

## Fun Ways to Get the Most from Learner Diversity With Brain- Compatible Instruction for Today's Bilingual Learners

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## Today's Objectives

1. You will learn and effectively be able to apply brain-compatible instructional strategies.
2. You will create an activity bank of brain-compatible activities, enabling you to reach a wider array of diverse learners.

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## Activity #1: Brainstorming



In small groups, brainstorm ideas about what the term "differentiated instruction" means and what it entails. You will share your ideas with the group either orally, in writing, using a visual representation, or by leading us in a group activity of your choosing/design.

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## What is Differentiated Instruction?

- "Ensuring that what a student learns, how he/she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he/she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning"
- "The practice of adjusting the curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom environment to meet the needs of all students"

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## What Is Differentiated Instruction? (Continued)

- "Differentiated instruction adapts learning to the students' unique differences. The strategies and activities are student-centered, based on readiness, planned with flexible grouping designs, and changed as needed to meet the needs of all learners. These personalized experiences give students access to all of the information and skills they can assimilate in their learning journeys."

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## What Is Differentiated Instruction? (Continued)

- "Differentiation is not so much the 'stuff' but the 'how.'"
- "And at its best, differentiation is an opportunity to model a world in which adults and the young share responsibility for 'making things work' for themselves and for those around them."

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## Myths About Differentiated Instruction

- It's A Waste of Time
  - It reaches more students than status quo teaching...how can that be seen as "wasted time"?
- I Don't Have Time to Do It
  - It may be time-consuming initially, but it can be used for many years with many different student populations, making the investment worth it!

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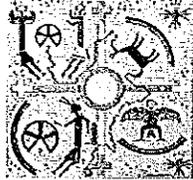
## Myths About Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- It Only Works for Lower-Level Students and May Hurt Others
  - It is just as important for gifted students and high achievers, as it may provide much-needed motivation and interest
- It Doesn't "Fit" with NCLB
  - Of course it does! How can we prepare our diverse learners for these assessments if we don't teach them the curriculum effectively?

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## Activity #2: What Are Your Myths?

Working individually, think about some of the preconceived notions or negative associations that you have with differentiated instruction, write them down, and tape them on the wall. Walk around the room, and see how many others share your views. With a partner, discuss what you see, looking for fallacies.



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## What Is In It For Us?

- It Allows Us To Reach More Learners
- It Aides in Student Comprehension and Retention by Making Learning Comprehensible and Meaningful
- It Reduces Students' Feelings of Isolation or Disconnection from the Classroom

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## Why Do We Need to Differentiate Instruction?

- Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory
- Students' Various Learning Styles
- Classroom Implications

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## Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)

"Nowadays an increasing number of researchers believe...that there exists a multitude of intelligences, quite independent of each other; that the mind is far from unencumbered at birth; and that it is unexpectedly difficult to teach things that go against early 'naïve' theories that challenge the natural lines of force within an intelligence and its matching domains."

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## Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)

- All Are Equally Important
- The Different Intelligences Work Together In Coordination, Not Alone
- Intelligences Are "Raw" But Can Be Nurtured And Trained

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## Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)

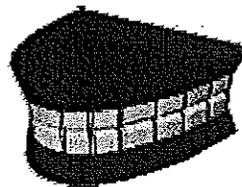
- Verbal-Linguistic
- Logical-Mathematical
- Visual-Spatial
- Musical/Rhythmic
- Bodily-Kinesthetic
- Interpersonal/Social
- Intrapersonal/Introspective
- Naturalist

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## Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

- Skill in Using Language
- Refers to Both Written and Oral Language
- Characteristics: extensive vocabulary, speak often
- Examples: writers, teachers, lawyers, comedians, radio hosts, etc.

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## Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

- Working with Numbers and Patterns
- Involves Various Types of Thinking and Reasoning
- Characteristics: completing word puzzles, doing mental math, and creating and using gadgets
- Examples: scientists, accountants, mathematicians, computer analysts, etc.

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## Visual-Spatial Intelligence

- Possess Strong Observational Abilities
- See or Think in Pictures
- Characteristics: building things, creating projects, designing and creating pictures or posters, and arranging objects
- Examples: artists, architects, designers, photographers, etc.

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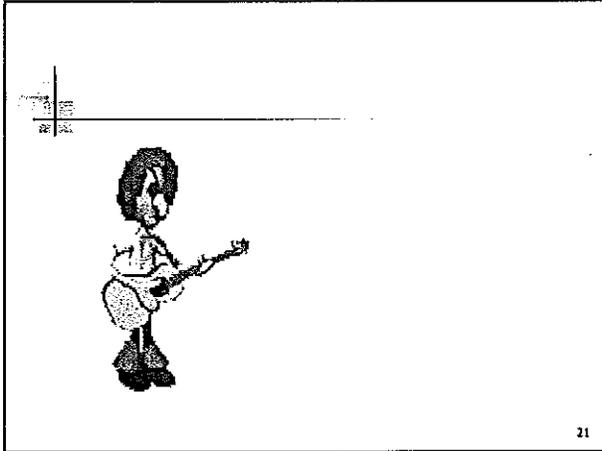


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## Musical Intelligence

- Recognizes Various Patterns Within Musical Compositions
- Able to Connect with the Emotional or Abstract Components of a Musical Selection
- Characteristics: singing, writing/re-writing songs, dancing, finger tapping
- Examples: musicians, music critics, speech pathologists, composers, etc.

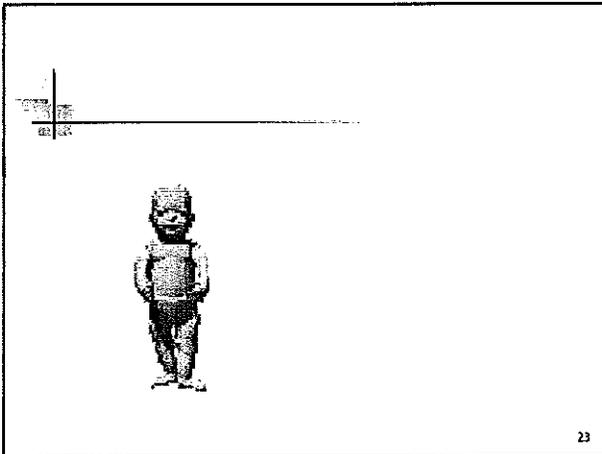
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## Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence

- Expresses Ideas, Thoughts, and Feelings Through Movement
- Skilled in Handling Objects and Creating Things
- Characteristics: building models, moving, touching, sewing
- Examples: athletes, mechanics, actors, magicians, carpenters, etc.

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## Interpersonal Intelligence

- Communicate Well with Others
- Able to Understand Others' Feelings, Perspectives and Needs
- Characteristics: possess a large number and variety of friendships, good observers
- Examples: therapists, lobbyists, salespeople, clergy, advocates, etc.

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## Intrapersonal Intelligence

- Possess a Strong Sense of Self-Awareness
- Are Insightful, Independent, and Self-Disciplined
- Characteristics: work well alone or in groups, may keep diaries, are curious about ancestors
- Examples: anthropologists, philosophers, researchers, archeologists, etc.

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## Naturalist Intelligence

- Can Identify and Classify Items in Nature
- Relates Well to their Surroundings
- Characteristics: identifying plants and animals, recognizing weather patterns
- Examples: conservationist, zoologist, astronomer, florist, etc.

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## Learning Styles

- **Visual Learners**
  - love presentations, using the board, handouts, overheads, pictures, graphics, diagrams, etc.
  - prefer written directions and a sense of order in the classroom
  - can be distracted by movement
  - writing may help them process information
  - possess good visualization skills

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## Learning Styles (continued)

- **Auditory Learners**
  - enjoy both listening and speaking
  - like lecture, audiotape, telephone, radio, and conversation
  - possess strong language skills and vocabularies
  - may become distracted by unrelated background noise
  - generally prefer to receive verbal instructions and to write as little as possible

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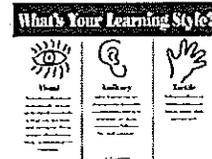
## Learning Styles (continued)

- Kinesthetic Learner
  - learn by doing
  - respond well to manipulatives and whole-body activities
  - may draw or doodle in order to engage the brain in learning
  - may gesture when speaking, fidget, tap on desks, or touch during conversation

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## Activity #3: Self Inventory

Complete the "Multiple Intelligences Survey" provided in order to review your own learning strengths and preferences.



Identify your strongest and weakest areas.

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## Do My Preferences Matter?

- YES!!!!
  - We often teach to our own preferences, strengths, and styles. As such, it is important to recognize our own strengths and weaknesses and be careful not to let those factors inform our instruction in such a way that our students' needs are not being met.

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## In My Classroom

- How Do I Determine The Multiple Intelligences And Learning Styles That Are Present?
  - Ask your students directly to see what they know about their own learning strengths and preferences
  - Administer a survey that deals with MI and/or learning style
  - Observe students during instruction/practice for signs

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## Important Facts to Remember About Teaching and Learning

- Student needs (especially those necessary for survival and safety) must be met before students can learn
- Classroom environment plays a major role in student learning
  - Ensure that students are comfortable
  - Make classrooms visually pleasing
  - Create a safe haven for students

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## What Does Differentiated Instruction Look Like?

- Differentiating Instruction Does NOT Mean Re-Inventing the Wheel!
  - Existing lesson plans can be modified to include a variety of learners
  - Baby steps can be taken as the process of differentiated planning is learned and explored

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## Common Tools For The Differentiated Classroom

- Graphic Organizers
- Cooperative Learning Groups
- Student Choice
- Puppet Shows
- Field Trips
- Music
- Role-Playing
- Journaling
- Clay
- Note-Taking
- Lecture
- Games
- Overheads
- PowerPoint
- Skits
- Debates
- Anticipation Guides
- Timelines
- Building
- Playing Cards
- Audio Tape

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## More Tools For The Differentiated Classroom

- Videos
- Storytelling
- Discussion
- Reading
- Metaphors
- Interviews
- Dioramas
- Computers
- Charades
- Labs or Experiments
- Thematic Units
- Drawing
- Bulletin Boards
- Posters
- Oral Reports
- Poetry
- Manipulatives
- Learning Centers
- Dance
- Puzzles
- Flash Cards
- Independent Study

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## A Helpful Reminder for Teachers

- According to Sousa (2006):  
"It seems that the working memory connects with the learner's past experiences and asks just two questions to determine whether an item is saved or rejected. They are: 'Does this make *sense*?' and 'Does this have *meaning*?'"
  - Can your students make sense of the curriculum?
  - What does it mean for them/their lives?

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## How To Be A Catalyst For Differentiation (Chapman and King, 2005)

- Determine the standards to be taught.
- Identify student needs with strong assessment tools before, during, and after learning.
- Formulate plans that link the targeted standards with individual needs.
- Find effective strategies and activities to teach the information.
- Engage students in activities that employ their interests and the ways they learn.
- Relate learning to the students' worlds.
- Encourage risk taking with wise choices.
- Nurture the social and emotional aspects of the students.
- Target the learners' needs with flexible grouping designs.
- Ignite each student's desire to learn.
- Adjust assignments to match the learner's abilities, knowledge levels, and interests.
- Tailor lessons with student-focused activities.
- Entice and ignite lifelong learners.

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## Activity #4: Create Your Own Differentiation Acrostic

Working in small groups, use the word DIFFERENTIATION (or a variation, such as "differentiated instruction," depending on how ambitious you'd like to be), and create an acrostic device to help you remember certain aspects of the concept. Using the materials provided, create a visual representation of your word(s) that you can share with the group!



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## Differentiated Instruction in Lesson Planning

- Start Small
  - Don't try to do too much at once!
- Collaborate with administrators and colleagues
- Be aware of students' prior knowledge, strengths, preferences, learning needs, interests, etc.
  - Take students where they are and go from there
  - Pre-Assessments are especially helpful in this

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## Differentiated Instruction in Lesson Planning (continued)

- Set clear objectives
  - What am I going to teach?
  - Why am I teaching it?
  - What is the desired outcome?
- Prioritize the curriculum
  - What content is most important for them to learn?
  - What information or tasks are the most critical?

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## Differentiated Instruction in Lesson Planning (continued)

- Provide Flexibility
  - Vary types of student groupings (whole-class, small groups, pairs, etc.)
  - Give students choices when assigning projects and assessments
- Focus on Application
  - Across the curriculum
  - Real life

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## Differentiated Instruction in Lesson Planning (continued)

- Foster Student Self-Reliance
  - Serve as a facilitator, rather than an instructor
  - Encourage students to use higher-order thinking and take responsibility for their learning
  - Model independence, self-awareness, and self-advocacy
  - Provide time for students to reflect individually, in pairs or small groups, and with the teacher
  - Help students to locate and use resources outside of the classroom
- Don't Give Up!

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (Some items adapted from Schmidt, 2001)

- Journals
  - Daily "Calendar Journals"
  - Providing Prompts
  - Dream Journals
  - Vacation Journals
  - Fictional Journals
  - Biography Journals
  - Scrapbooking

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Family Connections
  - Memory Boxes
  - Picture Exploration
  - Genealogy
  - Cultural Ancestors
  - Elder Interviews
  - Timelines

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Music and Movement
  - Songwriting
  - Singing and Dancing
  - Dress-Up/Costumes
  - Plays
  - Karaoke
  - Interactive Performance

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Fostering Imagination
  - Inventions
  - Recipes
  - Creating a new identity
  - Designing an imaginary city/country
  - Building something from "nothing" (scraps)
  - Creating metaphors for common objects or ideas

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Writing Practice
  - Letters (to the editor, pen pals, politicians, family members, celebrities, etc.)
  - Descriptions ("I spy," classmates, teachers, objects, themes, etc.)
  - Reader Response (What happened and why? What happens next?)
  - Scriptwriting

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Using Your Hands
  - Puppet Shows
  - Model Building
  - Virtual Fieldtrips (Online Resources)
  - Set Design
  - Posters and Visuals
  - Classroom Props
  - Items in Nature

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Using Your Ears
  - Audio Books and Cassettes
  - Conversation (pair and group)
  - Read-Alouds
  - Speeches
  - Oral Presentations
  - Pair-Share Activities
  - Conferencing

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Something From Home
  - Traditional Dress
  - Food and Recipes
  - Cultural Artifacts
  - Photographs
  - Songs, Celebrations, and Traditions
  - Guest Speakers
  - Family Events

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## Sample Instructional Practices For Differentiated Instruction (continued)

- Outside The Classroom
  - Field Trips
  - Environmental Explorations
  - Outdoor Observation and Writing
  - Field Guides
  - Nature Experiments
  - Community Involvement
  - Hometown Tours

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## Differentiated Assessments

- Are Ongoing
- Match Instruction
- Focus On Key Concepts
- Need To Be Clear
- Include Accessible Instructions
- Involve Teacher Modeling
- Provide Student Exemplars
- Emphasize Variation
- Use Rubrics

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## Activity #5: Closure



In pairs or small groups, discuss the items presented today that you feel will be MOST useful in your classroom. Using these ideas, concepts, and techniques, along with a curricular area that is of interest to you, discuss how they can be used to transform or modify an existing classroom lesson. Be prepared to present your ideas to the group, identifying the ways in which you have incorporated differentiated instruction.

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