

What is differentiated teaching?

LPEBL-KT is a non selective school welcoming pupils from all education systems background. We provide them with an original curriculum based on both the French national curriculum (BO mars 2015 (maternelle) BO juin 2008 (élémentaire) and on the British curriculum (EYFS framework March 2014; National curriculum in England September 2013). Given the various profiles of the pupils, we have to implement differentiation according to the main strategies below:

Common LO (learning objective) but adapted implementation systems regarding time management, workload, regarding teaching staff level of supervision, regarding the pupil's action scope and available resources.

Common LO but with a different planned provision regarding extended learning or adapted learning according to pupils' needs and expected achievements.

DIFFERENTIATION AT LPEB-KT

Learning Objectives must be clearly stated in pupils' writing books and on worksheets.

Learning Objectives also need to be displayed on the classroom board.

BRITISH CURRICULUM

- EYFS

Nursery: The Learning Objective needs to be stated, explained and differentiated orally. Teachers and TAs need to differentiate the activities according to each pupil's ability and interests.

Reception Class: The Learning Objective needs to be stated and explained orally and written down by teachers using simple wording. E.g LO: Can you order numbers from 0-10?

Teachers and TAs need to differentiate the activities according to each pupil's ability and interests.

- KS1 and KS2

Teachers in Years 1/2/3/4/5/6 must include Learning Objectives on pupils' work as follows:

Learning Objectives (LO):

By the end of the session pupils:

- Should
- Must.....
- Could.....

Example of differentiated Learning Objective

LO: By the end of the session pupils:

- Should write at least two sentences using their phonic knowledge.
- Must write several sentences using capital letters and full stops correctly.
- Could write several sentences using capital letters, full stops and connectives correctly.

FRENCH CURRICULUM

- **MATERNELLE:**

The Learning Objectives need to be stated, explained and differentiated orally. Teachers and TAs need to differentiate the activities according to each pupil's ability and interests.

- **PRIMAIRE**

French teachers must include Learning Objectives on pupils' work as follows:

Objectif: être capable de

Pedagogical resource for further information

Differentiation: setting learning objectives and outcome

This excerpt is taken from Gererd Dixie's book, *The Ultimate Teaching Manual*, published by Continuum.

All lessons need learning objectives. You need to make it clear what you expect pupils to know and understand by the end of the lesson.

Schools will use different systems for setting objectives, but it's expected that pupils will know – by being told or by seeing these displayed on the board – what the learning objectives are. I would strongly advise that pupils copy down these learning objectives, or stick them into their books so that they can refer to them both during and after the lesson.

When setting your learning objectives you need to be clear about what you expect the learning outcomes to be. Having said this, it will have already become pretty evident to you that not all pupils will be able to access the knowledge/skills/understanding you are trying to impart in your lessons to the same level, and because of this your outcomes need to be differentiated.

What is differentiation?

So what is actually meant by the term '**differentiation**'? It simply means teaching people differently according to their needs, their capabilities or even their preferred 'learning styles'. You need to make sure that you use a variety of teaching approaches capable of accommodating the different abilities and learning preferences of your pupils.

Teachers who only group according to ability are limiting the learning of many pupils in their classes, particularly those with special educational needs. The best way to meet pupils' different learning needs is to deliver the curriculum in a number of different ways; to differentiate the way skills, knowledge and concepts are delivered, as well as by presenting a range of tasks designed to support learning.

Here are a few types of differentiation:

- by classroom organisation and grouping as a way of helping pupils to access knowledge, increase their understanding, develop concepts and practise skills
- by paired tasks as a way of helping pupils to self-assess, peer assess, target-set and practise skills
- by outcome as a way of both accessing knowledge and experiences and assessing at the end of the 'teach and practice' cycles
- by resource in order to allow pupils to access information at their own level
- by questioning in order to allow you to target your questions at specific pupils
- by learning style and/or intelligence type in order to allow pupils to access information and/or present their work according to their preferred way of learning.

We all know from experience that pupils learn at different rates; some will have grasped the point before you have finished explaining it, and some may get there in the end but only after much additional effort and support. One way of formalizing the differentiation process is by posing the following three questions. By the end of this lesson, what should pupils know? What should pupils be able to understand? What should pupils be able to do? These may be expressed using the language of differentiation like this:

should learn

must learn

could learn

all pupils...

most pupils...

some pupils...

An alternative but nevertheless effective way of differentiating outcomes is to use the 'must/should/could' formula, which really needs no further elaboration!

Whichever strategy you employ you need to use differentiated outcomes when drawing up schemes of work and lesson plans

- so that even if pupils can only tackle some of the work, they will at least have covered the 'must learn' content
- to make sure that more able pupils who work at a faster pace have a constant supply of useful, if not essential, material to work on
- to help check on any tendency on your part to stray from the learning objectives

Starter activities

All lessons should have a starter activity. The purpose of the starter is to get pupils fully engaged in the learning process as soon as possible, and to engender a sense of pace within the lesson. Starter activities do not have to be directly linked to the main body of the lesson, although they are a good opportunity to use creative strategies to provide that all-important 'hook'. It is very important that your starter does not take too much time, and that it doesn't dominate the lesson.

The starter activity could take on numerous forms, including: a brief quiz; a brief research task using reference book; an anagram or crossword puzzle; interpretation of visual or textual material; responding to questions having heard a music track, or having seen a brief video clip; paired discussion on a relevant topic; an opportunity to revisit and improve previous work.

Main activities

When selecting the activities and tasks you intend to use in your lesson, you need to think about a number of key questions:

- Will the tasks and activities enable the learning objective(s) to be met?
- Will the tasks/activities enthuse and engage pupils of all ability levels? Will they enjoy learning?
- How successful will these tasks and activities be in catering for the different types of learners in your lesson?
- How can you use these tasks and activities to monitor and assess learning?

Plenary activity

Many beginning teachers find that because of their inability to plan effectively, this phase of the lesson often gets squeezed out. However, you do need to understand that this is a crucial part of the lesson because, if carried out properly, it will provide you and the pupils with an indication of whether the learning objectives have been met. As is the case with your starter activities, there is a range of possible formats for your plenary sessions. The suggestions made below, along with those made for starter activities, only 'scratch the surface' and you need to carry out more specific and focused research into this aspect of your teaching: verbal or written quizzes supported by a follow-up discussion; question/answer sessions in which you select responses from pupils across the ability range; role-play scenarios in which pupils are required to apply their newly gained knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

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