both account for the disconnection between this heightened awareness and method selection (Hootstein, 1999).

Efforts to differentiate were helped by access to technology, effective group work, and peer tutoring. Large classes and student behavior problems were reported as barriers to more frequent DI implementation. Teacher frustration with large class sizes and disruptive students may point to a need to address classroom management. Engaged students are easier to manage and control (Tomlinson et al., 1999). Professional development is important; however, high-quality, purposeful professional development that is not just introduced on a surface level and then dropped and forgotten is what many teachers yearn for (Hootstein 1999). Exposure to new strategies plus time to process and discuss collaboratively, coupled with time for coaching of instructional methods are highly recommended (Hootstein, 1999; Tomlinson, 1995).

With effective classroom control and regularly reinforced DI skills, well trained educators can be a major force behind highly functioning schools. Westberg and Archambault, Jr. (1997) conducted a multi-site case study aimed at discovering how teachers implement Differentiated Instruction specifically to meet the needs of accelerated students and to identify

and describe factors that contribute to best practices in successful classrooms. After conducting purposeful sampling, ten elementary schools (two urban, two suburban, and six rural) were identified as being high performing with a reputation for effectively catering to the needs of academically advanced students were chosen to participate in a multiple-month, full immersion case study.

A team of trained and experienced researchers gathered qualitative data using “passive participation” observation, a series of open-ended interviews, detailed field notes, and review of a variety of school documents, including official policies, meeting minutes, internal memos, curriculum guides, and enrichment material. Triangulation of data was intended to corroborate findings. Field notes, interviews and document data from all ten participating schools were coded and inductively analyzed. Several clear themes emerged (Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997).

1. *Teacher Advanced Training and Knowledge:* It is not coincidental that teachers with a reputation for excellence have advanced training. The majority of participating teachers held masters degrees, in addition to participating in quality training on developing questioning and critical thinking skills and modifying curriculum. Highly effective teachers appeared to be intellectually curious, life-long learners, hungry to improve. Differentiated PD based on teacher interest, readiness and choice may lead to even greater results.

2. *Teacher Willingness and Readiness to Embrace Change:* Teachers who devoted extra time and effort to refine instructional practices were intellectually prepared to handle new approaches and were comfortable taking academic and pedagogical risks.

3. *Collaboration:* While teacher collaboration is not the norm, like-minded teachers joining forces can lead to exponential gains both for students and teachers. Time is often seen as a barrier; however, successful teachers in the study were provided with time or made time to

debrief, discuss and plan together, regardless of scheduling. Westberg and Archambault (1997) highlighted one team of teachers that had a standing weekly dinner date at a local restaurant to make time to collaborate and refine their craft.

4. Teacher Beliefs and Strategies for Differentiated Instruction: Through observation, interviews and document data, it was evident that many participating teachers recognized academic differences, tailored instruction to meet individual needs, encouraged inquiry-based discovery, facilitated learning and set high expectations for all learners. Providing challenge and choice was repeatedly associated with meaningful learning.

5. Leadership and Autonomy: Vocal support by superintendents and principals who empower teachers to be highly effective educational leaders and who know “when to get out of the way” is critically important to the lasting success of large scale DI implementation.

The high functioning and performing schools featured in Westberg and Archambault, Jr.’s (1997) study demonstrated collaborative cultures, academic risk taking, and a willingness to put in extra time. School was seen as a learning community for teachers as well as students. Advanced, intellectually curious and evolving teachers, regardless of grade level or discipline, will inspire and facilitate learning opportunities for students to become engaged, advanced and intellectually curious, too. While the anecdotal evidence presented was interesting and supported the practice of Differentiated Instruction as a fundamental guiding philosophy which good teachers in highly functioning schools use, the absence of empirical evidence supports the need for more research.

Teacher Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction

Educators seem to recognize effective paths to improved instruction but conditions in the trenches often impede full DI implementation. Logan (2011) administered a survey to measure

teacher understanding of essential elements and perceptions of Differentiated Instruction in a large urban public school district in southeast Georgia where over 50% of the student population received free or reduced lunch. Participants in the study were drawn from five middle schools and included 141 teachers (38 male and 103 female). A 16-item qualitative survey using a Likert-type scale was designed based on the work of Tomlinson (1999) and others to measure essential principles, components, and common myths surrounding Differentiated Instruction. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete and was administered moments before faculty meetings (Logan, 2011).

Overwhelmingly, teacher responses supported the foundational principles championed by Tomlinson including honoring and respecting learners' commonalities and differences (94.3% agreed), responsive instruction tailored to individual needs, and viewing students as active participants in the learning process (92.1% agreed). Participants strongly agreed that successful differentiated classroom content and material, processes, and assessments must be continually modified. Not surprisingly, 85% of teachers agreed that readiness, interest, and learning style should be taken into consideration when constructing a lesson. Simplistic myths associated with DI were refuted including the claims that there is only one way to differentiate, that students must show mastery on the same day of grading and that DI creates unfair workloads among students. Teacher responses were split regarding the perception that DI is synonymous with individualized instruction, which raises the alarming question whether participating teachers had a clear and consistent understanding of what is meant by Differentiated Instruction (Logan, 2011).

Conclusions drawn from Logan's (2011) study must be regarded carefully. The research instrument appeared to be structured in a way to elicit responses that supported Logan's

preconceived opinion regarding the importance and effectiveness of differentiation practices.

Logan offered no explanation or analysis of the small number of respondents who disagreed with key principles of DI. Another troubling aspect of the study was the time period selected for administering the survey. Moments before a faculty meeting, quite possibly at the end of a full day of teaching, may not be the most opportune time to gather thoughtful responses. In addition, no information was collected regarding to what extent teachers implemented DI strategies in their daily routine. Despite its flaws, the Logan study reflects educators' support for basic elements of DI including student involvement when choosing a learning strategy.

Differentiated Instruction as a Focus for Professional Development

District-instituted and administrator-led Professional Development can often feel like “flavor of the month” educational reform, critically important and groundbreaking at one moment and then dropped the next. VanTassel-Baska et al. (2008) studied the impact that multiple years of continual professional development in Differentiated Instruction can have on classroom instructional behavior. Schools from six districts, all receiving Title 1 funding, were involved in a three-year curriculum intervention study and 71 upper elementary teachers were selected and randomly assigned to an experimental (N=37) or comparison (N=34) group. Care was taken to divide the experimental group and comparison group evenly based on teaching experience, age, ethnicity and continuing education. (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008).

Experimental teachers participated in three days of professional development prior to the start of the year where they were introduced to the project, given expectations, provided instructional training and offered support. Additional differentiated instructional topics and follow up training took place at one mid-winter institute. After first administering a pretest to students, the experimental group implemented a 12-16-week Language Arts curriculum

developed over many years by VanTassel-Baska (1992, 1998, 2002). The integrated curriculum model (ICM) focused on three key components: advanced content, higher order processing, and products and conceptual understanding. Students were given a diverse set of challenging texts (at least two years above their traditional grade reading level) and curriculum units featured lessons intentionally aimed at developing vocabulary, literary analysis, persuasive writing and problem solving (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008).

Teachers in both the experimental and control group were evaluated twice a year, once four weeks into the program and again near the end of the year. The primary instrument was Classroom Observation Scale-Revised (COS-R; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2003), which consisted of a list of 25 expected teaching behaviors in the areas of curriculum planning and delivery, accommodation for individual differences, problem solving strategies, critical and creative thinking strategies, and research strategies. Each behavior was assessed for effectiveness using a Likert scale. The experimental teachers were observed to have fewer discipline problems, better classroom management scores and overall higher levels of instructional behavior compared to the control group. Teachers who actively participated in intentional, recurring professional development, focused specifically on Differentiated Instruction, repeatedly demonstrated higher levels of DI, and scored at statistically significantly higher levels on COS-R, as well as educationally more important levels that did the control group. Veteran teachers who participated for all three years of the study showed even greater results (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008).

Experienced teachers receiving high-quality professional development, conducted over an extended period can produce very effective results: rigorous instruction, higher levels of student engagement, and more meaningful lessons and classroom activities. Teachers are likely to stick with strategies and practices if they see students benefiting. The evidence collected in the

study supported the need for multiple years of professional development with sustained support from administrators in order to see measurable student growth and institutional change. Also, ongoing observations, specifically with the intention of measuring the frequency and efficacy of targeted instructional behavior are needed in order to reinforce/support commitment to multiple years of PD. Finally, during professional development time, the best strategies to focus on and support should be content specific. Teachers are more likely to use instructional approaches that fit with the subject they teach and the potential of a strategy being implemented incorrectly or incompletely is reduced. Repeated and institutionally supported Professional Development benefits teachers and students and can have a pronounced positive impact on classroom instruction. Content rich materials will be more likely used by teachers and will be more likely to be useful to learners. What is taught is just as important as how it is taught (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008).

Student Engagement when Given Challenge and Choice

Striking the right balance between challenge and skill is delicate. Without enough challenge, students become apathetic or intellectually relaxed. When students are faced with a task that is too challenging for their skill set, anxiety kicks in and students often give up. If students are neither over-matched nor under-utilized, deeply engaging and satisfying learning is possible (Shernoff et al. 2003). Shernoff et al. (2003) investigated how high school students spend their time in school, if an association exists between student engagement and the experience of challenge, skill control and relevance, and to what extent classroom factors such as instructional method and subject matter influence student engagement. A longitudinal sample was taken of 526 secondary students from 13 high schools scattered across the United States. Data were collected in three waves over a six-year period in the mid-1990s. Students were

randomly selected from stratified enrollment lists broken down by gender, race, ethnicity, and academic performance. Experience Sampling Method (ESM) was used to measure student location, activity, as well as affective and cognitive experiences at random moments. Participating students wore a wristwatch that was preprogrammed to set off an alarm eight times throughout the school day for a one week sample period. When the alert sounded, respondents completed a 45-item Experience Sampling Form (ERF) consisting of open ended questions, a nine-point Likert-type scale to describe engagement and feelings and a seven point Likert-type scale to show degree of feelings. Data collected included 3630 responses and were coded using a detailed coding scheme (Shernoff, et al., 2003).

T-tests using challenge and skill items split at the median (high v. low) were used as grouping variables. The perception of high skill, highly challenging academic activities were associated with higher enjoyment compared to low challenge activities $t(3418) = 9.83, p < .001$. A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the five most commonly reported daily activities: individual work (23%), listening to lectures, (21%), taking exams (13%) taking notes (10%), watching a video (9%), $f(4,1238)=6.48; p<.001$. Students reported higher levels of engagement and interest during group work and individual work than while taking exams or watching videos or listening to lectures. Not surprisingly, higher levels of concentration were reported while taking exams and participating in individual and group work compared to listening to a lecture or watching a video (Shernoff et al., 2003).

Results support the claim that too much instructional time at the secondary level is spent on practices where students are passive learners and often anonymous (especially during lectures). Students are yearning for, but are not being provided with, enough regular opportunities to engage and actively participate in their learning. Again, this study highlights that

perceived levels of challenge, choice and control are directly connected to engagement and enjoyment at school. The findings also support the need for teachers to adopt a more interactive, student-centered approach to teaching and operate more like facilitators of learning rather than disseminators of information.

Social Studies, traditionally a lecture formatted discipline, may profit by observing methods used in science classes. Gentry and Springer conducted a pilot/validation study to refine a tool used to measure student attitudes toward their educational experiences in a secondary setting. Student perceptions and reactions to interest, challenge, choice, engagement, and meaningfulness were all areas where researchers were hoping to gather meaningful data. Participants included ethnically diverse, mixed ability students (n= 420) from an urban school in the upper Midwest during the fall of 1999. The school was a willing partner of the study and hoped that the study would be a positive component of the school's larger instructional reform movement. All students enrolled in either Biology or Advanced Biology responded to a 31-item pilot survey instrument titled, "Student Perceptions of Classroom Quality". The survey was independently proctored and no codes or names were collected. SPSS descriptive procedures (frequency, percents, means, SD), common factor analysis (used to examine the construct validity of scores on the attitude survey), and principal axis common factor models were used to measure the interrelationship among items and determine common conceptual meaning (Gentry & Springer, 2002).

Overall the sub-scores indicated a high internal consistency (alpha coefficient estimates of the sub-scores ranged from .80 to .84). Students reported craving meaningful learning opportunities (connected to the present day and are representative of real life) while at school. The Student Perceptions of Classroom Quality survey indicated that students like to be

challenged academically and appreciate the opportunity to be partially in charge of their own learning. While participating students may not necessarily have enjoyed their high school Biology class featured in this study, results indicate meaningfulness, challenge, choice, and appeal are all important when attempting to construct a curriculum that actually increases learning (Gentry & Springer, 2002).

For education to be meaningful, all students, including those identified as gifted, must be allowed to make choices (Douglas, 2004; Gentry & Springer, 2002). Providing choice in the classroom requires that teachers share power with students. A group of 23 “accelerated” 7th graders attending the same middle school were given a pre-assessment at the beginning of the school year to gauge comfort and familiarity with DI strategies, self-advocacy and interest. Their parents were given a similar survey. No control group was used. Participants underwent five 1-hour seminars, facilitated by the school district’s gifted and talented coordinator, dealing with intelligence, character, and planning for high school, college and career readiness. Students self-assessed, were coached in self-advocacy strategies, and 16 students participated in extended face to face conference opportunities throughout the school year. Nearly two thirds (n=15) chose to read an optional text to help teach about advocacy, and participated in small group discussions. When given the choice, nine students opted for no interventions beyond the initial seminar (Douglas, 2004).

After one year, as expected, students reported being more comfortable advocating for themselves than having their parents speak for them. Pre-assessments indicated students were very interested in exploring their learning profiles and learning about educational opportunities. Interest in learning more about self-advocacy was noted and comfort levels with asking for differentiation (including independent projects, mentorships, group projects, summer camps and

online courses) increased. Somewhat surprisingly, nearly one half of respondents (n=11) reported no change in the frequency of self-advocacy. It is unclear whether students felt more confident as a result of the initial seminar or if they were uninterested and disengaged in the self-advocacy process. Moving forward, one way students could be empowered to help direct, personalize, and seek meaning in their learning is through annual revisions of student learning profiles to reflect growth and evolution (Douglas, 2004).

Deciding when to Teach Differentiation

Undergraduate students studying education face formidable challenges in their pre-service preparation. In addition to learning course content, students are required to study the philosophy and cultural underpinnings of education, to become familiar with student disabilities and special education accommodations, and learn and practice educational methods. Tomlinson and colleagues (1995) conducted a three-year study to measure the impact that exposure to Differentiated Instruction strategies prior to student teaching can have on overall teacher success. In phase one of the qualitative and quantitative study, pre-service teachers from seven universities (n=41) with no training in DI were interviewed, observed, and participated in self-report surveys. Responses indicated pre-service teachers were cognizant of student differences and appeared to support the idea of DI. However, participants, having no previous exposure to DI, used ambiguous criteria for recognizing student differences and needs, showed a simplistic understanding of DI, were unable to clearly articulate implementing strategies, and appeared easily influenced by factors that discouraged understanding and execution of DI (Tomlinson et al., 1995).

During the second phase, participants were randomly assigned to either one of two treatment groups. The first group (n=22) attended an interactive workshop on Differentiated

Instruction. The second treatment group (n=23) participated in the same workshop plus had access to curriculum coaching throughout student teaching. The workshop was designed to challenge the conception of “one size fits all teaching”. Although students in the second group appeared more committed to implementing approaches, students who only got a taste of DI for one day at the workshop reported an increased awareness of the goals of DI and the ability to tailor instruction to help reach all learners. Positive gains were also reported when instructional coaches and cooperating teachers shared a common vision and worked together to foster and support good instructional practices. At the very least, pre-service instructional coaching offers teachers in training a vocabulary to help them begin to frame the way they think about responsive student-centered instruction (Tomlinson et al., 1995).

Tomlinson et al. (1995) bemoaned that pre-service teachers are entering the classroom unaware or unprepared to manage and reach heterogeneous groups but was sensitive to the daunting task facing teachers first starting out. Student teachers are so focused on content itself, they often fail to consider or do not even think to consider how content is delivered. However overwhelming student teaching may be, Tomlinson et al. identified three dangers of not exposing pre-service teachers to DI.

1. Novice teachers walk into the classroom thinking daily teacher-centered, content-driven approaches are synonymous with good teaching (teaching to the middle is okay).

2. If teaching instructional strategies that help diverse learners is not a priority at the college level and is not modeled by cooperating teachers and valued/assessed by university supervisors, novice teachers will see this as tacit permission to teach in a traditional teacher-centered way where all students are viewed as the same. Instructors need to be explicit that this is not the case.

3. Workshops can help, but recognizing and addressing academic diversity through varied strategies need to be modeled and prioritized if teachers are going to find value in the professional development.

While the amount of information student teachers are asked to know is daunting, from content to instructional strategies, great gains can be made by incorporating DI instruction to pre-service teachers' repertoire. One-size-fits-all approaches and teaching to the middle often fail to engage students and student centered teaching focused on key vocabulary and learning habits can help shape future instructional decisions. Intervention may help to align the disconnect between what students believe and find value in, but it remains to be seen what teachers are willing to put into practice (Tomlinson et al., 1995). One aspect to consider is given that Tomlinson has devoted her career to researching and advocating for the implementation of DI, perhaps her research methods lose some element of objectivity and her approach lends itself to arriving at predetermined conclusions.

Differentiation and the Pressure to Perform

In the era of No Child Left Behind, Adequate Yearly Progress, Race to the Top, and teacher evaluation tied to student scores on high stakes tests, school districts are under significant pressure to increase performance. As external mandates continue to increase, some teachers mourn the loss of control and have come to see curriculum as prescribed, inhumanly paced and completely focused on test preparation. While it may initially appear that Differentiated Instruction and a standards based curriculum aimed at preparing all students to perform on a standardized assessment may be incongruent, that is not necessarily the case (McAdamis, 2001). "Curriculum tells us *what* to teach: Differentiation simply suggests ways in which we can make that curriculum work best for varied learners" (Tomlinson, 2000, p. 6). McAdamis chronicled the

journey of a traditionally low performing school district of 22,000 students in Rockwell, Missouri, as they invested in district wide whole school improvement over the course of five years. The district's 3000 teachers participated in a series of DI training sessions, peer-coaching, study groups, intensive planning sessions and ongoing skill and strategy workshops over five years.

Initially, teachers expressed resistance, frustration and to some degree anxiety. However, proper administrative, teacher, and trainer support was in place and the initiative continued. Ultimately, teachers indicated after implementing DI practices, students were more engaged, excited, and empowered in their learning. State results confirmed testimonies made by educational stakeholders. The number of students scoring in the lowest achievement level on state standardized tests fell by 5% in math, 8% in communication arts, and 7% in science. In addition, students deemed "proficient" and "advanced" increased significantly. With a dramatic overhaul in institutional instructional and professional development focus, it was difficult for McAdamis to distinguish and specifically quantify the gains made as a result of differentiation alone. However, as a result of valuing Differentiated Instruction as the keystone to systemic reform, the Missouri school district, once viewed as a failure, became recognized as an example for others to follow (McAdamis, 2001).

While large scale, district-wide success is more likely to garner attention, individual classroom teachers, with sound instructional practices have the capacity to dramatically help students meet requirements and find success. Brimijoin (2005) conducted a case study featuring Katherine Martez, a 5th grade teacher in a low performing school, that was at risk of losing accreditation and funding if her students performed poorly on the annual state exam. Despite working with students who entered her class with scores in the bottom third in national norm-

ranked reading and math assessments, Ms. Martez set the high expectation that all students would pass the end of the year state tests (Brimijoin, 2005).

Intentionally and with deliberate speed, Ms. Martez rolled out the content standards. She devised three themes: patterns, change, and conflict to unite the curriculums of the four academic disciplines she was responsible for teaching. Consistent use of backward planning and a focus on big ideas centered around the mantra of “know, understand, do!” A continual and dynamic assessment process provided valuable data measuring student progress. Students informally reported comfort with material habitually using a scale customized by Ms. Martez to appeal to her 5th grade audience: glass, bugs, or mud. As a result of frequent modeling and practice, students readily knew “glass” meant that they understood clearly, “bugs” meant that they could see a little bit but did not have the full picture and “mud” meant that students were lost and unable to move forward without help or extra practice. A multitude of approaches including curriculum compacting, lesson tiering, opportunities for choice, anchor activities, task cards, and RAFT (Role-Audience-Format-Topic) student writing activities were used to allow for students to find a path to success that would be highly personalized, engaging, rigorous, and standards-based. With the power of personality, commitment to crafting quality learning activities and establishing high but achievable and well supported goals for all students, Ms. Martez created a highly productive and positive learning environment. At the end of the year, 74% of her students passed the reading and science assessments and 58% passed the math and social studies exams respectively; a marked improvement from scoring in the bottom third during the previous academic year. Results supported the claim that thoughtful standards based instruction can simultaneously address diverse student needs and prepare students to be successful on high stakes state standardized tests (Brimijoin, 2005).

Putting theory into practice and replicating other teacher success on a large scale level is often very challenging, given the demands on teacher time, skill, willingness and lack of resources. After consulting numerous studies on student achievement, McTighe and Brown (2005) proposed a three-phase framework utilizing backwards design and presented in a way that could be easily replicated by teachers looking to craft rigorous, standards-based units that are intentional and transparent and accommodating to a diverse group of learners with differing amounts of prior knowledge, interest and learning style (McTighe & Brown, 2005).

Here are their suggestions: The first phase, involves setting learning goals, big ideas, and essential questions, all based on content standards. Essential questions and big ideas provide the “conceptual pillars that anchor” the unit or course (McTighe & Brown, 2005, p. 238) and also dictate where teachers want students to be at the end and then utilize backward planning techniques to help make that happen. During the first phase, teachers should assess prior knowledge (using for example: pretests, KWL strategy) and work to plug the gaps of knowledge and skills that students are unable to demonstrate. The concept of frontloading should also be considered. If time is taken early on in the year to skill build and incorporate targeted instruction, student learning will be more efficient and meaningful as the year progresses. When students are academically ready, differentiated approaches including tiering, curriculum compacting, and centers (stations) can be used to facilitate student learning (McTighe & Brown, 2005).

During phase two, teachers implement both formative and summative performance-based assessments to measure mastery of knowledge, skills, and essential understandings outlined in the first phase. The least standardized, and therefore most differentiated, assessments are open-ended and allow students to capitalize on their strengths and have some degree of choice. Regardless of how students choose to show what they have learned, the same criteria or rubrics

should be used in order to measure to what extent the content goal was met (McTighe & Brown, 2005).

In the final phase, the instructional plan for the unit is developed with specific strategies embedded throughout in order to help students achieve their learning goals, answer essential questions and determine essential understandings. McTighe & Brown (2005, p. 239) encourage teachers to reflect and respond to the following questions using the acronym “W.H.E.R.E.T.O?” while planning:

W = Where are we going? Why are we going there? In what ways will they be evaluated as we move through this instructional episode?

H= How will I hook and engage the learners? In what ways will I help them connect desired learning to their experiences and interests?

E= How will I equip learners through experience-based learning activities to succeed in mastering identified standards? How will I encourage them to assume an active role in their own learning?

R= How will I encourage the learners to revisit, reflect, revise, and refine their thinking and learning process? How will I support their self-monitoring as they learn?

E= How will I promote students’ self-evaluation and reflection throughout the instructional episode?

T= How will I tailor the learning activities and my teaching to address the different readiness levels, learning profiles, and interests of my students?

O= How will the learning experiences be organized to move from initial construction of meaning and modeling of required knowledge and skills toward increasing levels of

understanding and independent application? What sequence will work best for my students?

External mandates and high-stakes testing tied to rigorous educational standards will continue to be a reality for teachers across the nation. Differentiation and educational standards can and must coexist and there are road maps that exist to help teachers create highly engaging, student centered units of study that cover the material in a respectful and creative way. Even though some language teachers may cringe at the McTighe and Brown acronym because it ends in a preposition, the steps in “WHERE TO?” have value for the classroom teacher seeking self-examination during the planning process (McTighe & Brown, 2005).

Chapter III: Results and Analysis Relative to Problem

After reflecting on the body of literature, several patterns emerged regarding student instruction during an era of external curricular mandates and rising accountability for both teachers and students. Differentiated Instruction grounded in honoring student differences and based on readiness, challenge, choice can be an effective way of increasing student performance in meeting rigorous standards both on the classroom level (Brimijoin, 2005; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008) and district wide (McAdamis, 2001).

DI is a philosophy that needs to be taught explicitly and supported continually. Undergraduate students studying education need exposure to differentiated instruction prior to entering the trenches (Tomlinson et al., 1995). While content is of the utmost importance, specific attention must be made to introduce pre-service teachers to ways of teaching that are student-centered, rather than teacher-centered in nature. New teachers, entering the profession for the first time, cannot be expected to be proficient practitioners of DI right away. However, seasoned, experienced teachers receiving DI training have demonstrated very positive results (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008; Tomlinson et al., 1995; Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997). Ongoing, high-quality professional development has been shown to help teachers become more comfortable and skilled practitioners of DI. Districts that have made DI a long term improvement focus have seen measurable student growth and institutional change (McAdamis, 2001; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008; Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997).

Students like to have challenge and choice at school and like to be partners in their own learning (Douglas, 2004; Gentry & Springer, 2002, Shernoff et al., 2003). Open-ended assignments that offer choice and push students slightly out of their comfort zones but provide adequate support and scaffolding are highly engaging and intrinsically rewarding.

Although some teachers recognize the value of Differentiated Instruction, time constraints, in addition to lack of proper training, are barriers to implementation (Hootstein, 1999). The amount of content secondary social studies teachers are asked to cover is daunting. Although teachers may acknowledge that students report enjoying classroom activities including instructional strategies like strategic group work, learning stations, and projects, the pressure to “get through the material” often leads teachers, especially in at the secondary social studies level, to fall back on traditional teacher-led lecture-style instruction.

Carol Ann Tomlinson has devoted her career to studying and promoting Differentiated Instruction (Tomlinson, 1995; Tomlinson et al., 1995; Tomlinson, 1999; Tomlinson, 2000; Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson et al., 2003) and is regarded by many as a preeminent voice in the field of Differentiated Instruction (Brimijoin, 2005; Gentry & Springer, 2002; Logan, 2011; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2008). A number of the studies reviewed in this paper appeared to attempt to positively support preconceptions of DI advocated by Tomlinson (Gentry & Springer, 2002; Logan, 2011; Tomlinson et al., 1995). While many of the results supported the principles of DI championed by Tomlinson, perhaps a research bias existed where studies were organized in a way to produce favorable results to support the work of Tomlinson. Another worrisome trend was that while many teachers reported recognizing the importance academic diversity and instructional change, there appeared to be gaps in the fundamental understanding of some participating teachers and a researcher (Logan, 2011). A clear and consistent definition of Differentiated Instruction is not shared by all teachers and researchers. Without a clear consensus and objective research tool, results should be scrutinized.

Effective characteristics in the age of No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and the Common Core State Standards must include dynamic, intentional and transparent student-

centered lesson planning and delivery. Differentiated Instruction is a systemic view that frames a teacher's approach to educating citizens; it is not merely fad or an occasional option that one does if time is available. It is a philosophy, not a strategy (McTighe & Brown, 2005; Tomlinson et al., 2003).

To achieve true institutional change and measurable student growth in social studies learning, educators need content rich materials, year-after-year of PD and sustained support from school administrators (Hootstein, 1999, VanTassel-Baska, Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997). The changing demographics of the United States require a major adjustment in how educators shape curriculum content and delivery so that all social studies students can and will learn. Differentiated Instruction, based on backwards planning with clear standards-based learning objectives, big thinking, ongoing formative and summative assessments and diverse opportunities for students to make choices, be challenged and find success is a methodology that can elevate the craft of teaching (McTighe & Brown, 2005; Tomlinson et al., 2003).

While the components of Differentiated Instruction have become more commonplace and a variety of websites and journals provide anecdotal evidence of success, very few quantitative studies designed to objectively measure the impact and effectiveness of differentiation have been published (Edyburn, 2004). In addition, the studies that have been published rely heavily on student and teacher self-reporting, whether through interviews or surveys (Douglas, 2004; Hootstein, 1999; Logan, 2011; Shernoff et al., 2003; Springer & Gentry, 2002). Research studies that have been conducted often center on teachers working with "gifted" students, often at the elementary or middle school level (Douglas, 2004; Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997). While science (Gentry & Springer, 2002) and math disciplines have been studied at the high school level, finding high-quality, peer-reviewed studies measuring the effectiveness of Differentiated

Instruction in a secondary social studies classroom were very difficult to find with the exception of Hootstein (1999). Additional studies regarding the improvement of planning and instruction in to meet the rigorous demands associated with the Common Core State Standards and Race to the Top, preferably in the social studies discipline, would help fill a void in the academic literary landscape.

Chapter IV: Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations

After thousands of hours of research and discussion, it is evident to us that quality teaching and learning incorporates many layers of instruction. Differentiated, thematic, and integrated thematic instruction are philosophies of education that have the potential to elevate the craft (Cook, 2004; Liu & Wang, 2010; Tomlinson et al., 1995; Westberg & Archambault, Jr., 1997; VanDyk, 2010; VanTassel-Baska, 2008). They all emphasize big picture thinking and planning. Rigorous academic standards and high stakes testing are here to stay, and teachers must have a game plan that is intentional and transparent to address curricular expectations and student needs. The following are four recommendations for incorporating differentiated instruction, thematic, and integrated thematic instruction:

1. *Exposure to Differentiated Instruction and Thematic Instruction at the undergraduate/pre-service level is essential.* Student teachers are entering their field experience lacking in basic instructional skills. Introduction and modeling of a variety of instructional methods and curricular organization would at least give pre-service teachers an opportunity to experience how teachers can intentionally structure units and craft lessons to engage academically diverse learners.
2. *Backwards Planning gives teachers a road map to help students achieve learning goals.* Backwards Planning can happen on a unit level as well as a yearly level; it reinforces the tenet that everything done in class is intentional and meaningful. Scaffolding is inherent. If we know the end goal, we know how to get there.
3. *Be open to collaboration.* Collaboration cannot be forced; it needs to happen organically, without an administrative mandate. With all of the external mandates and larger

classrooms, teaching is getting increasingly difficult. We need to work smarter and work together. Our collaboration has transformed the way we plan, teach, and even think. Due to the opportunity to perpetually discuss and dissect our craft, we are in a constant state of reflection. We feed off of one another's ideas and as a result, our planning and implementation of lessons has exponentially evolved.

4. *Sustained Professional Development is essential for school-wide reform.* Whereas it is possible for individual teachers to devise and implement innovative approaches to teaching, if the desired outcome is school-wide reform, there must be quality on-going and supported Professional Development.

Top Ten Differentiated Instructional Strategies

The following list of recommendations is a synthesis of the work of Tomlinson (1995) and Kryza (2010) work along with our own insights and experiences.

1. *Pretest/Posttest:* Ongoing assessments allow for students and teachers to recognize gaps in knowledge and skills and modify accordingly. Pretests for knowledge and skills at the beginning of every unit are recommended.
2. *Learning Style Inventory:* In order to mature as learners, students need to understand how they process information and learn best. In doing so, they will be able to develop strategies which will enhance their learning potential. Teachers can greatly benefit from knowing how their students learn best.
3. *Tiered Assignment:* Assignment focused on a key concept or generalization with tasks and/or resource materials adjusted to varying levels of complexity according to students' academic readiness. When analyzing primary source documents, documents could be assigned based on student lexile scores. Struggling readers could be given excerpts with

difficult vocabulary defined; advanced readers could be given segments of the original text.

4. *Curriculum Compacting*: Compressing the required curriculum into a shorter period of time so students who master it ahead of their classmates can use the time they “buy back” for other activities. Options include open-ended extension activities; for instance, music compositions, history v. Hollywood film and video game reviews, historical “what if?” scenarios and student-created films. Recently innovative assessments tied to the CCSS have been developed by groups such as Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (www.smarterbalanced.org/) and Next Navigator (<http://www.nextnavigator.com/>). These assessments provide flexible and actionable feedback of knowledge and skills for teachers and students.
5. *Choice*: Students crave choice; it gives them a sense of empowerment and leads to high-interest and high-quality learning and products. It can be as simple as giving students choice in terms of which questions they need to answer, letting students determine the format their culminating project will take to choosing a theme to help frame learning.
6. *Learning Stations*: Collections of materials that learners use to explore topics or practice skills matched to their readiness, interests, and/or learning profiles. Stations are a beautiful way for social studies teachers to expose students to a large volume of information via photos, documents, video clips, music, art, and political cartoons. Students, working independently or in groups, make their way around the room gathering information that will help them answer essential questions.
7. *Flexible Grouping*: Students are part of many different groups, and also work alone, based on the match of the task to student readiness, interest, or learning profile. CORE

groups are teacher-selected, fixed groups which students utilize on a regular basis. One great way to utilize CORE groups is for homework group checks. Other groups are more fluid and depend on the assignment or the activity.

8. *Chunk, Chew, and Check*: Teachers intentionally organize information into smaller learning chunks, allow time for processing of the new information and to make connections, and finally check for understanding through multiple assessments.
9. *Think-Pair-Share*: Students are given a moment to process and compose their thoughts, then turn to an elbow partner to exchange responses and refine thinking. By allowing students to process and collaborate before sharing responses with the full group, class discussion is exponentially richer.
10. *Exit Slips*: A quick and easy method to check for understanding and provide closure is with the use of an exit slip. The exit slip could be formal or informal formative assessment. An example is “State the most important point you learned today and what is one thing you need clarification on or want to know more about?”

Elements to Consider When Developing Thematic and Integrated Thematic Units

1. *Identification of a Theme*: Teachers and students must choose a theme that is broad in focus to encourage global thinking. The theme must foster student interest and lend itself to be deep, meaningful learning across the curriculum. Possible themes include responsibility, justice, conflict, truth, and identity.
2. *Time*: Creating Thematic and Integrated Thematic Units is time consuming. Backwards planning helps but it is a daunting task to overhaul curriculum and dissect and reframe units and lessons. However, it is rewarding for both teachers and students as engagement and interest are elevated (Applebee et al., 2007; Cook, 2004). Time is also an essential

consideration in the implementation of the unit. Students should have time to fully explore and reflect upon the theme thus making the learning relevant and meaningful.

3. *Natural Thematic Connections:* Content must be authentic and relatable; it cannot be forced or it will lose effectiveness. The connections must be relevant to students' lives as well as to the larger curriculum.
4. *Flexibility of Scheduling:* With the advent of teaming, Integrated Thematic Units are easier to implement but many secondary schools are still organized by departments. Consequently, the staffing issues of the entire building may create barriers to creating interdisciplinary connections. Therefore, administrative support and vision is necessary to facilitate innovative planning and instructional practices.

Recommended Secondary Social Studies Sources

Wonderful resources are available on the Internet that make teaching with primary sources accessible and engaging for students and easy to implement for teachers. The Stanford History Education Group's *Reading like a Historian* (<http://sheg.stanford.edu/?q=node/45>) curriculum includes 12 units focused on teaching sourcing, contextualization, close reading and corroboration while studying landmark moments in American history. Document-based lessons, ranging from Puritan contributions in American society to evaluating the arguments made by members of the anti-war movement in the 1960s, are all centered on a specific essential question students work to answer. Differentiated instructional strategies are embedded in many of the lessons and allow for carefully structured collaboration, assistance for struggling readers, alternatives for advanced readers and open-ended responses designed to illicit diverse student responses and create rich class discussions.

Another excellent resource for social studies teachers looking to incorporate quality and accessible primary source documents in a well-structured manner that promotes student inquiry is *HSI: Historical Scene Investigation* (www.wm.edu/hsi/). The site is an online project developed by the College of William and Mary, University of Kentucky Department of Education, and the Library of Congress was designed to help students think like a historian; evaluate primary and secondary source documents, make inferences, and support claims with specific evidence from the texts. The HSI cases concisely hit the Common Core anchor standards of reading, writing, speaking and listening in an engaging, easy to use format.

The Stanford History Education Group in conjunction with the digital archive of the Library of Congress has recently developed a collection of easy to implement new generation history assessments called *Beyond the Bubble* (beyondthebubble.stanford.edu/). The questions aim to assess student knowledge in a way that goes beyond regurgitation of information and requires students to use historical thinking skills like sourcing, corroborating evidence, and contextualization. All assessment questions are in line with CCSS and feature a rubric and samples of student responses.

Other recommended sites include the Library of Congress' *American Memory* (memory.loc.gov) for a plethora of primary source documents. Included are visuals, letters, governmental documents, music through the ages, and poetry in addition to lesson plans. The Gilder Lehrman Institute (www.gilderlehrman.org/) also has an extensive primary source collection in addition to essays, lecture videos for teachers, as well as a variety of Summer Institutes to enrich teaching. A new addition to the site includes curricular units tied directly to the Common Core State Standards. The College Board website includes a list of historical themes as well as previously administered document-based essay prompts and high-level

multiple choice test questions. *Great Debates in American History*

(<http://www.peterpappas.com/journals/greatdebates.htm>) poses twelve controversial questions.

For each debate, the site provides dueling viewpoints in the form of historical speeches and includes a series of comprehension and critical thinking questions.

Differentiated Instruction Thematic Unit Template

Attached at the end of this section is our product. First is the template that combines differentiated instruction and thematic instruction. After researching models and structures (Laufenberg, 2010; McTighe & Brown, 2005; MDE, 2008), we constructed this template. This is the tool that we use, in addition to a school calendar, when we use backwards design to structure a unit. By no means is this the only format one can use to combine DI, TI, and ITI; the template could be modified depending on individual need. We have also attached an example of a completed template using our War Unit.

Areas for Further Research

Very little research has been conducted in the specific area of Differentiated and Thematic Instruction in the secondary social studies classroom. In the era of NCLB, RTT, CCSS and high-stakes standardized testing, teachers need to know which instructional methods work with today's students. Additional research needs to be done to determine to what extent DI, TI and ITI can successfully embed Common Core State Standards into secondary social studies classrooms. We propose a case study that chronicles the process two 10th grade US History teachers who team-teach undertake as they implement DI, TI and ITI in their quest to address the Common Core State Standards. Quantitative and qualitative data should be gathered to measure effectiveness of teacher planning and implementation through interviews, surveys, observations and document analysis. Interview responses and observations could be coded to highlight

patterns. The survey responses could be on a four point Likert Scale, to eliminate the option of ambivalence. Document analysis could include frequency of DI implementation, student growth, and connection to the Common Core. Four areas of focus could be teacher planning and collaboration, level and effectiveness of implementation, student engagement, and student outcomes.

Proposed Research Questions:

- 1) How can secondary social studies teachers use effective differentiation practices to engage all learners while meeting the Common Core State Standards?
- 2) To what extent do thematic units implemented in the secondary social studies classroom meet CCSS and engage students in deep, meaningful, and relevant learning tasks?

Summary and Conclusion

Differentiated Instruction, Thematic Instruction and Integrated Thematic Instruction combine to offer a potentially exciting and rewarding research-based, standards-based approach to teaching and learning in an era of rising accountability for students and teachers. Exposure to DI, TI and ITI should begin during pre-service training and be continually supported with ongoing quality professional development. Opportunities for colleagues to collaborate should be fostered without being forced. While rethinking approaches to secondary social studies may be time consuming and daunting, powerful results are achievable.

THEMATIC UNIT _____

TIME/DAYS REQUIRED:

Essential Questions:	Essential Understandings:
State Content Standards (What?):	Common Core State Standards (How?):
Takeaway Points: <i>Students will know...</i>	
Student Skills: <i>Students will be able to...</i>	
Formative Assessment (Pre-	Ideas for Formative Assessments:

<p>Test/Ongoing):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflection • Self-assessing • Journals, Think Logs • Think, Pair, Share
<p>Summative Assessment:</p>	<p>Ideas for Summative Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit Test • Culminating project
<p>Performance Tasks</p>	<p>Ideas for Performance Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted instruction to address significant gaps in knowledge and skills following pretest • Lessons based on readiness → Tiering, curriculum compounding, stations • Interventions → Individual or peer coaching, small group instruction, tutorials
<p>Materials/Resources:</p>	

Action Plan (Unit Schedule):

THEMATIC UNIT EXAMPLE: WAR!

TIME/DAYS REQUIRED: 8 WEEKS

<p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is war? • Is war ever just? If so, under what conditions? • How has war become part of the US narrative? • How does war impact domestic life? • Should the United States fight wars to make the world safe for democracy? • Does war cause national prosperity? • How has the role of the press affected war? • Should a democratic government tolerate dissent during times of war and other crises? • Should the president be able to wage war without congressional authorization? • Is it the responsibility of the United States today to be the world's "policeman?" 	<p>Essential Understandings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through their essential questions journal responses and classroom activities, students will discover their own essential understandings.
<p>State Content Standards (What?):</p> <p>Growth of U.S. Global Power – Locate on a map the territories (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Philippines, Hawaii, Panama Canal Zone) acquired by the United States during its emergence as an imperial power between 1890 and 1914.</p> <p>Analyze the role the Spanish American War, the Philippine Revolution, the Panama Canal, the Open Door Policy, and the Roosevelt Corollary played in expanding America's global influence and redefining its foreign policy. (<i>National Geography Standards 1 and 3; p.184 and 188</i>)</p> <p>WWI – Explain the causes of World War I, the reasons for American neutrality and eventual entry into the war, and America's role in shaping the course of the war.</p> <p>Domestic Impact of WWI – Analyze the domestic impact of WWI on the growth of the government (e.g., War Industries Board), the expansion of the economy, the restrictions on civil liberties (e.g., Sedition Act, Red Scare, Palmer Raids), and the expansion of women's suffrage.</p> <p>Outcomes of WWI – Explain how Wilson's "Fourteen Points" differed from proposals by others, including French and British leaders and domestic opponents, in the debate over the Versailles Treaty, United States participation in the League of Nations, the redrawing</p>	<p>Common Core State Standards (How?):</p> <p>Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. 2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. 3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. 4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. 5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole. 6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. 8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and

of European political boundaries, and the resulting geopolitical tensions that continued to affect Europe.

Causes of WWII – Analyze the factors contributing to World War II in Europe and in the Pacific region, and America’s entry into war including

- the political and economic disputes over territory (e.g., failure of Versailles Treaty, League of Nations, Munich Agreement)(*National Geography Standard 13, p. 210*)
- the differences in the civic and political values of the United States and those of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan
- United States neutrality
- the bombing of Pearl Harbor

U.S. and the Course of WWII – Evaluate the role of the U.S. in fighting the war militarily, diplomatically and technologically across the world

Impact of WWII on American Life – Analyze the changes in American life brought about by U.S. participation in World War II including

- mobilization of economic, military, and social resources
- role of women and minorities in the war effort
- role of the home front in supporting the war effort (e.g., rationing, work hours, taxes)
- internment of Japanese-Americans

specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently

Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats,

including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance Understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.
5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
6. Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Takeaway Points: *Students will know...*

- the major changes – both positive and negative – in the role the United States played in world affairs after the Civil War, and explain the causes and consequences of this changing role.
- the causes and course of World War I and II, as well as the effects of the wars on United States society and culture, including the consequences for United States involvement in world affairs.
- the changes in weaponry, strategies, and rationales for war

Michigan Department of Education Social Studies HSCEs

Student Skills: *Students will be able to...*

- Reach class wide consensus

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze a variety of primary source documents Draw conclusions based on historical and essential questions Summarize main ideas Evaluate decision making process (ethical debate) Articulate multiple perspectives Assess relevancy of content to life today Synthesize historical evidence Collaborate with core group/flexible groupings 	
<p>Formative Assessment (Pre-Test/Ongoing):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content pre-test What is war? Is it ever just? Initial student response/group definition Reading quizzes Content quizzes Essential Questions journal responses (ongoing) 	<p>Ideas for Formative Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach class wide consensus Self-reflection Self-assessing Journals, Think Logs Think, Pair, Share DBQ essay, persuasive essay
<p>Summative Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd quarter exam Culminating portfolio project (student choice) 	<p>Ideas for Summative Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit Test DBQ essay, persuasive essay Culminating projects (could include poetry, murals, design a monument, song collections, compose music/rap, video, board game, story boards, digital story)
<p>Performance Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veteran Interview Project Maps, simulations, discussion and classroom activity participation, visuals (video, photo, art) analyses; comparing textbook entries from around the world Essential Questions journal responses (ongoing) 	<p>Ideas for Performance Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted instruction to address significant gaps in knowledge and skills following pretest Lessons based on readiness → Tiering, curriculum compounding, stations Interventions → Individual or peer coaching, small group instruction, tutorials One Pager assignment
<p>Integrated Thematic Instruction Unit Ideas:</p> <p>Language Arts: Veteran’s Interview project and presentation, literary circles with war novels and short stories, poetry of war, letters home, persuasive/document based essays</p> <p>Math: Calculating time spent in war, proportions/ratios using war related statistics, geometry of war</p> <p>Science: Pandemic of 1918 (bacteria, viruses), chemical and germ warfare (cell division), changing medical techniques</p> <p>Art: Murals, propaganda posters, design memorials, veteran portrait</p> <p>Music: Compose musical score for war movie/scene, analyze the effects war had on musical taste and style</p>	
<p>Materials/Resources: War pre-test, guided readings, wars at-a-glance overview, essential question journals, culminating portfolio project description/rubric, Victoria’s Family Tree PowerPoint, Sophie, Live for the Children! Story time, Should the US go to War simulation, Wilson’s <i>War Message to Congress</i></p>	

(1917), We are Fighting! Stations activity, *War Horse and Passchendaele* movie clips, propaganda/civil liberties in times of war poster project, Negotiating the Treaty of Versailles simulation, WWI quest, Ch 23 Sec. 1 terms, Rise of the Dictators powerpoint, *Pearl Harbor* clip with *History vs. Hollywood* article, rationing and budgeting activity, Women at War prezi, UP Goes to War reading and map activity, Japanese American internment video clips and docs, We're Fighting powerpoint and map assignment, *Saving Private Ryan* clip, compare and contrast warfare activity, Ch 24 Sec. 5 terms, End of the War in Europe powerpoint, Ch. 24 Sec. 3. Terms, War in the Pacific video clips, music and pop culture of WWI and WWII listening day, End of WWII in Japan, Atomic bomb reading, Atomic Bomb Right or Wrong? Debate, multiple perspectives textbook comparison activity, history of atomic bomb testing youtube clip, *Why We Fight* film and viewer guide.

Action Plan:

Unit Four: War November 12-January 18

Week #1: US Imperialism/Spanish America War

Monday, November 12 – American Expansion & Imperialism PP HW: Read Chapter 17 Sec 2 with guided reading/map due Tuesday

Tuesday, November 13 – Background Spanish-American War HW: Yellow Journalism, Jingoism and “Remember the Maine” with document analysis

Wednesday, November 14 – War pretest; intro unit and establish ground rules

Thursday, November 15 – Grunt work: Complete war overview, due Monday.

Friday, November 16 – Grunt work: Complete war overview, due Monday.

Week #2: Grunt Work

Monday, November 19 – Intro Essential Questions and Culminating Project: War Portfolio; What is war? Group consensus ; Math problem: Using your group's definition of war, determine how many years the U.S. has been at war throughout its 236 years. Figure out the percentage, and be ready to defend your answer.

HW: Read Chapter 18 with reading guide and be prepared for a reading quiz on Monday 11/26.

Tuesday, November 20 – Is war ever just? If so, under what conditions?

Wednesday, November 21– (half day) Wrap up.

Thursday, November 22 – Happy Thanksgiving!

Friday, November 23 – No School ☺

Week #3: WWI

Monday, November 26 – Chapter 18 Reading Quiz; WWI intro (Victoria's family tree) Raikko in LT; map assigned (due Fri.)

Tuesday, November 27 – The Great War Begins... story time! Raikko in LT

Wednesday, November 28 – Should the US Got To War Simulation HW: Read Wilson's War Message to Congress w Q & A; **HW:** Respond to either EQ#2 or #5

Thursday, November 29 – We are Fighting – Station Activity; What Was Life Like? Activity; War Horse clip (BIG)

Friday, November 30 – C 18 reading quiz; Homefront – Committee on Public Information (propaganda)

HW: Respond to EQ#4 and #8

Week #4: WWI → Pearl Harbor

Monday, December 3 – EQ discussion; Treaty of Versailles simulation; **HW:** map revisions (due Thurs)

Tuesday, December 4 – Complete Treaty of Versailles simulation; Review for quest

Wednesday, December 5–WWI quest; Essential Questions discussion

HW: Read C23, section 1 w terms

Thursday, December 6 – Quest debrief; Rise of the Dictators (WWI aftermath)

Friday, December 7 – Pearl Harbor Day – Pearl Harbor clip w/History v Hollywood in Little Theater

Week #5: WW2: On the Homefront

Monday, December 10 – EQ#4: How did war impact domestic life? Mobilizing troops, rationing, Rosie the Riveter; **HW:** Extended response to EQ # 3, 4, or 7-choice out (portfolio element)

Tuesday, December 11 – U.P. Goes to War Step 1: Gleaning info

Wednesday, December 12–U.P. Goes to War Step 2: Create annotated map, due Friday

HW: Respond to EQ#4or #6

Thursday, December 13 - Japanese- American Internment video and doc analysis (EQ #4) **HW:** Read C 24 Section 1w terms

Friday, December 14 – UP map due; We are fighting: North Africa-Battle of the Bulge PP; map assignment

Week #6: WW2: We are fighting...

Monday, December 17 – Saving Private Ryan clips: D-Day, Battle of the Bulge, Allied and German bombings – C/C warfare **HW:** Read C 24 Section 5 w terms & EQs (in Little Theater)

Tuesday, December 18 – Yalta, Goodbye FDR, Mussolini, Hitler; End of war in Europe (aftermath) **HW:** Read C 24 Section 3 w terms

Wednesday, December 19– War in the Pacific-island-hopping; Pacific clip + other video clips - C/C warfare of WWI and WWII

Thursday, December 20 – Flex day

Friday, December 21- Essential Questions discussion (#3), Music and pop culture of war

Happy Winter Break!

Week #7: Ending the War in the Pacific

Wednesday, January 2- Potsdam, decision to drop bomb, Japanese surrender **HW:** Atomic bomb reading

Thursday, January 3 – The Atomic Bomb: Right or Wrong? Debate **HW:** Multiple perspectives textbook activity, due Tues.

Friday, January 4 – Set up Cold War; Atomic bomb testing (youtube clip); begin Why We Fight w viewer guide (in Little Theater)

Week #8: Evaluating the Role of War in Shaping our National Identity

Monday, January 7 – continue Why We Fight (in Little Theater)

Tuesday, January 8 – Textbook activity due; finish Why We Fight (in Little Theater)

Wednesday, January 9– Essential Questions Discussion/Portfolio Work Day

Thursday, January 10 – Portfolio Work Day (Raikko 259; O'Connor 259 B); portfolio due on exam day

Friday, January 11- Final Exam review

Final Exam Week

Monday, January 14 – *Final Exam review*

References

- Barton, K., & Smith, L. (2000). Themes or Motifs? Aiming for Coherence through Interdisciplinary Outlines. *The Reading Teacher*, 54(1), 54-63. Retrieved from www.reading.org/General/Publications/Journals/RT.aspx
- Beane, J. (1995) Curriculum Integration and the Disciplines of Knowledge. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 76 (8), 612-615. Retrieved from <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kappan.htm>
- Betts, G. (2004) Fostering Autonomous Learners through Levels of Differentiation. *Roeper Review*, 26 (4), 190-191. Retrieved from http://www.lwhiting.info/414/Blog/Entries/2010/1/31_Supplemental_Articles_files/Fostering%20Autonomous%20Learners%20Through%20Levels%20of%20Differentiation%20.pdf
- Brimijoin, K. (2005). Differentiation and high-stakes testing: An Oxymoron? *Theory into Practice*, 44 (3), 254-261. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3497005>
- Coleman, G. (1983). *Questions and Answers about the Michigan Educational Assessment Program*. Lansing: Michigan State Board of Education. Retrieved from ERIC database (ED247244)
- Cook, J. W. (2004). Integrated Thematic Instruction: A Case Study. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Retrieved from <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/etd/umi-okstate-1147.pdf>
- Douglas, D. (2004). Self-advocacy: Encouraging students to become partners in differentiation. *Roeper Review*, 26 (4). 223-228. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/206698285?accountid=2745>

- Elkind, D. (2004). The Problem with Constructivism. *The Educational Forum*, 68, 306-312.
doi:10.1080/00131720408984646
- Gentry, M., & Springer, P. (2002). Secondary student perceptions of their class activities regarding meaningfulness, challenge, choice, and appeal: an initial validation study. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, 13 (4), 192-204. Retrieved from http://zc9gn3am3j.search.serialssolutions.com/?ctx_ver=Z39.88
- Graham, B. & Bridge, S. (2010). From presidential policy to classroom reality: the indelible impact of ESEA. *Proceedings of the American Institute of Higher Education Conference*, 99-104. Retrieved from http://www.amhighed.com/documents/orlando2010AmHighEd_Conference_Proceedings_Fall2010.pdf#page=99
- Hinde, E. (2005). Revisiting curriculum integration: A fresh look at an old idea. *The Social Studies*, 96, 105-111. doi:10.3200/TSSS.96.3
- Hootstein, E. W. (1999). Differentiation of instructional methodologies in social studies at the secondary level. *Journal of Social Studies Research*, 23(1), 11-18. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/211071102?accountid=2745>
- Kirner, M. (2008). Differentiated Instruction Data Report and Summary: A Look at Connecticut. *Connecticut State Educational Research Center*.
<http://ctserc.org/data/DI%20Report%20complete%202010.pdf>
- Kryza, K. (2010) *Differentiated Instruction: Creating Critical Thinkers*. Kryza, Duncan Stephens. www.inspiringlearners.com
- Langer, J. (1997). Thinking and Doing Literature: An 8 year Study. *Center on English Learning and Achievement: Report Series 6.8*. Retrieved from <http://www.albany.edu/cela/reports/langer/langerthinking.pdf>

- Laufenberg, D. (2011). The Pitfalls of Chronology. *National History Education Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from <http://teachinghistory.org/nhec-blog/24585>
- Levy, H. (2008). Meeting the needs of all students through differentiated instruction: Helping every child reach and exceed standards. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 81 (4), 161-164. doi: 10.3200/TCHS.81.4.161-164
- McAdamis, S. (2001). Teachers tailor their instruction to meet a variety of student needs. *Journal of Staff Development*, 22 (2), 1-5.
- McTighe, J., & Brown, J. L. (2005). Differentiated instruction and educational standards: Is détente possible? *Theory Into Practice*, 44(3), 234-244. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/3497003?uid=3739976&uid=2&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21101512609827>
- Michigan Department of Education, Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability. (2011). *Michigan Merit Exam*. Retrieved from http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_35150---,00.html
- Michigan Department of Education, Office of School Improvement. (2007). *High school content expectations: Social studies*. Retrieved from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/SS_HSCE_210739_7.pdf
- Munson, L. (2012). An Opportunity for History and Civics. *National History Education Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from <http://teachinghistory.org/issues-and-research/roundtable-response/25353>
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers (2010). *Common Core State Standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.corestandards.org/>

National Standards for Social Studies Teachers (2001). *National Council for the Social Studies*.

Retrieved from <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/teacherstandards>

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Executive Summary (2001). *United States Department of*

Education. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/execsumm.html>

Orillion, M. (2009). Interdisciplinary Curriculum and Student Outcomes: The Case of a General Education Course at a Research University. *The Journal of General Education*, 58(1). 1-

18. Retrieved from <http://muse.jhu.edu/>

Phillips, V. & Wong, C. (2010). Tying Together the Common Core of Standards, Instruction, and Assessments. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91(5), 37-42. Retrieved from pdkintl.org

Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2011). *A Guide for Rhode Island Parents*. Retrieved from

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/DOCS/CommonCore/CCSS_Guide-Families.pdf

Shernoff, D., Csikszentmihalyi, M., Schneider, B., Shernoff, E. (2003). Student engagement in high school classrooms from the perspective of Flow Theory. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 18 (2), 158-176. Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/195473552?accountid=2745>

Social studies in the era of No Child Left Behind (2007). *National Council for the Social Studies*.

Retrieved from <http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/nclbera>

Stout, M. J. History and Social Studies: At the Core of the Common Core.

Strickland, D. (2012). Planning Curriculum to Meet the Common Core State Standards. *Reading Today* 29 (4). 25-26. Retrieved from

<http://www.reading.org/Libraries/resources/RTy294CommonCoreCover.pdf>

- Subban, P. (2006). Differentiated instruction: A research basis. *International Education Journal*, 7 (7), 935-947. Retrieved from <http://ehlt.flinders.edu.au/education/iej/articles/v7n7/v7n7.pdf#page=69>
- Tomlinson, C. (1995). Deciding to differentiate instruction in middle school: One school's journey. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 39, 77-87. doi: 10.1177/001698629503900204
- Tomlinson, C. (1999). Mapping the route toward differentiated instruction. *Educational Leadership*. 57, 12-16. Retrieved from http://pdonline.ascd.org/pd_online/diffinstr/e11999909_tomlinson.html
- Tomlinson, C. (2000). Reconcilable differences? Standards-based teaching and differentiation. *Educational Leadership*. 58 (1), 6-11. Retrieved from <http://esblogin.k12albemarle.org/attachments/7b8c23a2-1dd0-4aab-943f-d417df093124.pdf>
- Tomlinson, C., Brighton, C., Hertberg, H., Callahan, C., Moon, T., Brimijoin, K., Conover, L., & Reynolds, T. (2003). Differentiating Instruction in Response to Student Readiness, Interest, and Learning Profile in Academically Diverse Classrooms: A Review of Literature. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 27(2/3), 119-145. Retrieved from https://moodle.emu.edu/pluginfile.php/95452/mod_resource/content/1/7su.pdf
- Villegas-Reimers, E. (2003). Teacher Professional Development: An International Review of the Literature. *UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning*. Retrieved from http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Research_Challenges_and_Trends/133010e.pdf
- VanTassel-Baska, J., Feng, A. X., Brown, E., Bracken, B., Stambaugh, T., French, H., (2008). A study of differentiated instructional change over 3 years. *The Gifted Child Quarterly*,

52(4), 297-312. Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/212090954?accountid=2745>

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/212090954?accountid=2745>

Westberg, K, & Archambault, Jr. (1997). A multi-site case study of successful classroom practices for high ability students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 41(1), 42-51.

doi: 10.1177/001698629704100106.

White, R. (1995). How thematic teaching can transform history instruction. *The Clearing House* 68(3), 160-162. Retrieved from <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/00098655.asp>

Windschitl, M. (2002). Framing Constructivism in Practice as the Negotiation of Dilemmas: An Analysis of the Conceptual, Pedagogical, Cultural, and Political Challenges Facing Teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 72 (2), 131-175. doi:

10.3102/00346543072002131