The Role of Assessment and Grading in a Differentiated Classroom

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ASSESSMENT ≠ GRADING
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

ASSESSMENT
- On-going
- Integrally related to instruction
- Across student profile dimensions

GRADING
- Occurs at specific, pre-determined points
- Summative and shorthand
- Focuses on a limited set of dimensions of performance
Assessment strategies collect data to be used for:

- Specific instructional decisions by the teacher
- Behavioral change in students
- Specific feedback to parents to help the student in learning
Grading is used to communicate overall achievements to parents and students.
The Nature and Purpose of Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

- Provides *on-going* information that will inform instructional decision-making
- Includes pre-assessment, in-process or formative assessment, and summative or post-assessment
- Includes a range of assessment approaches
Pre-Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

Purpose:

- Gather information to be used in planning instruction that will match students’ zone of proximal development with instruction as well as capitalize on interests, learning styles, intelligence strengths, etc.
Method: Assess across a range of profile dimensions to measure students’

- Level of proficiency in pre-requisite knowledge, skills and understandings
- Current level of knowledge and understanding of the content and skills to be taught
- Learning styles
- Interests
- Intelligence strengths
Pre-Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

Principles:
- Reliability
- Validity
- Timeliness
- Directness/efficiency and effectiveness
Approaches to Pre-Assessment

- **Formal**
  - Pre-tests/quizzes
  - Performance on prior end-of-unit assessments

- **Informal**
  - Journal entries
  - Webbing activities
  - Systematic Observation
On-going/Formative Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

Purpose: A “temperature check”
to find out:

- What students have learned up to this point,
- Where there are gaps in learning,
- Where students have exceeded expectations
- Where students have questions
On-going/Formative Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

Principles
- Reliability
- Validity
- Timeliness
- Directness/efficiency and effectiveness
Approaches to On-going Assessment

- **Formal**
  - Quizzes—*NEVER* pop-quizzes
  - Mini performance tasks
  - Homework assignments

- **Informal**
  - Webbing activities
  - Journal entries
  - Systematic observation
Post-Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

Purpose:
- Through a culminating activity, evaluate the success of students in attaining the knowledge and skills, understanding the concepts, principles and generalizations, and applying the learning that were the goals of instruction.
Principles of **Post-Assessment** in a Differentiated Classroom

- Represents a culmination of learning experiences which have been targeted at *achieving* and *integrating* a set of goals and objectives
- Ensures a clear match between the expected outcomes of instruction and the task(s) provided
- Provides for a sampling of the most important outcomes of the learning experiences
- Allows for performance at the level of learning expected
Principles of Post-Assessment in a Differentiated Classroom

- Allows for demonstration of learning using preferred mode of learning and producing within the constraints of the expected outcomes
- Allows for demonstration of what students have learned
- Is a learning experience
- Has clearly specified criteria which allow for clear communication of which goals and objectives have been achieved at what level
Principles of **Grading** in a Differentiated Classroom

- Clearly communicates standards that are being used
- Clearly delineates separate grades
  - for growth (changes in learning from the beginning to the end of the instructional component)
  - for achievement relative to standards of performance
  - for effort
- Provides full disclosure to all
- Heeds student voices
- Are never used to punish