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Differentiating Instruction to Prepare African American Males for High School Accelerated Courses

Monique Carson
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Walden University

College of Education

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Monique Carson

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2020

Abstract

Differentiating Instruction to Prepare African American Males for High School

Accelerated Courses

by

Monique Carson

MEd, Tarleton State University, 2011

BA, University of Texas at Arlington, 2006

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2020

Abstract

Differentiating instruction is important in helping students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles understand curricula; however, this can be challenging for educators. The educators at the study site reported that teachers' instructional practices could be affecting African American males' preparedness for accelerated courses. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices were being used in the classroom to prepare African American male students for accelerated courses at an urban, Title I school in the Southwest United States. The study was guided by Tomlinson's differentiated instruction framework. Research questions addressed the types of instructional practices teachers used to prepare students for accelerated courses, how instructional practices were aligned with best practices for differentiating instruction, and how instruction was differentiated to meet the academic needs of African American male students. Ten core content teachers were selected as participants. Data were collected using individual interviews and direct classroom observations. Using a priori and axial coding, the data were analyzed for emergent themes. Findings showed that differentiation strategies were being used but could be strengthened and that culturally responsive teaching had not been considered as a differentiation strategy. A 3-day professional development project for teachers was created to address culturally responsive teaching, learning styles, and differentiation for African American male students. The results of this study may help educators transform their instruction, cultivating a culture of equitable learning that could ultimately challenge students to rise to their full academic potential.

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Dedication

This project study is dedicated to the memory of my father, Donald Lee Carson, who believed in everything I did; my brother, John Moses Barron, who was the ultimate encourager; and my aunt, Dorothy Griggs, who always told me how proud she was of me.

To my beloved grandmother, Bigmama, time just would not sit still long enough for you to see this major accomplishment; the little girl who would sit at the end of your bed sucking her thumb—just as shy as she could be. Your strength, dominance, and confidence were a mere reflection of who I would become later in life. You were loving, kind, and understanding of my differences and treated me as treasure.

To my mother, Jeanetta Carson, you always instilled the importance of education and to allow God to order my steps. You were my model for persevering through the hardest of times; because of you, I learned to never give up on my dreams.

To my children, Sahara Smith, Hannah Fletcher, and Brayden Fletcher, I appreciate your patience and support through this process. Spending countless hours reading and writing while trying to meet your individual needs by being the best parent I could be was quite challenging; however, you all understood and loved me through it. I hope you three understand my dedication to education and my passion to effect change. I pray one day that you all will follow your passions and make a difference in the lives around you.

To my husband, Toriano Dawson, I appreciate your patience, love, and support through this entire process. Your encouragement and belief in me gave me the strength I needed to make it to the end. You were made perfect for me—I love you.

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Section 1: The Problem

Background

Differentiated instruction involves teachers' consideration (Anderson & Cook, 2014) of students' varying learning styles with attention to diversity and cultural background (Maeng & Bell, 2015) and adjusting instruction to meet these needs and maximize learning. This type of instruction allows students to express themselves, represent what they know, and engage in what is being taught (Tobin & Tippett, 2014). Students can demonstrate knowledge outside the traditional forms of assessment (Smets, 2019). More importantly, differentiated instruction allows for higher learning opportunities for all students (Valiandes, 2015).

Differentiated instruction can help balance equity in learning opportunities (De Neve, Devos, & Tuytens, 2015) for students. These opportunities include students meeting their learning goals (Coubergs, Struyven, Vanthournout, & Engels, 2017) and moving toward mastering the content. Because differentiated instructional activities are learner centered, students should take ownership of their own learning (De Jager, 2017). Through learner-centered activities, students learn to be independent and self-directed critical thinkers, problem solvers, and life-long learners (Cullen, Harris, & Hill, 2012). These skills can help students be successful in accelerated courses and reach their postsecondary endeavors (Bishop, Caston, & King, 2014). Students can benefit from these skills in the future but understanding how to implement differentiated activities can be a challenge to teachers (Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014).

Although differentiated instruction has been found to provide support for students with learning differences (Tomlinson, 2014; Valiandes, 2015), some teachers may be unaware of how to differentiate instruction. Learning how to successfully teach students from varying cultural backgrounds and learning styles who have never taken an accelerated course can present a challenge for teachers (Godley, Monroe, & Castma, 2015). Understanding how to instructionally engage students and design activities to meet the individual needs of each of their students presents teachers with the challenge of coping with these tasks (Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014). Not only do teachers need to differentiate for students, but they also need to maintain the rigor of the course (Taylor, 2015). The teacher must know how to vary the complexity (Taylor, 2015) while keeping in mind the students' learning styles, interests, and capacity (Suprpto, Liu, & Ku, 2017). By not differentiating instruction, teachers have ignored students' learning styles, and this neglect has a negative effect on learning outcomes (Soflano, Connolly, & Hailey, 2015). Teachers also have not taken cultural background into consideration, which may be a barrier to preparing students for accelerated classes (Maeng & Bell, 2015). Lastly, progress monitoring to adjust instruction is not taking place in the classroom; progress monitoring must take place for teachers to adjust their instruction (Roy, Guay, & Valois, 2015). Lack of differentiated instruction can set students up to be unprepared for accelerated courses (Raugh, 2014). When differentiated instruction is applied to the learning environment, increased student achievement occurs (Heng Ngee, 2014; Tomlinson, 2015). Adapting the instruction to the students' learning style is correlated with increased student achievement (Thiede et al., 2015). Students are

challenged during instruction and learning outcomes are increased (Callahan, Moon, Oh, Azano, & Hailey, 2015), while the students' individual learning needs are being met.

When students are unprepared for advanced placement and other accelerated courses, they are often unsuccessful and lose interest (Little, McCoach, & Reis, 2014) in taking future accelerated courses. There has been a move across the United States to improve students' preparedness for success in these accelerated courses (J. Wilson, Slate, Moore, & Barnes, 2014); however, narrowing the achievement gap has been the struggle (Kanno & Kangas, 2014). Understanding that cultural background plays a role in differentiating instruction, teachers should consider culturally responsive teaching in the classroom (Swanson & Nagy, 2014).

One group shown to perform below the national norms in accelerated course placement is African American male students. African American male students are least prepared for advanced placement exams, which is reflected in advanced placement scores, as well as SAT and ACT exam scores (Bryant, 2015; Ericson & McKlin, 2015). When African American male students are placed in accelerated courses, the support to help them become successful is not there (Conchas, Lin, Oseguera, & Drake, 2014; Noguera, 2014; Sadler, Sonnert, Tai, & Klopfenstein, 2016). Sadler et al. (2016) noted that placing resources in earlier courses before accelerated courses would be a better approach to preparing African American male students for advanced work. Noguera (2014) found that these resources included mentors, counseling, and other academic supports when students struggled academically. These resources help African American male students engage in what is being taught and rise to the expectations to succeed in

these accelerated courses (Swanson & Nagy, 2014). With these supports, African American male students have a better opportunity to connect to the content of these accelerated courses (Cooper & Davis, 2015). More research is needed to discover how teachers can prepare African American male students for accelerated courses and the strategies teachers can use to make the difference (Bryant, 2015).

The Local Problem

When reviewing the enrollment numbers in accelerated courses at the study site, administration and instructional specialists discovered that African American males were the least represented group at West Central High School (pseudonym), an urban Title I school in the Southwest United States. Currently, 23% of African American male juniors are enrolled in an accelerated American history course. A review of enrollment data prompted me to examine how instruction is delivered in classes that precede accelerated courses. School counselors at West Central High School are concerned that African American male juniors are not receiving the rigorous, differentiated instruction needed to prepare them for accelerated courses, which may be a reason these students are not taking accelerated courses (personal communication, March 31, 2017). Teachers must consider the differences in their classes and adjust their curriculum and instruction (Dixon et al., 2014) to meet the learning needs of their students; however, teachers may be unaware of how to adjust curriculum and instruction. The gap of practice addressed in this study was that teachers may not be providing rigorous, differentiated instruction to prepare African American students for accelerated courses. Differentiated instruction is the mindfulness of “individual abilities, learning styles, and interests” (Anderson & Cook, 2014, p. 4).

Teachers must move their instruction away from one size fits all to provide students with varied opportunities to learn (Goddard, Goddard, & Kim, 2015). However, teachers may not understand how to provide differentiated instruction; there may be a disconnect between understanding how to differentiate instruction and implementing rigorous, differentiated instruction (Suprayogi, Valcke, & Godwin, 2017). Teachers at West Central High School, as well as at other high schools in Briarwood Independent School District (ISD; pseudonym), are expected to teach and encourage students toward their maximum achievement (Assistant Principal, personal communication, March 31, 2017). However, this expectation is district-wide, and policy states that students may enroll in accelerated courses based on their interests. In this study, I investigated teachers' instructional practices because it was unknown whether teachers at West Central High School were providing rigorous, differentiated instruction that may prepare African American male students for accelerated courses and college (see Bethea, 2016; DiBenedetto & Myers, 2016).

Rationale

The district and study site created missions to drive educational goals and guide the work they do every day; however, parts of the work had not been evaluated to determine effectiveness. Arizona Education Agency (pseudonym) as well as Briarwood ISD expected the study site to increase student achievement and progress-monitoring percentages, close learning gaps, and prepare students for postsecondary opportunities. Though the school had met the expected standard of three indices required by the state, they failed to perform at standard for student achievement (Assistant Principal, personal

communication, March 31, 2017). After administrators looked at each subgroup and how they performed, the numbers confirmed that African American male students were the lowest performing subgroup. There is a strong correlation between instruction and student achievement (Shaunessy-Dedrick, Suldo, Roth, & Fefer, 2014). At the study site, it was not clear whether instruction was being differentiated for students, especially for the African American male subgroup (Instructional Coach, personal communication, April 5, 2017).

The district provides curriculum frameworks and outlines of lessons that cover content and meet the required state learning standards with differentiated lessons for various learning levels, including special education and limited English proficiency learners. The purpose of the curriculum frameworks is to streamline lessons that are intended and proven to increase student achievement through differentiated lessons. Although this resource has been provided and mandated for teachers to use, it was not known whether these differentiated lessons were being used at the study site (Counselor, personal communication, April 3, 2017).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices are being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students, for accelerated courses. Current research indicated that teachers must consider the differences in their classes and adjust their curriculum and instruction (Dixon et al., 2014) to meet the learning needs of their students. Teachers must note students' prior knowledge and readiness of a subject (Maeng & Bell, 2015). Differentiated instruction also includes the appropriate support structures for students to

build a knowledge base to succeed in accelerated courses (Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2014). Because the school's and district's goal is to encourage all students to perform at their maximum achievement, it was important to explore educators' viewpoints on the instructional practices they use for their African American male students to prepare them for accelerated courses.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study. The definitions reflect how they were used.

Accelerated courses: Courses that fall under advanced placement, International Baccalaureate program, and honors courses. Accelerated courses are designed to challenge and interest students of high achievement capability through increased rigor (Schmitt & Goebel, 2015). These courses increase the odds of college success (Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014).

Advanced placement: College-level courses through the College Board program that offer "34 subject-specific courses in the arts, English, history and social sciences, world languages, and science" (Shaunessy-Dedrick et al., 2014, p. 111). End-of-course exams can be taken, and college credit can be awarded. The courses provide rigor, and students who take these courses understand the demands of postsecondary education (Richardson, Gonzalez, Leal, Castillo, & Carman, 2016).

Culturally responsive pedagogy: The "cultural knowledge, prior experience, frames of reference and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make

learning encounters more relevant to and effective [for students of color]" (Ellerbrock, Cruz, Vásquez, & Howes, 2016, p. 226).

Differentiated instruction: The awareness of "individual abilities, learning styles, and interests" (Anderson & Cook, 2014, p. 4). Differentiated instruction includes consideration of diversity and cultural background (Suprayogi et al., 2017). Learning becomes student centered (Maeng & Bell, 2015) and focuses on the different learning styles of each student.

Learning styles: The ways students learn and can be "differentiated between the way students process information: active experimentation or reflective observations" (Truong, 2016, p. 1185). Styles can also be described as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile (Soflano et al., 2015). These indicators show "how a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment" (Truong, 2016, p. 1185).

Theory of multiple intelligences: As defined by Gardner (as cited in Suprpto et al., 2017), this theory "refers to a biopsychological potential of our species to process certain kinds of information in certain kinds of ways. . . . Gardner proposed the existence of seven distinct intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal" (p. 215).

Significance of the Study

In this study, I addressed a local problem by exploring how instructional practices are being implemented in the classroom to help African American male students with rigorous material that could help prepare them for accelerated courses. This project study was unique because I explored teachers' instructional practices, the use of best practices

of differentiation, and meeting the academic needs of African American male students (see Kettler & Hurst, 2017; J. Wilson et al., 2014). The results of this study may provide insights into how educators can instructionally challenge African American male students in courses that are designed to prepare them for accelerated courses, and may improve understanding of African American males' intelligence, culture, coping styles, and self-worth (see Williams & Portman, 2014). The results of the study may lead to positive social change by helping the local site and district meet their mission and academic objectives of preparing all students for college and assisting students in meeting state requirements of college readiness.

Local Change

Findings may improve awareness among West Central High School administrators, academic coordinators, instructional specialists, and counselors regarding current teacher instruction and the ways instruction is differentiated for all students. Based on the project's results, administrators or instructional specialists may use the professional development project to train teachers to implement strategies to differentiate their instruction. Teachers may be able to learn how to respond to their students' needs and how to present content (see Dixon et al., 2014). All students, especially African American male students, may feel supported and empowered to take accelerated courses that may challenge and prepare them to move toward postsecondary opportunities (see Kotok, 2017).

Professional Application

This study may support professional education practice by providing teachers with a better understanding of the importance of moving from traditional forms of teaching to differentiated instruction. Having this insight helps to teachers to “maximize each student’s learning potential” (Maeng & Bell, 2015, p. 2066). Teachers may also be able to make connections between differentiated instruction and increased student progress, which is expected of students each year. According to Arizona’s state report card, each student is expected to show growth with yearly state assessments. Teachers at the study site may be able to use the state’s report card as an example of student progress. The findings of this study may also have implications for future teacher development.

Social Change

Educators have an obligation to prepare students to be successful in their future endeavors (Kennedy & Odell, 2014). Educators can prepare students by challenging them to their full capacity (Rea & Zinskie, 2017). The results of this study may create positive change in how instruction is delivered for students, especially African American male students, by taking culture and learning styles into account. Differentiated instruction allows students to learn in various ways based on their learning styles (Dixon et al., 2014). When students are empowered to explore themselves and the world, they are likely to contribute to the world in a significant way (Douglass & Morris, 2014). Educating others involves teaching them to have a growth mindset (Tomlinson, 2015), which is the effort made toward academic growth and success (O’Rourke, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). Teachers should teach their students what it means to have a growth mindset

to better themselves and to be responsible adults and citizens of their communities (Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015).

Research Questions

In this study, I examined the instructional practices teachers use to prepare students for accelerated courses. Tomlinson's (2015) differentiated instruction highlights the perspective that differentiating instruction can help students prepare for accelerated courses. This study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What instructional practices do teachers use when preparing all students for accelerated courses?
2. How do instructional practices used in courses preceding accelerated courses align with best practices of differentiation?
3. How do teachers differentiate instructional practices to meet the academic needs of African American male students?

Review of the Literature

Differentiated instruction allows for the consideration of students' interests, readiness levels, and learning styles (Anderson & Cook, 2014). Differentiating instruction helps meet the individual needs of students (Acosta-Tello & Shepherd, 2014). Understanding learning styles with consideration for diversity and cultural backgrounds can help transform how instruction is delivered, especially for African American male students (Maeng & Bell, 2015). Differentiated instruction for African American male students is the connection between culture and experiential knowledge to meet educational goals (Chenowith, 2014). Differentiating while providing rigorous instruction

for African American males could maximize African American male students' academic growth (De Neve et al., 2015) and may prepare these students for accelerated courses.

I searched for studies associated with differentiated instruction, advanced placement, and African American males. References were peer reviewed and were mostly on the subject of implementing differentiated instruction and training educators on how to differentiate instruction. There was limited research on how to differentiate instruction for African American male students. Databases used in my searches included Academic Search Complete, Education Source, ProQuest Central, Sage, Eric, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar. Search terms used included *differentiated instruction*, *African American males*, *black males*, *leaning styles*, *learning profiles*, *Tomlinson*, *advanced placement*, *gifted education*, *accelerated courses*, *scaffolding*, *tiered activities*, and *flexible grouping*. Emerging themes from these searches included differentiation in a conceptual framework, differentiated instructional strategies, differentiating advanced placement, and differentiating instruction for African American males.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was Tomlinson's (2000) differentiated instruction and assessment. Differentiated instruction is the awareness of "individual abilities, learning styles, and interests" (Anderson & Cook, 2014, p. 4). Tomlinson's (2015) model focuses on classroom environment, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom leadership and management that can be used to meet the learning levels and styles of students. For students to have academic success, academic and social supports that focus on the individual student should be in place (Chase, Hilliard, Geldhof,

Warren, & Lerner, 2014) to help students maximize their learning. According to Dixon et al., (2014), support can be accomplished by focusing on students' learning styles.

Understanding the learning styles helps teachers tailor the instruction to each student's individual needs (Truong, 2016). There are four areas of strategies teachers can use to differentiate their instruction: "content, process, product, and learning environment" (Tomlinson, 2014, 15-19).

Content. Content is the knowledge and skills teachers expect their students to learn (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). Through differentiated instruction, teachers can vary what is being read and how it is being read. For example, teachers can have students read a story, novel, or article as a small group, whole group, or independent reader.

Process. Process refers to how the teacher teaches the content and how students "understand and assimilate facts, concepts, and skills" (Mulvey, Cooper, Accurso, & Gagliardi, 2014, p. 92). The activities vary depending on the students' learning styles (Taylor, 2015). Through process, teachers can differentiate their instruction through visuals and manipulatives. Teachers can also use learning centers to provide opportunities to concentrate on specific skills based on students' needs.

Product. The product of differentiation is what the student has learned because of the differentiated instruction (Fitzgerald, 2016). Students can demonstrate learning outcomes over time (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). The product can be demonstrated through a specific project or an assessment at the end of a unit.

Learning environment. The learning environment is connected to the physical space in which students learn, and the learning environment can be changed to support

students' learning (Civitillo, Denessen & Molenaar, 2016). The change can be done through movement in the classroom or use of technology in the classroom (Ernest, Heckaman, Thompson, Hull, & Carter, 2011). The student may also move outside of the classroom (Whitney, 2014) to other locations such as the library or a resource room.

Applying this framework to the current study highlighted the perspective that differentiating instruction can help students prepare for acceleration courses. Preparation could increase the likelihood of success in these courses. Tomlinson (2014) noted that in a differentiated classroom, teachers believe in the capacity of their students and their capability to succeed. Though differentiated instruction, teachers can help build their students' capacity to manage the rigor of accelerated coursework (Rea & Zinskie, 2017). Using the study's research questions, I examined teachers' instructional practices and explored whether they were aligned with the best practices of differentiation. Tomlinson's (2014) framework grounded my research questions and supported my exploration of the ways teachers can differentiate their instruction through "content, process, product, and learning environment" (p. 15-19). These differentiated strategies were also the constructs used in the data analysis of this study.

Review of the Broader Problem

The broader problem included mandates to protect students, differentiated instructional strategies, the history of advanced placement, difficulties of differentiating advanced placement, connection between African American male students and advanced placement, teaching African American male students, and differentiating instruction for African American male students.

Mandates. For the protection of students, the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004, response to intervention, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 were implemented to ensure students with disabilities were given a fair education addressing their needs alongside their peers (Jennings & Lauen, 2016). Special education students were graduating at a 50% rate compared to the 75% rate of their peers, and the U.S. Department of Education sought to improve the outcome of these students (Flowers et al., 2017). These mandates not only provided students with disabilities a fair education but also prompted more accountability for districts, schools, and educators (Crawford, 2014). Through these mandates, educators were required to look at their instruction and supports and assess their alignment with student learning needs (Crawford, 2014). As a result of these mandates, schools began to differentiate their instruction from a classroom perspective; however, educators were not prepared or trained to differentiate instruction for individual student needs based on learning styles (De Neve et al., 2015)

Differentiated instructional strategies. Differentiated instructional strategies are used to accommodate different learning styles and the processing of information (Subban & Round, 2015). Teachers can use varying strategies depending on their students; however, the activities used within the strategies should be meaningful (Sharan, 2015). To understand which strategies to use, teachers must know their students and their cultural links (Mills et al., 2014). Teachers must accommodate for differences and diversity (Cha & Ahn, 2014; Dack, 2018). The strategies for differentiating instruction do not provide a recipe; they provide a way for teachers to think about learning and their

instruction (Tomlinson, 2001). These strategies include scaffolding, tiered activities, and flexible grouping.

Scaffolding. Scaffolding is an instructional strategy a teacher uses to support student learning. It is a technique through which the teacher moves the student to a higher level of thinking (Fernández, Wegerif, Mercer, & Rojas-Drummond, 2015). This strategy is connected to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, which is the "distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving" (Kuusisaari, 2014, p.47). The potential development is the central focus in the scaffolding instructional strategy. The teacher can "focus on the trajectory of students' learning and development" (K. Wilson & Devereux, 2014, p. 92). To meet their potential development, students should be challenged with rigor beyond what they can do, with the support of the teacher (Early, Rogge, & Deci, 2014). For example, the teacher can support their students with the reciprocal reading method (Palinscar & Brown, 1984). The teacher reads a text with the students, the students read with each other, and the students read on their own. This goal of scaffolding is to take the students from dependence to independence of their learning. Along with planned scaffolding, there are also interactional elements (Oliveira & Athanases, 2017). Contingent scaffolding, a strategy of teacher and student interaction, occurs when the teacher moves the student through a desired level of learning (K. Wilson & Devereux, 2014). Instructional decisions are made in the moment. The goal of scaffolding is to help students gradually withdraw from

teacher support to control their own learning (Lange, Costley, & Han, 2016; Oliveira & Athanases, 2017).

Tiered activities. Tiering activities is a differentiation strategy that meets the needs of students by creating assignment based on low, middle, and high readiness levels while addressing the content learning goals (Maeng & Bell, 2015). Tiered instruction can be based on readiness or interest (Taylor, 2015). The rigor of the activity varies based on the readiness level of the student with focus on the process levels (Whitney, 2014). Based on the student's learning style or preferences and readiness level, different formats of an assignment (Landrum & McDuffie, 2010) can be given for the student producing the same outcome or meeting the same learning goals as other students. For example, a learning goal of a lesson could be to understand the elements of a story read in class. Tiered activities could include creating a book trailer, creating a PowerPoint, or using a display board for a presentation of the story. Each activity would be based on the readiness level of the students. Connecting the activity to the readiness level increases active participation in the classroom (Subban & Round, 2015) because the activity becomes "suited for the [students'] interests and learning profile" (p. 124). It also important for the teacher to have an awareness of the students they teach. Understanding the students helps the teacher to construct the tier appropriately and "facilitate understanding, matching the learner's challenge level, while addressing the curricular components" (Richards & Omdal, 2007, p. 426).

Flexible grouping. When delivering instruction, students can be grouped with a partner, small group, or whole group. Students can be grouped by demonstrated ability or

readiness level (Missett, Brunner, Callahan, Moon, & Azano, 2014). Grouping can also change over time (Nicholae, 2014) with the readiness levels of students continually changing. Through flexible grouping, students learn from one another and their learning is enhanced. There are opportunities for students to be exposed to challenging or rigorous work (Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, & Rosenthal, 2015) with the help of their peers. Students encourage one another to take ownership of their own learning (McDonald et al., 2016). Although this differentiation strategy can be beneficial to students, it can be challenging for the teacher to oversee. Some teachers lack the training, organization, resources, and curriculum (Cha & Ahn, 2014) to differentiate their instruction with flexible grouping. However, flexible grouping can be “possible through systematic, focused, and continuous teacher training and support” (Valiandes, 2015, p. 22).

Advanced placement. After an experiment by the Ford Foundation in 1951, which included Phillips Exeter Academy, The Lawrenceville School, Andover Academy, Princeton, Harvard, and Yale, College Board (2011a) introduced collegiate-level courses in secondary schools and began administering advanced placement exams in 1955 to provide greater access to higher education (College Board, 2011b). Participation in advanced or accelerated courses helps promote successful transitions to postsecondary education (Castellano, Sundell, & Richardson, 2017) and has been associated with college readiness and higher student achievement (Kettler & Hurst, 2017). College Board (2011c) currently offers 37 courses and exams. Each exam varies in length and task, but most have multiple choice questions, essays, and short answer responses. When tested, students can score a 1 (no recommendation for college credit) to a 5 (extremely well

qualified for college credit). Scores of 3 or higher can earn college credit (College Board, 2011d) but at the discretion of the college or university.

Differentiating advanced placement. Advanced placement courses are intended to provide students with opportunities to accelerate in their learning and prepare for postsecondary education (Castellano et al., 2017), coursework may need to be differentiated to meet the varying learning styles of students taking these courses. There can be some misconceptions about differentiating instruction and teachers may find it especially hard to differentiate within advanced placement or accelerated courses. It is not about making lessons plans for every student a teacher has; it is an additional step to the lesson planning process (Acosta-Tello & Shepherd, 2014). Birnie (2015) claimed most students fall within four “manageable ranges” (p. 63). There are instances in which some students may need more attention than others. Teachers may find themselves in the middle of meeting their students’ needs and meeting the requirements of institutions (Rauh, 2014). Fulfilling these requirements can be challenging, but AP content can still be addressed, and deep learning can take place (Parker & Lo, 2016). Though advanced placement teachers find themselves pressed to prepare their students for the end of course exam, teachers should find ways to make content meaningful (Parker & Lo, 2016).

Differentiation involves a teacher adjusting the instruction to provide the best possible learning experience (Aliakbari & Haghghi, 2014). The focus is on the individual learning needs of the students and there should be more thoughtful differentiation in an AP classroom (Rauh, 2014). Advanced placement lessons should be planned based on the students’ learning styles, interests and abilities and vary in complexity (Aliakbari &

Haghighi, 2014). Various differentiation methods can be used: acceleration, ability grouping, residential academies, and pullout enrichment (Schmitt & Goebel, 2015) to provide rich and authentic learning experiences. Based on the readiness levels and matched abilities (Missett et al., 2014), ability-based (flexible) grouping is a recommended practice of differentiating accelerated coursework. With flexible grouping, students can meet their educational goals of “broadening, accelerating, and extending the curriculum” (Missett et al., 2014, p. 249). Ability grouping can be perceived as a way of excluding students from accelerated courses and/or curriculum (Plucker & Callahan, 2014); however, with ongoing training, teachers can learn how to group students based on students’ recognized potential. Questioning also allows the teacher to scaffold and “enhance the students’ analytical and creative thinking skills” (Plucker & Callahan, 2014, p. 278). In addition, inquiry-based learning and discussion groups are instructional strategies are helpful to student success (Plucker & Callahan, 2014).

In support of differentiating advanced placement instruction for students, there are other things to be considered. Olszewski-Kubilius and Clarenbach (2014) stated that there are noncognitive factors in preparing students for rigorous coursework. Teaching students to have “grit, self-control, and mindsets towards ability and effort” (Olszewski-Kubilius & Clarenbach, 2014, p.104) is important. Through grit and self-control, students find opportunities to challenge themselves (Irwin, Doig, & Corbin, 2017). Helping students to challenge themselves requires the teachers to “scaffold for advanced thinking and questioning skills” (Olszewski-Kubilius & Clarenbach, 2014, p.106) and provide any needed additional supports. These supports may include study sessions, peer groups, and

one-on-one skill sessions (Bruce-Davis et al., 2014). Bruce-Davis et al. (2014) stated that advanced learning can be differentiated through real world problem solving and through questioning. Real-world problem solving allows the student to connect with the learning environment and apply what he or she has experienced to what is being taught.

African American students and advanced placement. Of the 20,833 “African American males in the 2013 cohort in the United States who had 60% or more AP potential based on their PSAT/NMSQT scores, 72% of them did not take any matched AP exam during high school” (College Board, 2014). Of the students who do take AP courses, African American male students earn AP credit at 23% compared to 40% of White male students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). There have been attempts to eliminate this disparity of advanced placement enrollment, allowing students the option of taking more accelerated courses (Royster, Gross, & Hochbein, 2015; Wilson et al., 2014). No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001), Section 1702 (Access to High Standards Act), and all-inclusive state policies on advanced placement access (McBride Davis, Slate, Moore, & Barnes, 2015) have been steps to eliminate this disparity. Current research indicates school districts in the United States are implementing accountability measures to circumvent barriers to participation in accelerated courses such as teacher gatekeeping (Rowland & Shircliffe, 2016).

Teaching African American male students. There have been “persistent racial gaps in school discipline, educational opportunities, and attainment levels for African American male students” (Hayes, Juarez, & Escoffery-Runnels, 2014). Though the argument that African American male students are more suited to be taught by African

American teachers (Coffey & Farinde-Wu, 2016), African American males are taught by educators of all races and the argument that African American males should be taught by African American teachers is not necessarily required for these students to be successful. Goldenberg (2014) stated that because of cultural inconsistencies and congruencies, African American male students have had difficulties in learning and teachers have had difficulties with teaching. In many instances, the subject of the African race and culture is excluded in instruction due to the teachers' lack of knowledge of the culture (Allen, 2015), yet is important in connecting African American males to instruction. Kayama, Haight, Gibson, and Wilson's (2015) study of the criminal justice system and its correlation to out of school suspensions for African American male students pointed out that the "unfamiliarity with Black culture [leads] to the stereotypical ideas of Black males as dangerous" (p.27). In the aforementioned studies, the importance of teacher roles was also mentioned. Allen (2015) highlighted that teachers play an important role in the educational successes of African American male students. Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2016) also added that teachers undoubtedly play a significant role in influencing the expectations of students regarding their academic opportunities.

Differentiating instruction for African American males. African American males face many academic and behavioral challenges (Ransom, 2016). African American males score the lowest amongst all achievement levels (Goings, Smith, Harris, Wilson, & Lancaster, 2015). Marginalized students sometimes have a misunderstanding of their capabilities (Mills et al., 2014) and expectations from their teachers may be different (Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2014). Sometimes African American males are seen as having

deficiencies and subsequently, teachers may underestimate their potential (Oliveira & Athanases, 2017). Ultimately, this can lead to African American males performing well below their recognized potential (Gagné, 2015). Learning, however, should be equitable and attainable. Instruction should help maximize African American male's capacity (Dack, 2018). Understanding their capacity also means that teachers must understand their students and the "various injustices they may experience in their lives both inside and outside school grounds" (Mills et al., 2014, p. 335).

Teachers should work to inspire African American males' "passion to explore new ideas and discover worlds of knowledge for themselves" (Dumas & Nelson, 2016, p. 27). Challenging African American males also includes commensurate support (Wilson & Devereux, 2014), encouraging them to be able to do what is expected of them and understanding the demands of the rigor of the content. With support in place, African American males can enhance in self-competence and connectedness (Bottiani, Bradshaw, & Mendelson, 2016). Culturally responsive teaching is important to differentiating instruction for African American males. Chenowith (2014) stated that "when educators understand the beliefs, biases, and behaviors of their students, they can make culturally informed decisions about how to make teaching and learning most effective" (p. 35). Chenowith (2014) also suggested using cultural scaffolding—using the values and personal backgrounds of students to promote and boost academic and intellectual attainment. This form of scaffolding can improve the educational successes (Bell, 2014) of African American male students. Goings et al. (2015) stated that teachers should consider the cultural ethos of African American males to guide their instruction:

“spirituality, harmony, movement, verve, affect, expressive individualism, orality, sociality, and communalism” (p. 56). African American males also work well in science, discovery, expression, and exploration (Dumas & Nelson, 2016) and experiential activities (Bell, 2014; Bristol, 2015). African American males’ learning also increases with real-world context (Bristol, 2015). Teachers can differentiate learning outside of the classroom, taking what is learned inside the classroom and applying it to what African American male students may experience daily. Teachers can also allow African American male students to bring in their experiences and concerns, adding to the academic content (Allen, 2015).

Critical Analysis of Literature

Differentiating instruction is important in meeting the needs of all students. The literature review focused on differentiating instruction and the consideration of students’ abilities, learning styles and interests. Understanding the learning styles helps teachers tailor the instruction to each student’s individual needs (Truong, 2016). There are ways that educators can differentiate their instruction. “Content, process, product, and learning environment” (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 15-19) should be considered when differentiating instruction. Tomlinson (2014) believed that in a differentiated classroom, teachers believe in student capacity and their capability to succeed. Through differentiated instruction, teachers can help build their students’ capacity to the rigor of accelerated coursework. There are multiple of ways of differentiating instruction through scaffolding, tiered activities, and flexible grouping. The literature review described that though there are several ways educators can differentiate their instruction, the strategies do not provide a

recipe; they provide a way for teachers to think about learning and their instruction (Tomlinson, 2001).

The literature review is also connected to Tomlinson's differentiated instruction with advanced placement and teaching African American male students by offering suggestions and strategies teachers can differentiate their instruction. Advanced placement is intended to promote successful transitions to secondary education. Though advanced placement courses are intended to resemble a college freshman course (College Board, 2011a), advanced placement courses can be differentiated. Teachers may find themselves in the middle of meeting their students' needs and meeting the requirements of institutions (Rauh, 2014). Fulfilling these requirements can be challenging, but AP content can still be addressed, and deep learning can happen (Parker & Lo, 2016). Researchers of these studies showed that African American male students lag behind other students in advanced placement courses though it is possible for these students to be successful in these accelerated courses (College Board, 2014). Teaching African American male students can be done, and they can be successful (Dumas & Nelson, 2016). It was found throughout the literature that cultural awareness was important in teaching and differentiating instruction for African American male students (Bell, 2014). Chenowith (2014) suggested that teachers use cultural scaffolding—using the values and personal backgrounds of students to promote and boost academic and intellectual attainment. This form of scaffolding can improve the educational successes (Bell, 2014) of African American male students.

In conclusion, educators should alter instruction to ensure that each student learns at a level that works for him or her (Aliakbari & Haghghi, 2014; Subban & Round, 2015; Tomlinson, 2015; Truong, 2016); however, knowing how to adjust the instruction may be problematic for some. Teachers' instructional practices were examined to help educators adjust their instruction to help prepare African American male students for advanced courses.

Implications

In this qualitative project study, I sought to understand classroom instructional practices to classroom to help prepare African American male students for accelerated courses. In the literature review, I outlined the differentiated instructional strategies that can be used to differentiate accelerated courses and the considerations in differentiation instruction for African American males. Possible misconceptions teachers may have with differentiating accelerated coursework are also identified. The current study was designed to address teacher expectations and student preparation for end of course exams from institutions (i.e. College Board). The study was also designed to bring attention to the limitations teachers may have with differentiating instruction for African American males and how these limitations may have affected the study's findings. In this study, I attempted to demonstrate how differentiated instruction could prepare African American males for accelerated coursework by tailoring instruction to meet the individual academic needs of students.

Summary

In this qualitative study, the instructional practices teachers use to prepare students for accelerated courses were examined. Some teachers may face limitations with differentiating instruction for African American male students; however, insight to these limitations may provide important information as to how teachers can strengthen their instruction in preparing African American males for accelerated courses. The literature review included the conceptual framework, Tomlinson's (2000) differentiated instruction and assessment, and strategies for differentiating instruction; I also connected these concepts to advanced placement coursework and differentiating instruction for African American males.

Section 2 is an explanation of the methodology of research for this study; the research design and approach, participants, data collection and analysis will be discussed in this section. A major goal of this capstone was to create a project (Section 3) that could help educators understand differentiated instruction and how to apply strategies to everyday instruction. This section will also consist of a rationale for the project, a review of literature, project description, project evaluation plan, and project implications. Section 4 of this study will include reflections and conclusions. This reflection consists of project strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change, reflection of the importance of work, implications, applications, and directions for future research, and the conclusion. Lastly, my project study is included in Appendix A along with other study-related documentation.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the instructional practices teachers use to prepare African American male students for accelerated courses. There are various methodological approaches in social science research, but not every one of those approaches is appropriate to the purpose of a study. To fulfill the purpose of the current study, which focused on teachers and their instructional practices in a natural setting, I chose the appropriate methodology to answer the research questions.

Research Design and Approach

The methodological approach for this study was qualitative with an explanatory case study design. In a case study, the researcher explains or explores a phenomenon and answers the research questions (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). Yin (2009) noted that the type of case study should be based on the types of research questions and how much control the researcher has over behavioral and contemporary events. As the researcher, I did not have the ability to manipulate events. Instead, I conducted observations and interviews. Using research questions in this study addressed the how and the what. Yin (2009) stated that these types of questions involve functional links needing to be tracked over time.

In this study, I sought to explain the instructional practices used to help prepare African American males for accelerated courses. With an explanatory case study design, I had the ability to collect a variety of data including direct observations and interviews. Through data analysis, I hoped to explain the connection between differentiating

instruction for African American male students and their preparedness for accelerated courses.

In qualitative research, the researcher “attempts to understand individuals, groups, and phenomena in their natural settings in ways that are contextualized and reflect the meaning that people make out of their own experiences” (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 2). In contrast to a qualitative approach, a quantitative approach is used to measure variables and to answer questions about how many and how much using numerical data (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Hypotheses and null hypotheses are tested, and specific sampling strategies are used (Burkholder, Cox, & Crawford, 2016). A qualitative approach is used to answer how and why questions (Yin, 2009). I used the qualitative approach to obtain a deeper understanding of the instructional practices educators use to prepare African American male high school students for accelerated courses. Qualitative researchers collect direct evidence (Baskarada, 2014) by observing the phenomenon in its natural setting and making my interpretations about what they see, hear, and understand (Creswell, 2012).

Qualitative researchers study people in their ordinary environments while trying to understand and make meaning of what people can bring to the environment (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative researchers attempt to identify “meaning-relevant kinds of beliefs and interests—focusing on differences in forms of things that make a difference for meaning” (Erickson, 2018, p. 43). Qualitative researchers are observers in the study and can become participants when doing field research (Babbie, 2015). There are several

types of the qualitative research: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study (Babbie, 2015).

According to Wang and Geale (2015), narrative research is used to tell the story of an individual. The narrative approach allows the researcher to describe the participant's lived experiences to explain a phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Phenomenological research is used to explain the experiences of a phenomena as understood by those in the situation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The actors or persons must be able to interpret the experience so the researcher can interpret their explanation of the phenomenon (Adams & van Manen, 2017). Grounded theory is "an attempt to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered in observational data" (Babbie, 2015, p. 308). People define their reality based on their beliefs, and the researcher looks for similarities and differences in the data to form concepts (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A common type of qualitative research is case studies. Case studies are used to explain how episodic events occur with the use of a framework; they are specific and complex (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Case studies focus on one or more examples or cases of social significance (Babbie, 2015). Ethnography is a "research technique in which the personal experiences of individuals are used to reveal power relationships and other characteristics of institutions within which they operate" (Babbie, 2015, p. 312). In this approach, the ethnographer is a participant in the fieldwork to describe and interpret a group and its culture (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

To focus on one or a few instances (Babbie, 2015) of educators' experiences differentiating rigorous instruction for African American males, a case study was

appropriate to gain deeper insight to whether African American male students are prepared for accelerated courses. Conducting a case study involves collecting a variety of data including interviews and direct observations (Yin, 2009). In the current study, I also reviewed district and school state reports. The case study approach enabled me to reveal possible barriers preventing African American males from participating in accelerated courses despite the courses being open to all students.

Participants

Population and Sampling Procedures

Based on the 2015-2016 school report card, the student population of the study site was diverse with 71.7% of the 863 students being economically disadvantaged. The student population consisted of 73.6% African American students, 23.1% Hispanic students, and 3.3% White, Asian, and Pacific Island students. The school was chosen because of its high percentage of African American students compared to other schools in the district. I used purposeful sampling to recruit potential participants based on the information they could provide (see Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). I was able to select participants based on the selection criteria for the study. Purposeful sampling allowed for a full examination of the perspectives and experiences of teachers and their instructional practices.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

I used purposeful sampling to recruit core subject teachers. To ensure data saturation, I recruited 10 core subject teachers who teach on-level, honors, and advanced placement courses. These 10 core subject teachers had between 2 and 30 years of

teaching experience. Each of the teachers had six classes in different disciplines including English language arts, mathematics, history, and science. Selecting these 10 core subject teachers allowed for deeper inquiry; however, these 10 teachers may not represent the perspectives of all teachers at the study site (see Ishak & Bakar, 2014).

Procedures for Gaining Access to Participants

I obtained permission from the district's research department by completing an online application to conduct the study. The district's online application included questions similar to those in the Walden University Institutional Review Board application: description and background of study, purpose of study, procedures, how much time the study would take, risks and benefits, type of payment and copies of the consent form, interview protocol, and observation protocol. Once I obtained the district's approval, I had to obtain the study site principal's permission before conducting the study. I emailed the principal the district's approval letter and the letter of cooperation to complete. The principal emailed consent and assigned a site counselor to oversee the study and be of assistance if I needed it. After gaining the district's approval, I was able to complete the Walden University Institutional Review Board application and obtain permission to conduct the study (Approval #12-11-18-0626114). I used the district's website to access the teachers' names and email addresses. The site counselor provided me with a list of each core teacher's teaching schedule and their planning periods. The participants were given 2 weeks to review the consent form, ask questions, and to reply to the study invitation.

Methods of Establishing a Researcher-Participant Working Relationship

In building the researcher-participant relationship, I first emailed the participants an invitation and then met with each of the 10 teachers prior to the data collection to introduce myself and to explain the study, including the problem, purpose, and research questions. I also described the purpose of the direct observations and interviews.

Providing the participants with the purpose of the interview and reviewing confidentiality measures can promote trust and rapport between both parties (Råheim et al., 2016). I also provided my participants with my contact information should they have questions or need to reach me for any reason. I also provided them with Walden University's research participant advocate contact information if they had any questions about their participant rights.

Ethical Protection of Participants

Conducting research involves ethical challenges of preserving anonymity or confidentiality, mitigating damage, and honoring common experiences (Yin, 2016). Before conducting the study, I completed the Human Research Protections training required by all Walden research students. Protecting privacy, minimizing harm, and respecting the participants was of importance. An informed consent form provides participants with details of the study and informs them of the possible risks or benefits of their participation (Nusbaum, Douglas, Damus, Paasche-Orlow & Estrella-Luna, 2017). Participants in the current study were given an informed consent form so they could provide consent for the study. Participants were ensured of the confidentiality of their identities and the site location through the use of pseudonyms, and were given the option

to withdraw from the study at any time. Allowing the participants to provide feedback and interact with the data and researcher helps the study to be more ethical (Thomas, 2017). Ravitch and Carl (2016) noted that researchers should consider beneficence, keeping in mind the welfare of the participants and mitigating the risk of harm.

Participants consent to the study under the assumption that no harm will be done (Nusbaum, Douglas, Damus, Paasche-Orlow & Estrella-Luna, 2017). To ensure the safety of the participants, the researcher works to build rapport with them (Damon et al., 2017). Being transparent in the goals and processes can help with rapport building (Mitchell, 2015; Tai & Ajjawi, 2016). In the current study, interview transcripts were secured on my personal password-protected laptop. Consent forms, interview protocols, and observation protocols were kept in a binder stored in a locked personal file cabinet in my home. All paper data were kept in the locked file and will be destroyed after 5 years.

Data Collection

Justification for Data Collection Methods

As the researcher, I was obligated to ensure that my choices for data collection aligned with my research questions. The research questions are the center of the study. The methodology is determined by the “recursive relationship between these questions and engagement with participants as well as structured reflexivity processes as research questions can evolve as the study progresses” (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 179). Charting or mapping out the research questions, core constructs, study goals, site, design methods, rationale, and instruments helped me determine whether there was alignment among the components of the study. The aim of this qualitative study was to provide a complete and

accurate description of this case (see Cronin, 2014). The researcher uses the research questions and the study's goals to decide the focus of the data collection processes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Interviews and direct observations were used for data collection.

Interviews and Observations

With individual interviews, researchers are provided with “deep, rich, individualized, and contextualized data that are centrally important” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 146). Through the experiences and processes described in greater depth, I was able to gain deeper insight to the personal experiences teachers have with differentiating their instruction. Through direct observation, I used interpretive and naturalistic approaches (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) to understand teacher differentiation practices. For the direct observation, I used field notes. Field notes are taken during an observational event to record and remember behaviors, activities, and events. They are also used to record and distinguish the researcher's experience and interpretation of those events. Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted that if the researcher understands that he or she holds strong feelings of objectivity, the interviewees can be solicited to challenge the researcher's stereotypes. In the interviews, I had an open mind, ready to learn. For interviews, I used taped recordings and explained to the participants why I was recording the interviews; the recordings were used to reflect on questions to ask on follow up interviews, if necessary (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Though an interviewee can receive the same questions as another interviewee, the follow-up questions and probing could lead to information that may not be discussed in the interview of another interviewee. No follow-up interviews were needed

The interview questions were researcher produced (Appendix C). The interview questions were based on what I already knew about differentiated instruction, questions stemmed from the literature I have studied about differentiated instruction, and questions on issues the participants might have had with differentiating instruction (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). These questions were reviewed for alignment with the research questions by three certified administrators who were former teachers and instructional coaches. The data were collected over the course of three weeks. Week one consisted of observations and interviews for three core content teachers; week two consisted of observations and interviews for five core content teachers; and, week three consisted of observations and interviews for the remaining two core content teachers. Research logs and reflective journals were used to record data and track personal biases that might have come up. Field notes and analytical memos provided me an opportunity and time to reflect on the study. Ravitch and Carl (2016) noted that the memos and field notes can serve as connective tissue for data collection and analysis processes informing future fieldwork. Writing memos and field notes was ongoing and a regular practice in the research process. Data review allows the researcher to refine the methods and make meaning of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). No background check for participant safety of the participants was needed for access to the study site because it was already one completed by Briarwood ISD prior to the research. Direct observation of classroom instruction occurred during school hours and interviews occurred during the teacher's planning period.

Systems for Keeping Track of Data

For privacy and confidentiality, each participant was given an alphanumeric number for privacy and confidentiality (DIF1901-DIF1910). I conducted each interview and observed each lesson. The interview MP3 recordings were stored on my personal password-protected laptop. The interview MP3 recording were uploaded into Nvivo 12.3, “a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software” that allowed me to “manage, store, organize, and reconfigure” (“What is Nvivo,” 2019) my data. The interviews were transcribed using Nvivo 12.3, and I reviewed each transcript for accuracy. Each transcript was stored on my personal password-protected laptop. Email correspondences with the participants were saved in an email folder through my Walden account.

Role of the Researcher

According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), “positionality refers to the researcher’s role and social location/identity in relationship to the context and setting of the research” (p. 6). I have been a professional and certified educator for 13 years. I have attended numerous trainings, workshops, and conferences for incorporating data in planning and instruction as a teacher and a school counselor. I was active in this research; I conducted the interviews and direct observations. Prior to data collection, I practiced with interview questions, made sure I had working recording equipment for the interviews, and kept a binder for direct observations. I made myself available for questions and was open to differences in opinions.

As a researcher, I considered my personal experiences and the biases I may possess related to the topic of differentiating for African American male students. Noble

and Smith (2015) noted that researcher biases can influence findings and must be accounted for. To keep track of my personal opinions and possible biases, I used a reflective journal. Reflective journals can be used to record my experiences through the data collection process and can be used for triangulation of perspectives (De Felice & Janesick, 2015). I do feel passionate on the topic of teaching to students' needs and have been an educator for over a decade. I have seen varying teaching attitudes over the years on this topic, and I knew I might encounter teachers whose perspectives differ from my own. Through reflective journaling, I was able to record the different perspectives, including my own and was able to determine that my personal biases did not interfere with the trustworthiness of the findings.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Methods

In data collection analysis, I was able to place the information in codes, categories and ultimately found common themes in the data. Codes can be words or short phrases that describe the idea of text, while the category is a collection of codes sharing the same attributes labeled by a word or phrase (Saldaña, 2016). Themes were formed from a category or collection of categories that reveal an aspect of the study. Themes show the relationship between concepts (Creswell, 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). When the researcher continues to see recurring patterns and has been able to find enough data to answer the research question(s), the researcher has reached data saturation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Coding began as soon as I received data; coding occurred during the entire data collection process through field notes and transcribed interviews. I personally used a

“computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called Nvivo 12.3” (“What is Nvivo,” 2019) to transcribe all the interviews and managed and configured the codes from the interviews. This instrument was appropriate for the current study, providing a guideline in organizing vast amounts of data. I used *a priori* coding, an inductive approach to coding, which codes are developed prior to the examination of the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I developed these codes based on the research questions. The interview questions were created to answer the research questions. Axial coding, which is a thematic or pattern coding (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) was used to help situate the constructs of the study’s findings.

Accuracy and Credibility of Findings

To assure accuracy and credibility of the findings, member checks, triangulation, peer debriefing, and clarifying researcher biases were used. For member checks, copies of the transcripts with theme summaries were sent to participants to check for accuracy, to review for clarification, to provide feedback, and allow for further comments. Data triangulation alludes to a collection of data sources to validate the same results within a phenomenon (Hussein, 2009). It was important to find the teachers and instructional specialists with different viewpoints to help with triangulation. Baskarada (2014) noted that investigator triangulation could help with internal validity. To also help with accuracy and credibility, peer briefing was of benefit to the study, allowing the researcher to step back from the data (Probst, 2015) to gain an impartial view of the data. A team of peers, also Walden University doctoral colleagues who have experience reviewing qualitative data, reviewed my observation notes, coding, transcriptions and other parts of

the methodology. To clarify researcher biases, I used my Walden colleagues who are also educators to check my interview questions prior to the interviews and my memos and coding for any inferences (Yin, 2009) drawn.

Discrepant Cases

Searching for different ways or methods to challenge different interpretations (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) was one of the main ways I checked for accuracy and credibility of the findings. I did not experience any discrepant cases or disconfirming evidence (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) that were problematic with my study or challenge any preconceived notions. In a discrepant case, a participant's experiences may differ from the rest of the data collected, and this data may have a significant effect on the results of the study. The discrepant case could refute [my] explanations and require a reformulation (Merriam, 2009) of the case. Since there were no discrepant cases, there was no need to use my Walden colleagues to reanalyze the interview transcripts. Copies of the transcripts with theme summaries were sent to participants to check for accuracy, to review for clarification, to provide feedback, and allow for further comments. Based on feedback, it was not necessary to conduct a second interview to clarify or resolve any differences in the data. I also engaged more into the data and learned about alternative explanations (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Data Analysis Results

In qualitative research, the researcher "attempts to understand individuals, groups, and phenomena in their natural settings in ways that are contextualized and reflect the meaning that people make out of their own experiences" (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p.2).

Qualitative data analysis allows the researcher to make meaning of the data collected and therefore discovering themes. There were two methods of data collection used for this case study: teacher interviews and classroom observations. To analyze this data, I used Yin's (2016) five-phase cycle that included "compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting and concluding" (p. 185-187). I experienced this cycle several times throughout data analysis stage to discover the themes in the following sections.

Smith and McGannon (2017) stated that, "member checks, or what is sometimes also termed 'respondent or participant validation', involve the participants of a project assessing the trustworthiness of research in terms of validating the credibility of qualitative data and results" (p.103). Each participant was emailed a copy of the draft findings and asked to review my interpretation of their own data included in the findings for accuracy and for credibility of the findings in the setting; participants were given a week to respond. Some of the participants followed up with a positive email about the study experience, but no participant responded with necessary changes to the findings and interpretation of the data. In the aforementioned peer debriefing, a team of peers, also Walden University doctoral colleagues who have experience reviewing qualitative data, reviewed my observation notes, coding, transcriptions and other parts of the methodology. These documents were also sent electronically to each of the peers via email. Each peer was asked to review each data and to probe the researcher's interpretations, incite deeper thinking and offer possible additional perspectives (Hadi & Closs, 2016). Each peer also checked for researcher biases and no suggestions for changes were noted.

Findings

The findings of this qualitative case study were triangulated based on sources of evidence collected in the months of January and February 2019. The evidence from the research study included a 45-minute classroom observation, an 11-25-minute interview, and a follow-up email from ten core teachers. I used the research questions as drivers for the study and after two cycles of coding with the Nvivo 12.3 program, several themes emerged. Key themes that emerged from the first research question were providing students with opportunities to advance themselves and allowing students to demonstrate leadership in the classroom. Key themes that emerged from the second research question are the use of scaffolding and allowing students to collaborate with one another. Lastly, key themes that emerged from the third research question are making the content relevant for African American males, lack of training for differentiating instruction for African American males and instruction is not differentiated for African American males (see Table 1).

Theme 1: Advancement and Fostering Student Strengths

All participants shared that in each of their classes, there were students who stood out more than other students in their classes. They acknowledged that there were students who came prepared for their classes and could benefit from a more challenging class. A few expressed their students' reservations of taking a more advanced or accelerated courses. Participant DIF1909 stated that she sets her lessons up in a way that helps those who are more advanced to work more independently as well as provides opportunities to help their peers. She acknowledged she has some students from her on-level classes who

could benefit from a more accelerated course, so she finds ways to challenge these students and build on their strengths. I observed a lesson on genetics in which the teacher had to provide hands-on support; however, many of her students independently worked on the assignment and offered help to their peers. The teacher gave instruction and set clear expectations and guidelines for the assignment, which allowed the students to work independently. This particular teacher stated in her interview, making a reference to the students who work ahead, “if you understand [how to do] this, you don’t need to wait for us to keep going.”

Because she has a classroom of varying levels, Participant DIF1902 noted that she tries to give her more advanced students an assignment that challenges them. She stated that she “adapts the assignment, keeping the same content but students may have different tasks or even more challenging tasks. She differentiates her assignments for the varying learning levels and needs of her students but sometimes gives her higher-level students project-based assignments. In Participant DIF902’s class, I observed her students creating posters on the use of laboratory equipment, using sign language to complete the posters. Her class had several kinesthetic students who seemed or needed the out of seat assignment, which allowed them to work with their peers and to move about the classroom. There were also students who walked around the room and helped other students.

I also observed some of the participants who were great at engaging their students and fostering the strengths of their students through enrichment activities, focusing in on their varying learning styles. I found it interesting from Participant DIF1909 when he

commented that he was just “planting a seed of pushing [his students] higher and higher... so they don’t feel complacent in their own education.” I observed him in a two-period classroom observation where he encouraged his students to think deeper when making connections. I noticed he had more male students in the particular period I observed, and the students seemed more connected to him. Participant DIF1909 mentioned in his interview that building relationships and rapport was important and vital to students learning in his class.

Theme 2: Demonstrating Leadership

In attempts to accelerate a student who shows potential to do more than his or her peers in class, many participants expressed the importance of helping these students develop independence and have opportunities to demonstrate leadership in the current setting (i.e. course level). Participant DIF1902 fosters independence and encourages her more accelerated students to help others in the class. In this science class, labs are weekly exercises done in groups. For those students who may struggle in the class, she provides them with a “mentor student, student helper, or study buddy.” Not only do the students who struggle are provided extra support through their peers, but these peer leaders are able to stretch their own knowledge of the learned content by helping others with the content. Participant DIF1904 stated that he “quickly identifies the high ends of the class, the outliers, and the anomalies.” He provides them with opportunities to lead the class which he has states has led to a positive learning environment.

Participant DIF1908 stated that providing students with a rubric of activity expectations helps each of the students to more comfortably and independently complete

assignments with their peers. He stated that students working collaboratively helps to foster leadership and independence. As he conferenced with each of the students about their individual essays, I observed the students working together, following the rubric to review each other's essays. There were some students who were comfortable reviewing the rubric to ensure their essays had the required content while others needed the assistance of their peers since the teacher was occupied with student conferences. I observed the same in another English classroom with Participant DIF1907 in which the students had to depend on each other to complete the analyzation of a poem. It was evident that some students could grasp the task and others could not. The students who had a handle on the assignment helped others who struggled while the teachers attempted to explain the assignment to those who struggled or were less engaged in the lesson for the day. Being able to collaboratively work with peers and independently complete a task are skills needed in accelerated courses.

Theme 3: Use of Scaffolding

In order to enhance learning, build on students' current skills, and aid in closing learning gaps, teacher differentiate their instruction. To differentiate is to consider the "content, process, product, and learning environment" to address the various learning levels and styles of each student (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 15-19). From the study, many participants discussed common instructional practice of scaffolding. Scaffolding is a vicarious consciousness in which the teacher probes the student to a higher level of thinking (Fernández et al., 2015).

There are many ways these teachers scaffold their lessons. Participant DIF1907 stated she scaffolds her lessons by having her students explain the concept in their own words, and she in turn teaches them the academic language. I observed her doing this with an activity called Do Now, which was a lesson starter. The students were learning strategies to analyze sentences within a paragraph that would be later used in the analysis of a poem. In the interview, this participant stated, “We scaffold down if we need them at this level... how we meet them where they are and scaffold to where they need to be.” She recognizes that there are different learning levels all within a single class and for the most part, across all her classes. Because his science class learns complex concepts, Participant DIF1901 understands that he must scaffold between class periods and must adjust his classes quite often. He stated that he starts with a simpler way to explain the concept, “breaking it down and tweaking” the lessons. He uses the students’ prior knowledge and builds on that.

I observed a classroom in which the teacher scaffolded most of the period to fill in learning gaps of material students were expected to know but did not know. He and I discussed what occurred during my observation period. He stated that many times he must adjust his lesson plans so that he does not leave his students behind. Participant DIF1904 stated that he had to move slowly in his classes, teaching his students basic understanding of how to complete an X/Y table; he is aware that this causes him to fall behind the pacing his district requires him to be, but he understands he must address his students’ learning gaps. Participant DIF1908 too understands that he must address the gaps of his students; he stated that he must reteach many things his writing students

should have learned in the course from the previous year. I observed this teacher working one on one with his students to address the writing deficiencies in their essays. These personalized conferences help to develop his students into stronger writers.

Theme 4: Student Collaboration

Participants shared that they commonly tailor their lessons to include student collaboration. No matter the student learning level, each participant shared that student collaboration was important in fostering student learning. The most common practice mentioned was flexible grouping. Students can be grouped with a partner, small group, or a whole group. Students can be grouped by demonstrated ability or readiness level (Missett et al., 2014). Grouping can also change over time (Nicholae, 2014) with the readiness levels of students continually changing. Flexible grouping was the most noted by participants as a strategy to enhance individual learning while working with a peer. Participant DIF1906 stated that she normally “groups the lower level students with higher level students,” which is common practice of flexible grouping.

In every classroom I observed, the students were paired together to complete assignments. I did not witness any of the individual assignments to be worked independently but required collaboration. Each member of the group had their individual part to do but had to rely on their peers to complete the task. In Participant 1903’s class, I observed engaged students having fun with the experiments, asking each other high level questions (e.g. Blooms Taxonomy) and encouraging one another to achieve each individual task needed to complete the group assignment. I observed the same in the classroom of Participant DIF1908. The students had the opportunity to work together,

peer editing a literary analysis essay as the teacher worked one on one with specific students. The students had a rubric for what they were supposed to look for in each other's essay and were able to have discussions on what needed to be revised. The students seemed to work well with one another. Participant DIF1909 noted the importance of student collaboration and how students working together has challenged each of the students.

Theme 5: Relevancy

When working with African American male students, many participants stated that teaching relevance was effective in engaging African American male students. Some stated that when teaching a concept or discussing an issue, connecting to African American males' experiences or a construct of culture was most effective. When asked about the experiences of differentiating for African American male students, Participant DIF1907 pointed out that it had been her experience that African American males struggled to pay attention in her class. I observed that 5 out of the 7 African American male students were engaged in her lesson of analyzing a poem. When one of these students asked her a question of how to complete each part of the poem, she worked one on one with them. The two students who were not engaged had no interactions with the teacher and did not complete the assignment given to him. The students could work with each other; however, these two students did not participate for the class period observed. Participant DIF1907 mentioned in the interview that she has seen more of her African American males express their needs in class, but she did not mention anything she does

specifically to engage her African American males when they do not pay attention in class, as she mentioned before.

During the interview, Participant DIF1901 referenced his lesson on momentum and connected it to the use of a gun, to capture his students' attention, not necessarily African American males in general, but because of the environments his students live. In the lesson I observed, he gave an example of momentum of "getting hit with a bullet first before hearing the sound of the shot." The students who initially seemed tired and unconnected, because this class was after lunch, now seemed interested in the lesson. The participant also used other examples of pitching a baseball and having a car wreck. Not only did the teacher use visuals in this lesson, but he also attempted to make it relevant to something the students either have experienced or witnessed. The students were able to learn the concept of momentum, not only through what each of them read in the book, but also through teacher examples.

Much like other participants, Participant DIF1910 openly stated that because of the population he teaches, he must relate his history lessons to his students' experiences. In his interview, he held up an empty liquor bottle, used as a prop when he teaches about the amendment that banned liquor and the use of a "1040EZ" when he teaches on the New Deal and income tax. As stated, "[I use] anything that our culture, this particular culture in the area can learn from and use." Participant DIF1910 was sure to emphasize the importance of having a rapport with the students in order to bring in props that would not offend any of the students. As a part of his interview, the participant stated, "If you can't keep their attention, you're in trouble; if you can't engage them, you're in trouble as

an educator on any level.” When observing his class, he used visuals and all students were engaged in the lesson. There were some students who needed more attention than others, but the teacher attempted to connect the lesson to each of the students.

Theme 6: Lack of Differentiated Instruction Training

There was a consensus amongst all the participants that they had received very little to no training in differentiation to accommodate different learning levels. All also stated that they had no training at all for differentiating instruction particularly for African American males. Many noted that the most common training they received was English as a second language and special education. This training normally would occur at the beginning of the school year during a week of professional development.

Participant DIF1903 stated that most of differentiation training has included the use of “LEP and ELL strategies...provided by the district.” Both participants DIF1902 and DIF1906 expressed that most of their training experiences have included the differentiation of instruction for their special education students. Both have history of being an inclusion teacher, who as a general teacher works with a special education teacher to mainstream the learning experiences of special education students in a general classroom setting. Because the study site’s district has over 60% Hispanic population and an increased number of refugee students of various ethnicities, ESL training is a common professional development offered. As I observed the classrooms, I could not help but notice the large number of refugee students who at first glance looked like African American students, but after observing the interactions and listening to the conversations amongst these students, I could see that there were language barriers and ESL strategies

were required to help these students. The teachers used strategies that could be applied to any subgroup of students such as flexible grouping and visuals within their instruction.

It was also expressed by almost all participants that they were given no training for differentiating instruction particularly for African American males. Participant DIF1903 mentioned some training she had on lowering discipline referrals for African American students, being that their students had an increased number of referrals in the study site's district. Likewise, participant DIF1902 recalled some cultural training that focused on Ruby Payne's book *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, which provides strategies in helping students from poverty to overcome obstacles. Though there has been little cultural training within the participant group, some shared some Kagan and scaffolding training they have loosely learned in prior professional development opportunities that could be used with any group of students.

Theme 7: Lack of Accommodated Instruction

Although some participants accommodated their instruction to some degree, all participants stated that their instruction had not been adjusted to specifically cater to African American male students. African American male students are provided instruction alongside their peers, and apart from achievement level, no specific accommodations are made for this subgroup of students. In 8 out of the 10 classrooms I observed, no specific or purposeful attention was given to the African American males. Many of these students sat quietly in the room and at times unengaged with the lesson. There was an average of 6-10 African American male students in each of the classrooms I observed. In two classrooms I observed where the teacher purposely engaged African

American male students, the teacher had these students out of their seats, working on an assignment within a group setting. After describing an activity that required the use of the hallway and working in groups, Participant DIF1905 stated, “I’ve got more engagement and more of my African American males who normally sit and look at me like ‘I’m not trying to be here and hurry up bell’—they were involved in some sort of way. So now that I see maybe we’ll do more activities of that type...” She noticed a difference in interest with her African American male students when they were able to move around and work on hands-on assignments versus paper and pencil. I also observed participant DIF1903’s classroom in which the students were working together to complete a lab. The classroom had more male than female students, which in this class, a couple of African American male students took initiative to lead the labs. This classroom was an example of a student-led environment. The teacher was there as a facilitator and helped students when they had questions or found themselves needing assistance with the lab.

Of the eight classrooms I observed where African American males were not engaged in lesson, some of the participants stated they never considered to differentiating their lessons for African American males. Participant DIF1907 stated, “I really don’t do anything special for them... I have seen my African American male students a little more vocal and I’m able to address their needs and try to show them how to meet their need in a way they can still do the assignment... whatever they need, I guess I would do for any student.” This statement was repeated with other participants—no particular accommodation was made for American male students. Participant DIF1901 questioned

using the “same tool from the tool chest.” The participant referenced that he differentiates his instruction with no particular purpose to a specific subgroup.

Table 1

Alignment of Research Questions and Themes

Research questions	Themes
1. What instructional practices do teachers use when preparing all students for accelerated courses?	1-a. Advancement and fostering student strengths 1-b. Demonstration of leadership
2. How do instructional practices used in courses preceding accelerated courses align with best practices of differentiation?	2-a. Use of scaffolding 2-b. Student collaboration
3. How do teachers differentiate instructional practices to meet the academic needs of African American male students?	3-a. Relevancy 3-b. Lack of differentiated instruction training 3-c. Lack of accommodated instruction

Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices are being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students for accelerated courses. Data from classroom observations and teacher interviews were analyzed with the study’s purpose and research questions in mind. Seven themes emerged from the data and were discussed in the previous section: advancement and fostering students’ strengths, demonstrating leadership, use of scaffolding, student collaboration, relevancy, lack of differentiated instruction training, and lack of accommodated instruction. The study’s findings reflected research about teacher’s differentiation practices and revealed that differentiation

strategies are being used but could be strengthened. It was also discovered that the use of culturally responsive teaching is not considered as an instructional practice and teachers need more time and training to differentiate their instruction.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 focused on instructional practices that prepared students for accelerated courses. The data showed that some of the participants sought to provide experiences in which their students were challenged and provided rigorous work (e.g. labs and projects). The assignments were differentiated to meet the varying needs and learning levels of each of the students. Based on a student's learning style or preferences and readiness level, different formats of an assignment (Landrum & McDuffie, 2010) can be given for a student producing the same outcome or meeting the same learning goals as other students. Clear expectations are explained, and students can move ahead or explore enrichment activities connected to the lesson or concept being taught.

Throughout many of the interviews, I repeatedly heard that there were students who could benefit from being in a more accelerated course; however, these students normally were hesitant to explore the possibility of taking an accelerated course. As a result, the participants expressed the need of allowing these students to take on leadership roles in the class. When working in group settings, some of the participants stated that these driven students take lead in group discussion and group activities. They felt more comfortable in an on-level classroom being classroom leaders rather than sitting in an accelerated classroom and being in the shadows. Learning to work with others and take initiative in tasks are skills needed and expected in accelerated classes. It takes students

having grit to be successful not only in these on-level classes, but also in accelerated courses; through grit and self-control, students find opportunities to challenge themselves (Irwin et al., 2017). Based on the study's findings, participants could benefit from training that helps teachers to identify students' strengths and learning styles, helping teachers to grow and develop each of their students academically.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 focused on the alignment of instructional practices and best practices of differentiation in courses that preceded accelerated courses. Through the data, it was discovered that it is important for teachers to differentiate their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students. Though many of the teachers used some differentiation strategies, they all agreed that they could improve in the implementation of differentiation strategies. Because the study site's district has over a 60% Hispanic population, differentiation training is focused more on working with English as a second language learners as well as special education students. Based on these findings, these participants could benefit from more differentiation training that could be used with any subgroup, especially African American male students. Though most of the participants expressed the need for more differentiation training, most of them had a grasp on some best practices of differentiation.

Scaffolding was the most common instructional practice I observed and the most common practice the participants stated that they used in their classroom instruction. Scaffolding is a vicarious consciousness in which the teacher probes the student to a higher level of thinking (Fernández et al., 2015). Many students come to their classes

with learning gaps and teachers find themselves teaching to the students' current learning level, finding ways to bring the students to the current grade level. Teachers also spend much time reteaching the material until the students grasp the concept. One participant stated that despite the required pacing of the class, he simply could not move forward until his students could understand some of the basic concepts of his class. The participants did admit that having the time to plan lessons based on the student's learning level and style was one of their biggest challenges.

Student collaboration was also discovered as a practice of preparing students. Students working and learning from each other was important to the learning process. In some accelerated classrooms, students are taught in a "flipped" setting, where the teachers allow the instruction to be student-led and the teacher is there to facilitate (Schmidt & Ralph, 2016). In this case, students rely more on each other to learn rather to rely more on the teacher. Participants at the study site gave examples on how they use flexible grouping when pairing their students to work together. The use of flexible grouping allows the teacher to pair or group students based on ability or readiness level, while enhancing student learning (Missett, Brunner, Callahan, Moon & Azano, 2014). Based on the data, it would benefit teachers to learn more about how they can differentiate their lessons in a way that build on students' skills and learning levels, while building capacity in students to take action and ownership for their own learning.

Research Question 3

The final research question focused on meeting the academic needs of African American male students using differentiated instruction. Some participants stated

relevancy was important to meeting the academic needs of African American male students. These students tended to be unengaged in class unless the teacher taught a lesson that the students were familiar with or connected to. Two of the participants noted that they embedded famous African American figures in their lessons or discussed cultural related topics to the lessons. However, the remaining participants stated that they did not specifically differentiate their lessons for African American male students. Goldenberg (2014) stated that because of cultural inconsistencies and congruencies, African American male students have had difficulties in learning and teachers have had difficulties with teaching. In many instances, the subject of the African race and culture is excluded in instruction due to the teachers' lack of knowledge of the culture (Allen, 2015).

Most participants stated that they have not been trained or experienced any professional development in working with African American male students. They did, however, say they received training on lowering discipline referrals for African American male students. It was my impression of the participants and it was directly stated by one of the participants that tailoring instruction for African American male students had never been considered. These findings showed instruction is not being differentiated to meet African American male students' academic needs but perhaps meeting the social needs of these students. It would be of great benefit for participants to be introduced to culturally responsive teaching and how the use of this particular instructional practice could strengthen their classroom instruction and meet the specific academic needs of African American male students.

As a result of the findings, I developed a three-day professional development project on culturally responsive teaching, learning styles and differentiation for African American males. The goals of this project are to increase awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy and strengthen differentiation of instruction. The emerging themes of this study will be the focus of the professional development, and the professional development will offer instructional strategies and suggestions that can be used in the classroom, not only for African American male students but also for any student who may need specialized instruction. Providing educators with a pathway to reaching students who have the potential to be challenged could enable the students to be stretched to their full academic potential. This project may ultimately help schools increase student achievement, increase student progress, close performance gaps, and improve postsecondary readiness. All students, especially African American male students, may feel supported and feel empowered to take accelerated courses that may challenge and prepare them to move towards postsecondary opportunities (Kotok, 2017).

Section 3: The Project

The project was based on the results from my qualitative study that addressed how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices were being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students, for accelerated courses. In this study, I interviewed teachers about their experiences with differentiation and instructional practices with African American males. Teacher interviews and classroom observations provided the data analyzed for the study.

Section 3 includes an in-depth professional development plan to address the concerns revealed in my study and benefit teachers who need more training in differentiating their instruction and working with African American males to prepare them for accelerated courses. The professional development plan includes the components (purpose, goals, learning outcomes, and target audience), timeline of events, activities, trainer notes, and module formats. The professional development product can be found in Appendix A. Section 3 also includes the rationale for the project; a review of literature based on the findings in the study; the project description, which includes necessary resources and a proposal for implementation; a project evaluation plan for outcome measures that will be used; and the project's possible social change implications.

Rationale

Differentiated instruction can help balance equity in learning opportunities (De Neve et al., 2015) for students. These opportunities include students meeting their learning goals (Coubergs et al., 2017) and moving toward mastering the content. After

data collection, I analyzed the data and identified seven themes: advancing and fostering students' strengths, demonstrating leadership, use of scaffolding, student collaboration, relevancy, lack of differentiated instruction training, and lack of accommodated instruction. The study's findings were consistent with prior research about teachers' differentiation practices and revealed that differentiation strategies are being used but can be strengthened. Based on the data analysis, I decided that a professional development project would be the most appropriate extension of this study; the project focuses on culturally responsive teaching, learning styles, and differentiation for African American males, which could also be of benefit for other students. The goal of this professional development project is to increase awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy and strengthen differentiation of instruction.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices were being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students, for accelerated courses. Although all 10 participants mentioned having some training in differentiated instruction, their responses were unanimous in indicating that no training in differentiated instruction for African American males had been received despite the high percentage of African American male students at their school. Tomlinson (2014) noted that in-depth planning and preparation are required to successfully implement differentiation. Goldenberg (2014) stated that because of cultural inconsistencies and congruencies, African American male students have had difficulties in learning and teachers have had difficulties with teaching. This professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy and differentiating

instruction could not only equip teachers with instructional strategies to help their students prepare for accelerated courses, but could also help schools improve their state accountability ratings with increasing student achievement, increasing student progress, closing performance gaps, and improving postsecondary readiness.

Review of the Literature

The literature review included articles and publications obtained through Walden's databases, which included Google Scholar, Education Research Complete, ProQuest Central, and SAGE Premier. Key search terms included *professional development, andragogy, adult learning/theory, and culturally responsive/pedagogy*. Based on the data collected and the findings, I chose a professional development project to address the study's problem. Knowles's (1984) adult learning theory, which focuses on how adults learn, was used to support the content of the project and guide its development. Culturally responsive pedagogy was also included in instructional strategies and differentiated instruction.

Professional Development

Trainers use professional development to promote teachers as learners. Using professional development allows a trainer to recognize a focal issue of practice with the intent to educate and devise an instructional method that may assist teachers in creating new thoughts and applying them in their practice (Kennedy, 2016). Not only should teachers be experts in their content, they should also adjust to the expectations of the changing field (Evers, Van der Heijden, Kreijns, & Vermeulen, 2016). As new material is discovered, teachers should equip themselves with the knowledge to teach this new

material to their students (Mohamed, Valcke & De Wever, 2017). Professional development should alter teaching practice (Kennedy, 2016). Effective professional development is “content focused, incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, uses models of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers feedback and reflection, and is of sustained duration” (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017, p. 4).

Content focused. Professional development can focus on what the teacher teaches and can include strategies that support the curriculum. Not only could teacher participants’ knowledge increase, but teacher instructional practice could also be improved (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015). It is also important that professional development focuses on the competency of teachers. Van Aalderen-Smeets and Van der Molen (2015) stated that helping teachers to improve their competency improves their teaching. For the professional development project in the current study, the content will focus on differentiated instruction and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Active learning. To have effective professional development, the training must be engaging and include the teacher in the learning process. This will require the trainer to have activities that are more interactive and perhaps get the participant out of their seat. These activities also allow the teacher to work in environments they will later create for their students (Voogt et al., 2015). Active learning can also include teachers “observing other teachers, practicing what has been learned and receiving feedback, reviewing and analyzing student work, leading and participating in discussions, applying their new knowledge to lesson plans, or participating in activities as students”

(Whitworth & Chiu, 2015, p. 123). These activities allow for participant learning to take place. During the professional development project, teachers will be able to view video clips, create their own lesson plans, and participate in a lesson that incorporates culture to a specific content area.

Collaboration. Teachers can share their thoughts and experiences with other participants and the trainer. Working with others during the training could create an atmosphere of positive change (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Collaboration with peers allows teachers to share what they know, hear one another's point of view, and tap into each person's level of experience (Voogt et al., 2015). Collaborating allows teachers to discuss pressing issues, increase possibility of teacher change, and create professional learning communities. This also helps to create dedication to the task and reduce opposition (Gast, Schildkamp, & Van der Veen, 2017) to change. In my project, teacher participants will be given multiple opportunities to collaborate not only with each other but also with the trainers during the professional development.

Models of effective practice. Providing teachers with exemplars of best teaching practices related to the content presented could help teachers understand the different aspects of the professional development (Campoy & Yuejin, 2018). The trainer of the professional development will provide evidence-based practices to the participants. Trainers can provide the teacher participants with video clips of what these practices look like or demonstrate a lesson to the participants regarding how to incorporate a concept into their instruction. For the current professional development project, video clips of differentiated lessons and culturally inclusive lessons will be used as the demonstration.

Teacher participants will also receive a handout that supports the video clip to highlight what to look for in the lesson regarding differentiation in culturally responsive pedagogy.

Coaching and expert support. Trainers should offer expertise to their learners and provide support and guidance for each of their participants in a way that benefits them. Trainers not only need to provide support during the training, but they also need to provide mentoring once the training is over and implementation of new strategies begins. Evers et al. (2016) stated that support can be given through praise, useful input with practical results, and approaches to improve the teacher's instruction. In the current project, the trainer of the professional development will provide evidence-based practices to the participants and will seek to meet the individual needs of the participants based on feedback and collaboration with the trainer.

Feedback and reflection. Time should be allocated for participants to give feedback and reflect on their experiences during the training (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Looking at teacher and student data would initiate conversation on what is happening in the classroom. This would allow teachers to begin the process of implementing instructional changes. Korthagen (2017) stated that experienced professionals reflect on their background in a cognizant and deliberate way by considering what they think, feel, and want. Professional development participants will be able to reflect on their prior experiences at the beginning of the training and will be asked for their feedback when posed certain questions. Throughout the training and at the end, teacher participants will be given multiple opportunities to share feedback and reflect on the subjects presented.

Sustained duration. Trainers should provide their participants with time to learn, collaborate, implement, and reflect on the professional development to digest and implement instructional changes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). During this time, teacher participants should recognize and plan for any barriers they may encounter once they are in the classroom (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015). The professional development for the current study will take place over 3 full days; however, more time can be allocated for activities should the trainer needs to extend beyond 3 days. During the 3 days, there will be time to learn, collaborate, and reflect on the training.

Adult Learning Theory

Knowles (1984) stated that adults are motivated to learn when they are exposed to a reality in which they are forced to grapple with incomprehensible challenges. Knowles (as cited in Dirkx, Espinoza, & Schlegel, 2018) emphasized the self as important to understanding why people feel the need to focus on learning and draw from these particular experiences. Adults consider self to important in the motivation to learn (Knowles, 1984). According to adult learning theory, the adult takes an active role in their learning (Cochran & Brown, 2016). Knowles (as cited in Cox, 2015) focused on andragogy, a constructivist approach to learning that involves helping adults to draw on their experience and create new learning based on previous understandings. Malik (2016) defined six principles regarding how adults learn: A person's self-image shifts from reliant to self-directing as they mature; each person accumulates experience which is vital to their learning; a person's social role determines their readiness to learn; based on time perspective, adults are more problem centered in learning; adults are more intrinsic than

extrinsic learners; and adults need to know the purpose for their learning. This theory is the basis to strengthen instruction (Arghode, Brieger, & McLean, 2017). It is important to show teachers the data for their campus, including highlighting the areas of need, and to have honest conversations about what is really happening with their students, especially broken down by the subpopulations.

Self-direction. With maturity comes self-direction. An adult can make his or her own choices without necessarily being influenced by others around them. Knowles argued that as people grow, they become more empowered in making their own their choices and self-governed (Cox, 2015). It would be important at the beginning of the training to acknowledge that learners are free to use the training as they see fit and participation of the training does not mean that they need to take on the beliefs of the trainer. It is important to emphasize the purpose of the training and the benefits that can be gained by participating in the training.

Life and work experience. An adult's experience in life can influence what and how he or she learns. As adults pull from their expansive background, this wealth of knowledge can be used as a resource for learning (McCray, 2016). During the training, especially at the beginning, it would be important to discuss what the learners already know about differentiating instruction and culturally responsive pedagogy. It would also be great to draw on the learner's experience to add to the professional development. By doing this, the learner would possibly be more receptive to what he or she is learning and affirmed as learners.

Readiness to learn. Not everyone is receptive or eager to learn at time. People are most receptive when they are ready or see a benefit or need to learn. This can be for the benefit of others or personally for themselves. For this study, it would be of benefit to allow the learners to reflect on their personal opinions of the training; do they feel it would be of benefit? Are they receptive to learning new information (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017)? The learner needs to be honest with his or herself in where they are in being receptive to the training.

Problem centered. Adults tend to work around problems and find that if what they are learning can be used to solve a problem. This is due to maturity from future use of what was learned to immediacy of use of what was learned (McCray, 2016). Helping teachers to discover or acknowledge the problems they see in their school and classes should be one of the goals of the professional development. This may help teachers see the need and/or purpose for the training.

Intrinsic learners. It can be argued that adults do things because of extrinsic motivators (Cox, 2015) such as getting a raise, a promotion, or some other materialistic thing; however, Cox (2015) stated that personal values or needs are generally more dominant drivers. This can be explained as values or needs that drive adults to learn what is presented to them. It would be important to connect teachers to their values and how their values are drivers to what and why they teach.

Need to know. It is important for adults to relate to what they are learning. Adults must be able to see from a real-world perspective (Cox, 2015) in order to make connections to the content of what they will learn. The same applies to teachers who are

expected to learn something for the first time. For them to apply what they are learning, they must first see the need to learn by relating it to what they see and experience in the classroom. It would be important to bring in the training participants' experiences into the professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). It is also important to have that reflection before the training to discuss everyone's experiences. One cannot assume that everyone has had the same experiences, though the participants may work at the same school.

Based on these assumptions, it is important for the trainer to know before the professional development is that he or she must plan activities that address these assumptions in the entire training. Park, Robinson, and Bates (2016) stated that learners must be prepared for the training, the climate of the learning must be set, there should be mutual planning between the trainer and learner, learning needs should be diagnosed, learning objectives should be set, the learning experience should be designed, the activities should be well thought out, and the learning should be evaluated.

Embedding Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy can be described as the “cultural knowledge, prior experience, frames of reference and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective [for students of color]” (Ellerbrock et al., 2016, p.226). Culture is the focus for learning in the classrooms. Teachers consider their students' cultural experiences to enhance their learning and show an appreciation for the students' culture. Culture responsive pedagogy trailblazer Gay (2010) stated that teachers can teach more effectively by using the

“cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits [for their instruction]” (p.106). Teachers help their students build a sense of cultural pride and feel a sense of belonging to the school environment (Thomas & Warren, 2017). They also help their students identify social norms without sacrificing their own cultural values and beliefs. Dickson, Chun, and Fernandez (2016) stated that a positive learning environment that uses culturally responsive practices, encourages students to engage in courteous connections and significant learning exercises with their peers, creating a culture of belonging and academic success.

Culturally relevant teachers create classrooms that are closely connected to the cultures and communities in which their students live. Their pedagogy is “validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory” (Thomas & Warren, 2017, p.88). According to Gay (2010), a teacher who is *validating* works with his or her students to foster their interests and affirm and acknowledge their students’ backgrounds, worldviews, and values. One who is *comprehensive* takes on the holistic view of the student, considering their social, emotional and academic learning (Milner, 2016). A teacher who is *multidimensional* understands that he or she must teach in a way that focuses on “curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments” (Gay, 2010, p.33). One that is *empowering* works to help his or her students meet their full potential and empowers his or her students to be successful. Being a *transformative* teacher means that the teacher educates the students in seeing the difference they can make in effecting change in their communities and society. Lastly,

emancipatory teachers teach their students the power of education and how learning can enable them to help others to be free from inequalities.

Though many teachers had some diversity or multicultural education as a part of their teacher preparation program, many of these programs provide disintegrated and shallow treatments of diversity (Ebersole, Kanahale-Mossman, & Kawakami, 2016). These diversity courses were also taught separately and not integrated with the teacher preparation curriculum. This has presented some challenges for teachers. Challenges of implementing culturally responsive pedagogy can be due to the “lack of competent leadership, adequate resources, staff experience, content area knowledge, and a deep understanding of pedagogy that support students of color” (Pabon, 2017, p.772). Educating teachers is to help them understand social political issues, other cultures and even themselves (Ellerbrock et al., 2016) can be challenging. Some teachers are unaware of how to support a culturally diverse classroom based on their cultural competence. Cultural competence requires a deep understanding of culture; one must take a transformative approach and understand the core, value and beliefs that drive behavior (DeCapua, 2016). Teachers also need to reflect and understand their own underlying assumptions. It is possible that some teachers feel pressured and abandon culturally responsive practices to follow traditional pedagogies (Pabon, 2017). Through this transition, teachers may experience feelings of awareness, bombardment, reflection, dissonance, and accommodation (Ellerbrock et al., 2016) in their pursuit of become more culturally responsive and competent.

It would be important to note that DeCapua (2016) stated that when teachers are culturally competent, they are able to teach their students in different ways that not only consider the student's specific learning style but culture as well. The curriculum is reshaped, and teachers can build on students' prior knowledge. Teachers also understand that they cannot use the same teaching methods for all students (Lew & Nelson, 2016). DeCapua's (2016) argument on culturally scaffolding instruction supports this study, which differentiating instruction to support African American males to accelerate is the focus; curriculum should be reshaped to meet the individual needs of students.

Project Description

The professional development project is a three-day workshop based on the study's data collection from the participants. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices are being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students for accelerated courses. The study's findings reflected research about teacher's differentiation practices and revealed that differentiation strategies are being used but could be strengthened. Through the study, it was discovered that culturally responsive teaching is not considered and that teachers need more time and training in differentiating their instruction. The workshop will provide educators with an understanding of the research findings, best practices of differentiating instruction, the importance of student learning styles and increasing culturally responsive pedagogy.

Resources and Existing Supports

The professional development project will require resources and support through the district and/or school where the workshop happen. Most importantly, administrative support is needed. Based on the school's data and mission for students to increase student achievement, increase student progress, close performance gaps, and to improve postsecondary readiness, the district and school administration would benefit most of having this workshop during the week before school starts, which is usually a time for teachers to participate in professional development opportunities. Participants will include administrators, instructional specialists, programs of choice coordinators and teachers. The following are other resources needed for the professional development workshop:

- Facility for workshop including breakout session rooms
- Promethean projector board
- Projector
- Wi-Fi
- District's Curriculum Frameworks or Adopted Curriculum
- District's and school's state report cards
- Teacher lesson plan template
- PowerPoint presentation
- Office supplies (pencils, pens, markers, post-it notes, chart paper, notebook paper)

Potential Barriers

This professional development three-day workshop would occur during the week the teachers return from their summer vacation. The district and the school administration may have their own agendas for what they want to review and present to their teachers. A three-day workshop training versus a full week training could be more appealing to a school that has other professional development to present to its teachers for the rest of the week. Also, the district now has waiver days available to teachers to use during the year. Contingent on professional development teachers have participated in prior to the start of school, this study's professional development project could also occur during the summer as a waiver day opportunity.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

To meet the commitments of the permission granted for this study, a copy of this study will be sent to the Grant Compliance and Monitoring Department of the district. The professional development project will be sent as well as an appendix to the study. The district and study site will be presented with the findings of the study and the researcher will request permission to conduct the professional development prior to the start of the teachers' contract for the option to use as waiver days or upon the teachers' contract days as required professional development. The timetable (see Table 2) provides an agenda of the daily workshop over the course of three days. This agenda will give administrators the time they need to present their own agendas to their faculty and staff, and three days could be more appealing to teachers than the normal full week training most workshops host.

Table 2

Daily Professional Development Timetable

Time	Activity	Location
8:00-8:15	Sign-in	School's library
8:15-9:00	Introduction activity	School's library
9:00-9:15	Q & A	School's library
9:15-10:15	PowerPoint presentation	School's library
10:15-10:30	Break	Front foyer
10:30-11:30	Breakout sessions	Classrooms
1:00-1:15	Afternoon sign-in	School's library
1:15-1:45	Complete breakout sessions	Classrooms
1:45-2:30	Presentation of lessons (3)	School's library
2:30-2:45	Break	Front foyer
2:45-3:30	Presentation of lessons (3)	School's library
3:30-4:00	Wrap-up and conclusion	School's library

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers and Others

The project for this study was created to bring attention to the issues and concerns gathered in the data collected from this study and to provide educators with instructional strategies to use in their classrooms to meet the individual needs of their students. It is important that administrators, instructional specialists, programs of choice coordinators and teachers work collaboratively to bring about the proposed changes they expect to see in their school and with their students. As the trainer of this workshop, I will oversee the setup and implementation of the three-day workshop. The instructional specialists will be available for breakout sessions. The number of teacher participants will determine how breakout sessions will be divided. Five groups will be ideal—a group for each core class (four) and a group for noncore teachers. The instructional specialists will oversee the core classes and the workshop trainer (myself) will oversee the noncore breakout session. If

the noncore group is over 20 teachers, the group will be split, and I will solicit the assistance of administration or the programs of choice coordinator.

The teacher participants will be expected to participate in this three-day workshop, bringing an open mind and their classroom experiences. They will be expected to work with their school data to strategize ways to strengthen in the areas of improvement. The teachers will be expected to complete the activities during the breakout sessions and take the strategies learned back to their classrooms to apply to their instruction, planning and classroom environment.

Administrators, instructional specialists, and programs of choice participants will be expected to participate in the workshop activities as well. As stated before, these specific people will help to facilitate with breakout sessions. Administrators, instructional specialists, and programs of choice participants will also be expected to help with implementation of instructional strategies and provide assistance and support for the teacher participants throughout the school year.

Project Evaluation Plan

“Goals function as immediate determinants of behavior” (Martin, McNally, & Taggar, 2016, p. 91). The goals of this professional development are to provide teacher participants with and understanding of differentiation, student learning styles and culturally responsive teaching. It is also a goal to increase teachers’ capacity to adjust their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students. Because of these goals, a goal-based evaluation (Youker, Zielinski, Hunter, & Bayer, 2016) would be most appropriate for this professional development project. Linzalone and Schiuma (2015)

stated that an evaluation is “the assessment and the analysis of the effectiveness of an activity; it involves the formulation of judgments about the impact and progress.

Evaluation is the comparison of the actual effects of a project, against the agreed planned ones” (p.92). This study’s professional development project has goals that require an evaluation of the project’s effectiveness and if adjustments need to be made for future use in other settings.

Teacher participants will have opportunities to give their feedback throughout the workshop and an evaluation at the end of each workshop day. The daily workshop will be evaluated through a K-W-L chart in which the participant will note what they already know, would like to know, and what they learned by the end of the day’s workshop. Each participant will do this individually and share out collectively, charting on the whole group chart paper. There will also be a formative, end-of-workshop evaluation (Appendix F), which participants will be given open-ended and rating scale questions to gauge whether the professional development met the proposed goals for the workshop. The evaluation will also allow the participant to give feedback on areas of improvement for the professional development. The participants can comment on what they found useful, interesting and what they would have like more information or training on.

One of the primary goals of this professional development is to make sure teacher participants understand differentiation. Evaluating this goal requires the facilitator to check for understanding throughout the training and to provide exemplars of what differentiation would look like in the classroom. The facilitator will provide exemplars of the different ways to differentiate lessons. Instructional specialists will be responsible for

ensuring teachers are supported in their efforts in incorporating differentiation in their daily lessons throughout the school year.

Another goal is gaining a clear and better understanding of student learning styles and culturally responsive teaching. To evaluate this goal, the facilitator and the instructional specialists will review the different resources and ways teachers take various learning styles and culture and use as drivers in planning their instruction. The facilitator will provide exemplars during the training and instructional specialists will monitor the implementation of students' learning styles and culturally responsive teaching in teacher instruction throughout the school year.

The last goal of the professional development is helping teachers to adjust their instruction to meet the learning needs of their students. To evaluate this goal, instructional specialists will review the lesson plans (Appendix E) teachers completed during the breakout sessions noting the examples of how instruction was adjusted for the example students (e.g. below grade level, learning disability, dyslexia). The instructional specialists will also be responsible for monitoring lessons plans throughout the school year.

Key stakeholders included are teachers, administrators, programs of choice coordinators and instructional specialists. These stakeholders will be given the results of the professional development evaluation as well as the end of year evaluation after school-wide implementation of instructional strategies used. Results of the evaluations will be shared with the district as well to show the possible benefits of the professional development, which can also be used in other schools.

Project Implications

Providing educators with a framework to address the problems with implementation of improved instructional practices may help educators with a pathway to reach students who have the potential to be challenged and enable the students to be stretched to their full academic potential. This project may ultimately help schools increase student achievement, increase student progress, close performance gaps, and improve postsecondary readiness. All students, especially African American male students feel supported and empowered to take accelerated courses that may challenge and prepare them to move towards postsecondary opportunities (Kotok, 2017).

This project could provide teachers with the necessary skills and tools to implement strategies needed to improve their instructional strategies. The professional development was designed so that teachers and other staff have adequate time to take a deeper look at their specific school data and to brainstorm the ways instruction can be adjusted to meet the individual needs of their students. The project addressed the study's data that there are teacher learning gaps in understanding differentiation, learning styles and culturally responsive pedagogy. The project includes time so that stakeholders can collaboratively discuss their specific campus and district goals for improving student achievement and postsecondary readiness.

Though this project was created around the study site's data, this project can be adopted by any school district and/or school in improving their instructional practices related to differentiation and culturally responsive pedagogy. The learning activities in the project related to understanding differentiation, teaching to students' learning styles,

and culturally responsive teaching can all be used in settings where instructional practices need to be improved.

Conclusion

In Section 3, the study's project was introduced and an analysis of the connection between the theory and research was discussed to support the content of the project. The project itself was described, which included the purpose, goals, learning outcomes, and target audience. The project's components, timeline, activities, trainer notes, and module formats were also described. The implementation plan and evaluation plan were presented for the three-day professional development project. Lastly, Section 3 ended with implications for social change. In section 4, I will discuss the project's reflections and conclusions including project strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, reflection on the importance of the work, project development and evaluation, leadership and change, implications, applications and directions for future research, and conclusion.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices were being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students, for accelerated courses. I discovered that differentiation skills could be strengthened, learning styles could be explored, and culturally responsive pedagogy could be of benefit in helping African American males prepare for accelerated courses. Based on these findings, I developed a professional development project to target the instructional gap, expose teachers to the different strategies to differentiate their instruction based on student learning styles, and help teachers learn how to incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms. If students' academic achievement increases, learning gaps will continue to close and more African American male students may challenge themselves to take accelerated courses. Findings may encourage the study site district to expand implementation of differentiation practices and culturally responsive pedagogy to other schools in the district.

Project Strengths and Limitations

A strength of this project was that it was grounded in research. The professional development focuses on content, allows participants to take ownership of their learning and work with one another, demonstrates effective practice, offers expert guidance and support, and permits feedback and reflection (see Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Gore & Rosser, 2020; Simonsen et al., 2017). The project's goals are aimed at educators growing as learners. Professional development is designed for the trainer to recognize a focal issue

of practice with the intent to educate and devise an instructional method that will assist teachers with creating new thoughts and applying them in their practice (Kennedy, 2016).

Another strength of the project was that teachers are able to look at their school's student data and see what they did well and what could be strengthened (see Schildkamp, Poortman, & Handelzalts, 2016). Looking at data that highlights the academic achievement of special population groups such as minority students, special education students, and English language learners allows teachers to see where differentiation could be adjusted, which could be applied to students with different learning levels.

Although there were strengths to this project, there were a couple of limitations to consider. The first limitation was teacher buy-in (see Alemán, Freire, McKinney, & Dolores, 2017). Incorporating differentiation in the lesson planning process can be time consuming. The study site participants all agreed that time was a factor in creating differentiated lessons. A teacher may conclude that the type of lesson planning offered in the project may be too time consuming for every lesson plan they create (Civitillo, Denessen, & Molenaar, 2016; De Jager, 2017). I did not know how much time a teacher in another school or district is given for personal planning or conferencing to create these types of lesson plans. The time for lesson planning was based on the study site's core content teachers who are given 45-minute personal planning and 45-minute common planning each day. Trainers at other sites should identify how much time teachers are given for planning and adjust lesson planning based on time and the length of the lesson or unit taught.

Another limitation of the project was the number of instructional or administrative supports available to teachers. The study site had an average number of teachers with many instructional and administrative supports. However, in other schools and districts, the number of supports could be smaller. Professional development trainers should first identify the instructional and administrative supports they have and adjust the professional development to their campus's needs and resources.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

This professional development project was designed to provide educators with strategies for differentiation to improve their ability to prepare students, especially African American males, for accelerated courses; however, the study did not address the challenges teachers face in differentiating their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students, or strategies to help with these challenges. During the data collection process, many of the participants voiced their reasoning for not differentiating their lessons or the resources they needed to differentiate appropriately. This study could be strengthened by identifying and addressing the challenges teachers face in differentiating their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students.

Addressing teacher challenges could help teachers feel more supported (De Neve, & Devos, 2016) and could change the mindset that differentiating instruction is something that can be done and not seen as a burden or more work on the teacher. It is important for administrators, instructional specialists, and other support staff to understand the challenges teachers face. Improved awareness could also help teachers eliminate barriers that may hinder them from doing what is best for their students.

Educating students is a collective effort that involves not only teachers but everyone responsible for meeting the needs of students (Blatti, Clinton, & Graham, 2019).

Scholarship

My study contributed to the ongoing quest to improve differentiated instruction, understand different students' learning styles, and incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy in the everyday learning environment. My contribution to the growing body of literature may provide teachers with more tools to strengthen their instruction, help close learning gaps and increase student achievement. Developing this project helped me to see the challenges teachers face in trying to meet the expectations of stakeholders (e.g. students, parents, administrators). I learned that in many cases, the teachers have a desire to incorporate instructional practices that meet the needs of their students; however, they need to feel supported in doing so. Teachers also need follow-up training throughout the year and into the following year to ensure implementation is done correctly. My experiences as a teacher with multiple learning levels in one classroom allowed me to empathize with the study's participants who faced challenges with things as simple as not having all the materials to teach their lessons. Much like Maslow's hierarchy in which meeting the basic needs of a person is required before they can come into self-actualization, teachers need basic resources before they can effect change in the classroom.

Project Development and Evaluation

I learned that developing a project required me to look at the study's data closely. In conducting the study, I had to collaborate with my peers to create interview questions

and analyze the data. I also had to examine the data and decide on an appropriate project based on the findings. Because the study focused on a local problem, I needed to create a product that could not only be applied in the local context but could also be applied in similar settings. After deciding on a professional development project, I had to look at the themes and identify the goals for the professional development. These goals became the foundation of the professional development project and the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development project.

The professional development project includes a daily workshop over the course of 3 full days. Each day includes time for sign-in, an instructional activity, a Q & A session, an informational PowerPoint presentation, break time, a breakout session, lunch, a presentation of created lessons, and a wrap-up and conclusion to end the day. This agenda was designed to give time to present the material and allow for group work to apply the information learned for the day. Determining when it would be most beneficial to conduct the professional development and when teachers would be the most receptive seemed obvious: the beginning of the year when teachers returned on contract. However, getting permission to do so when leaders are needing the same time to deliver information was the challenge. An optional time was posed if there is pushback from leadership. What is important is allowing time for teachers, administrators, instructional specialists, and other support staff to collaborate with one another to address the school's strengths and weaknesses and developing ways to grow as a school.

A goal-based evaluation (Youker et al., 2016) is appropriate for a professional development project. Linzalone and Schiuma (2015) stated:

An evaluation is the assessment and the analysis of the effectiveness of an activity; it involves the formulation of judgments about the impact and progress. Evaluation is the comparison of the actual effects of a project, against the agreed planned ones. (p. 92)

The current professional development project's goals need to be evaluated to determine the project's effectiveness and whether adjustments need to be made for use of the project in other settings. The teachers would have opportunities to reflect and evaluate the training through daily charts and a formative, end-of-workshop evaluation that includes open-ended and rating-scale questions.

Leadership and Change

An important facet of this qualitative project study was providing teachers with a framework for strengthening their instructional practices to meet the individual needs of their students. The participants in this study expressed that teachers need the support of leadership to feel empowered to make drastic or overwhelming changes in the classroom. Teachers also need the necessary resources to do what is being asked of them (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017).

Creating the professional development project increased my confidence in how to deliver a product that is data based, engaging, and useable in similar settings. The creation of this project also restored the enthusiasm I feel lives in every educator. Educating young minds can be challenging; however, feeling the support of administrators and other support staff can motivate a teacher to take on a challenge (Tamir, Pearlmutter, & Feiman-Nemser, 2017). Being a leader requires supporting those

who are being led and helping them to lead others. I learned through the project study that teachers want to be heard and supported; as a leader, I need to equip them with the resources they need to be successful in implementing a new intervention.

Analysis of Self as a Scholar

There was so much to learn and appreciate throughout this qualitative research experience. From a scholarly perspective, this study emphasized the importance of tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs of students to promote their development. Throughout my Walden experience, I have had numerous opportunities to grow professionally and to improve myself as a scholarly writer. I have learned the importance of data and how data can be the basis for making change. In this project study, I learned how to identify a problem, review the peer-reviewed literature, identify a gap in the literature, develop research questions that provide the foundation for the study, identify a framework to support the study, and collect and analyze data.

Throughout this experience, I have learned to appreciate and understand qualitative research. I used a case study design to gain deeper insight into the problem. As a researcher, I was able to connect with the data firsthand; I was able to understand the responses to the interview questions posed in this study. I enjoyed speaking with the participants and understanding their interactions with students. This study was fueled by a desire to provide tools that may help teachers prepare their students to grow in their academic pursuits.

Analysis of Self as a Practitioner

As a practitioner, I have acquired more knowledge to add to my profession. Through my project study, I connected theory to practice in which a literature review was required to support the need for my study through a conceptual framework. I also had to review the broader problem connected to my study. After identifying the problem and supporting my study with a framework, I gathered and analyzed data and created a professional development plan based on the study's findings. Throughout this project study, I learned to identify a problem and use qualitative methodology to collect and analyze data to develop a product that could facilitate in eliminating the problem. My research and writing skills have improved tremendously, not only in the last few years but over the course of my 11-year educational journey. I have room to grow, but much progress has been made throughout the research and writing experience.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

The role of a project developer allowed me to reflect on the things I needed when I was an educator in the classroom, the skills I lacked and the need for more professional development in order to better my instruction in the classroom. Developing the project required me to take everything I observed from the study site and heard from the study's participants to create the things that would possibly address the issues that were expressed and observed. Developing the project not only required me to keep the students in mind, but importantly to keep the educators as the focus of the training; educators are charged with effecting change through their instruction and are responsible for student

achievement. I also wanted to create a project that allowed teachers to see the training as an opportunity to grow professionally, and even personally.

Through this project, I wanted my study's participants to know that I heard them clearly in what they needed and wanted to see changed. I focused on making the data the foundation of the project; teachers needed to realistically see the things happening in and out of their classrooms. I also provided opportunities for collaboration to happen within the school's educational team. The instructional specialists will lead the breakout sessions and will work with teachers on strengthening their planning and the implementation of instructional practices. I also wanted to create opportunities for teachers to ask questions, provide feedback and most importantly, reflect on what they were learning. Ultimately, I wanted to create a safe and open learning environment.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

As a Walden student, I have been given many opportunities to grow as a student, overflowing into my professional life. With the guidance of my chair, committee member, and URR member, I have been able to see myself differently and concluded that I have something to contribute to the educational world and perhaps the world, as a whole. This study allowed me to contribute to the growing body of literature of differentiation, student learning styles and culturally responsive pedagogy. Much has been said about these topics, but this study gives insight, more on these topics in relation to African American males and how important it is to differentiate instruction and to consider learning styles and culture.

Throughout the last few years, I have grown as a scholar, practitioner, and project developer. I have concluded that I am a change agent. The world needs people who are willing to take a stand and be the voice of those who cannot speak for themselves. The Walden experience has taught me to stand boldly to do what others will not do. I have been charged to make a difference in not only education but also wherever my gifts can be used or lead me. I have learned how much one person's *insight* on a topic or issue can play a role in changing the simple things one can take for granted every day in the educational world.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The implications for future research will vary depending on the implementation of the instructional practices suggested in the professional development plan. The implementation of the plan should be intentional, purposeful, and done with fidelity. If done with intention, purpose, and fidelity, significant changes could occur: The study site's state accountability ratings could improve because of increased student achievement and progress-monitoring percentages, closed learning gaps, and prepared students for postsecondary opportunities. Though student achievement and preparedness for accelerated coursework could improve for the study site or similar settings, the underlying issue of teacher challenges in the classroom still exists. More future research to address specifically the challenges teachers face when implementing differentiation strategies, preparing African American males for accelerated coursework and embedding culturally responsive pedagogy is needed. It would help to identify barriers and offer

strategies that could help eliminate the obstacles teachers face in delivering instruction that is intentional, purposeful, and done with fidelity.

Though I used observations and interviews to collect the research's data, perhaps the use of focus groups would be of benefit to discuss teacher challenges. With a focus group, the researcher puts together a community of people whose thoughts are of concern to the population (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Within a setting of multiple colleagues, a focus group allows participants to share information in a nonthreatening way. In collecting data with focus groups, group interaction is key to the method (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The participants have ideas of interest and the attitudes, opinions, and experiences are explored. When gathering data, the researcher will use the research questions and the study's goals to decide the focus or foci of content and processes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Within the focus group, members can build on one another's ideas.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices are being used in the classroom to prepare African American male students for accelerated courses at an urban, Title I school in the Southwest United States. Guided by Tomlinson's differentiated instruction framework, the study questions addressed the kinds of instructional practices teachers use to prepare students for accelerated courses, aligning instructional practices with best practices for differentiating instruction, and differentiating instruction to meet the academic needs of African American male students. The study's findings provided insight on teacher's differentiation practices and proved that differentiation strategies are being used but can

be strengthened. It was revealed through the study that culturally responsive teaching has not been considered and that teachers need more time and training to differentiate their instruction. The findings of this study also showed that there was need to help the school meet its need to improve its state accountability through increased student achievement and progress-monitoring percentages, closed learning gaps, and prepared students for postsecondary opportunities. All students, especially African American male students, may feel supported and empowered to take accelerated courses that may challenge and prepare them to move towards postsecondary opportunities (Kotok, 2017).

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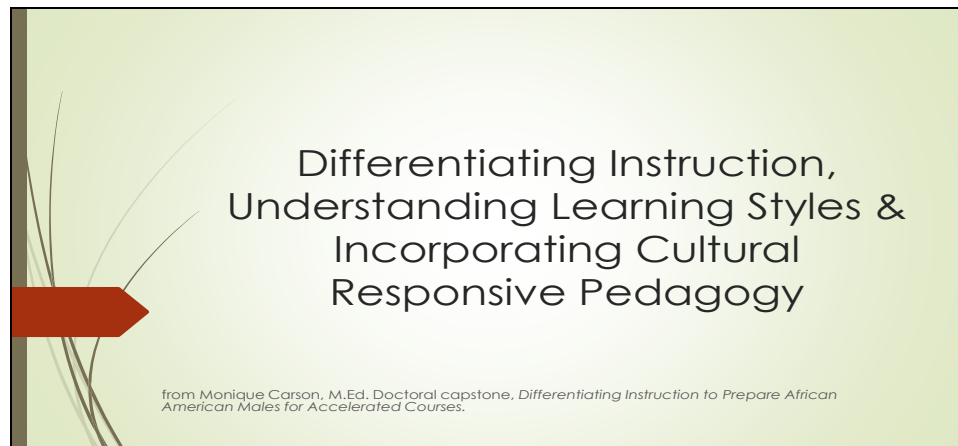
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Appendix A: The Project

Slide 1



Materials needs : Library, six breakout rooms for sessions, Promethean projector board, projector, Wi-Fi, District’s Curriculum Frameworks or Adopted Curriculum, District’s and school’s state report cards, Teacher lesson plan template, K-W-L handout, Office supplies (pencils, pens, markers, post-it notes, chart paper, notebook paper).

Prior to training: Set out materials on tables in library and K-W-L handouts at each seat.

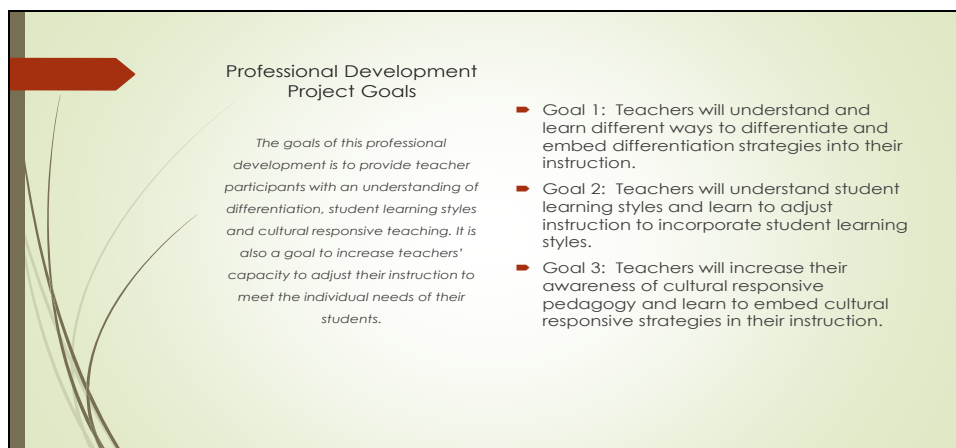
Slide 2

Time	Activity	Location
8:00-8:15	Sign-in	School’s Library
8:15-9:00	Introduction Activity	School’s Library
9:00-9:15	Q & A	School’s Library
9:15-10:15	PowerPoint Presentation	School’s Library
10:15-10:30	Break	Front Foyer
10:30-11:30	Breakout Sessions	Classrooms
11:30-1:00	Lunch	Off campus
1:00-1:15	Afternoon Sign-in	School’s Library
1:15-1:45	Complete Breakout Sessions	Classrooms
1:45-2:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)	School’s Library
2:30-2:45	Break	Front Foyer
2:45-3:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)	School’s Library
3:30-4:00	Wrap-Up and Conclusion	School’s Library

Review the daily agenda and note locations of sessions and housekeeping business. Because there is a tight schedule for the day’s events, participants can step out for

restroom breaks if needed but the official break is 10:15-10:30. Share all logistical information needed for the break.

Slide 3



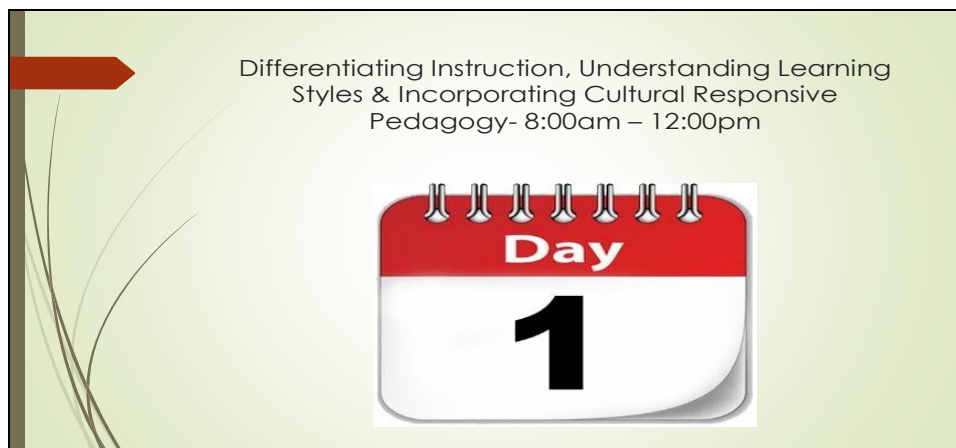
Professional Development Project Goals

The goals of this professional development is to provide teacher participants with an understanding of differentiation, student learning styles and cultural responsive teaching. It is also a goal to increase teachers' capacity to adjust their instruction to meet the individual needs of their students.


- Goal 1: Teachers will understand and learn different ways to differentiate and embed differentiation strategies into their instruction.
- Goal 2: Teachers will understand student learning styles and learn to adjust instruction to incorporate student learning styles.
- Goal 3: Teachers will increase their awareness of cultural responsive pedagogy and learn to embed cultural responsive strategies in their instruction.

Introduce the professional development training and the purpose and goals over the next three days. It is important to emphasize the importance of each goal, as these are the drivers of the training each day.

Slide 4



Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Responsive Pedagogy- 8:00am – 12:00pm



Note that this begins the training for day one.

Slide 5

Day One Professional Development Timetable	
<i>Goal: Teachers will understand and learn different ways to differentiate and embed differentiation strategies into their instruction.</i>	
8:00-8:15	Sign-in
8:15-9:00	"How different are we?" (Data)
9:00-9:15	Q & A
9:15-10:15	"Differentiation and Strategies"
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Breakout session in classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson planning with differentiation strategies
11:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:15	Afternoon Sign-in
1:15-1:45	Complete Breakout Sessions
1:45-2:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-3:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)
3:30-4:00	Wrap-Up and Conclusion

Review the specific agenda for day one. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will focus on the school's data, learning about differentiation and useful instructional strategies. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate the differentiation strategies just learned in the previous session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.

Slide 6

K-W-L Chart	
K What I Think I Know	
W What I Want to Know	
L What I Learned	

Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about differentiation. They will then complete what they would like to know about differentiation. At the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day. In addition, have participants to reflect on their classroom experiences. Where have I seen or experienced this before? What did I do? How can I be different the next time?

Slide 7

A Qualitative Study...

- The purpose of the study was to explore how rigorous, differentiated instructional practices are being used in the classroom to prepare students, especially African American male students for accelerated courses.
- Data from classroom observations and teacher interviews were analyzed with the study's purpose and research questions in mind.
- Seven themes emerged from the data and were discussed in the previous section: advancement and fostering students' strengths, demonstrating leadership, use of scaffolding, student collaboration, relevancy, lack of differentiated instruction training, and lack of accommodated instruction.
- The study's findings reflected research about teacher's differentiation practices and revealed that differentiation strategies are being used but can be strengthened.
- The study also revealed that cultural responsive teaching is not considered and that teachers need more time and training to differentiate their instruction.

Review the qualitative study. Be sure to review the purpose of the study, describing the local problem. Explain the process of data collection and data results. Connect the data to seven themes derived from the data analysis. Connect to the PD's goals.

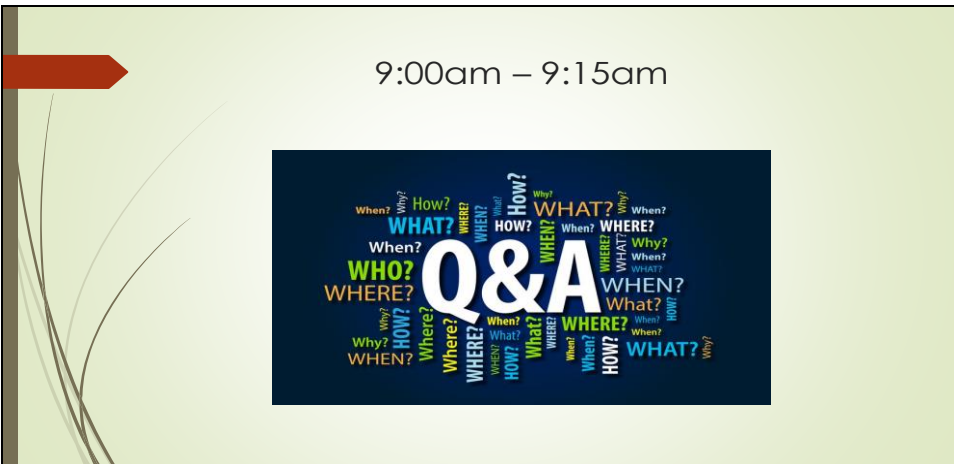
Slide 8

Looking at our Data:
West Central High School
Briarwood ISD

- View state report card
 - Student achievement
 - Student progress
 - Closing performance gaps
 - Postsecondary readiness
- View testing data
 - Subgroups
 - African American
 - Hispanic
 - At Risk (SES)

It would be important here to begin with the district's and school mission statements to understand where the school currently stands and the expectations that should be aligned to their data. Next, view the state report card and how the school measures in the areas of student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness. Lastly, view testing data for subgroups of African American, Hispanic, At-Risk students to compare to other subgroup of students.

Slide 9

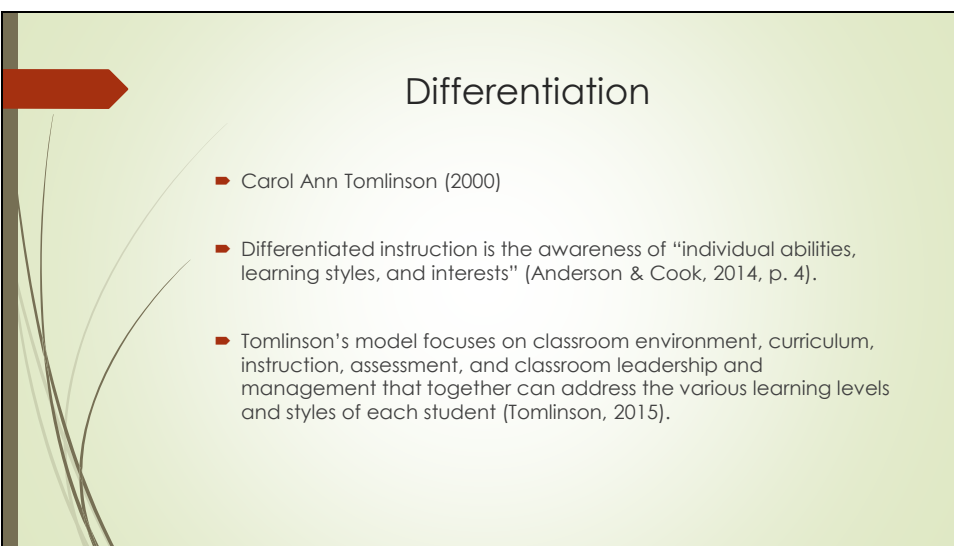


9:00am – 9:15am

Q&A

During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

Slide 10

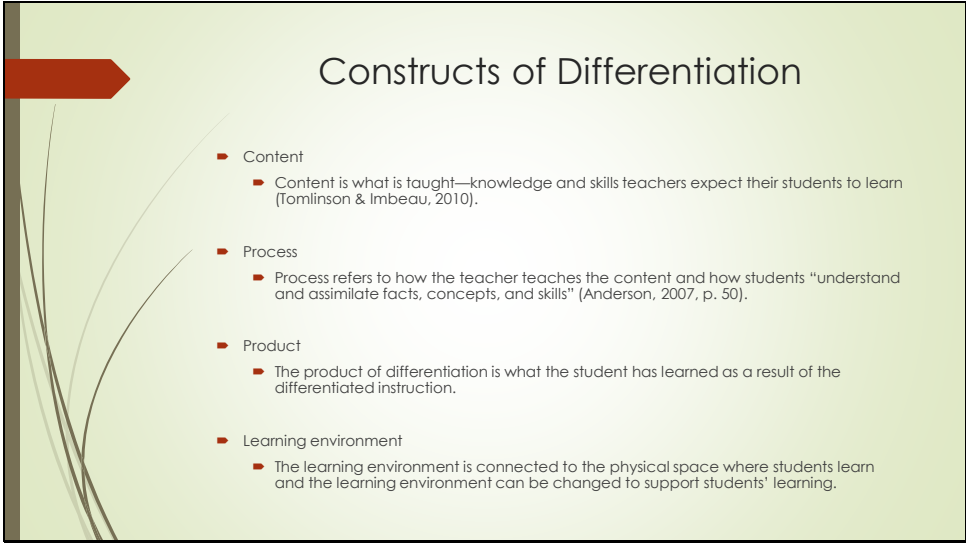


Differentiation

- Carol Ann Tomlinson (2000)
- Differentiated instruction is the awareness of "individual abilities, learning styles, and interests" (Anderson & Cook, 2014, p. 4).
- Tomlinson's model focuses on classroom environment, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom leadership and management that together can address the various learning levels and styles of each student (Tomlinson, 2015).

Have participants to look at KWL chart they completed to what they knew about differentiation. Tomlinson's history with differentiation. Highlight bullet as to what differentiation focuses on.

Slide 11

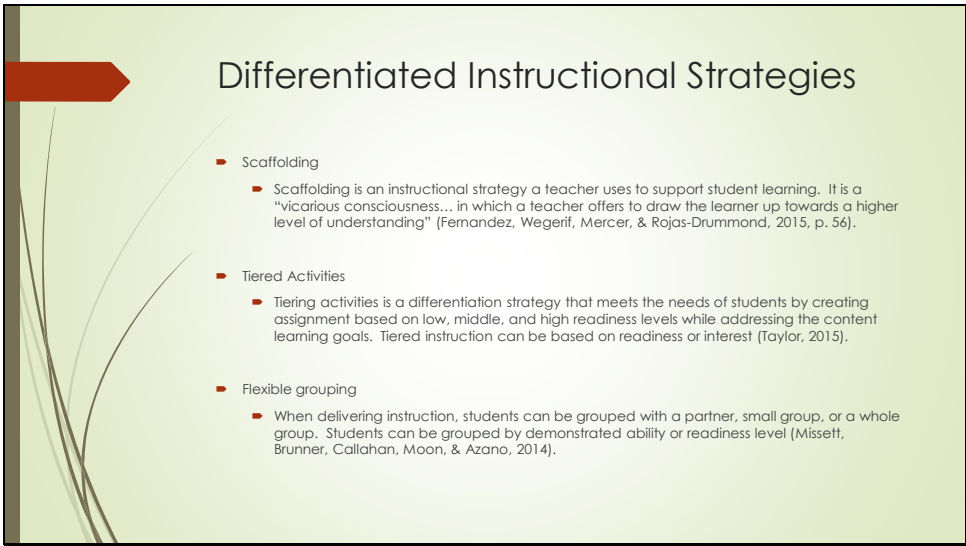


Constructs of Differentiation

- Content
 - Content is what is taught—knowledge and skills teachers expect their students to learn (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010).
- Process
 - Process refers to how the teacher teaches the content and how students “understand and assimilate facts, concepts, and skills” (Anderson, 2007, p. 50).
- Product
 - The product of differentiation is what the student has learned as a result of the differentiated instruction.
- Learning environment
 - The learning environment is connected to the physical space where students learn and the learning environment can be changed to support students' learning.

Review the constructs of differentiation. Before you go into detail, have the participants to make notes on their paper of examples they have used with the different constructs of differentiation. Think-Pair-Share strategy can be used; have participants pair with someone to give examples and then share out with the rest of the group.

Slide 12



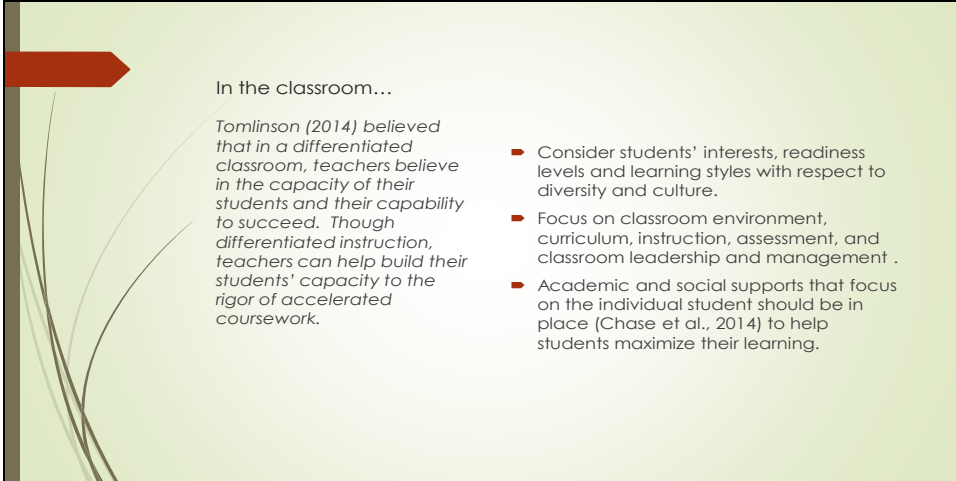
Differentiated Instructional Strategies

- Scaffolding
 - Scaffolding is an instructional strategy a teacher uses to support student learning. It is a “vicarious consciousness... in which a teacher offers to draw the learner up towards a higher level of understanding” (Fernandez, Wegerif, Mercer, & Rojas-Drummond, 2015, p. 56).
- Tiered Activities
 - Tiering activities is a differentiation strategy that meets the needs of students by creating assignment based on low, middle, and high readiness levels while addressing the content learning goals. Tiered instruction can be based on readiness or interest (Taylor, 2015).
- Flexible grouping
 - When delivering instruction, students can be grouped with a partner, small group, or a whole group. Students can be grouped by demonstrated ability or readiness level (Missett, Brunner, Callahan, Moon, & Azano, 2014).

Connect the constructs with the instructional strategies. These are strategies teachers can begin with when incorporating differentiation. Be sure to provide examples of what each of these would look like in the classroom. Possible examples could include *scaffolding*, in which the teacher would take on the subject of tragedies, using the text of “Romeo and Juliet.” The teacher could provide students with a text (content) that

uses both modern and the Shakespearean versions of the play to help students to understand the play; *tiered activities*, in which the teacher could have students describe (process) the play's themes through the creation of a soundtrack, illustration of pictures, or written descriptions; and, with *flexible grouping*, a teacher can group (environment) the students in low, medium, and high—groups of two or three students to have a discussion on the themes of Romeo and Juliet.

Slide 13



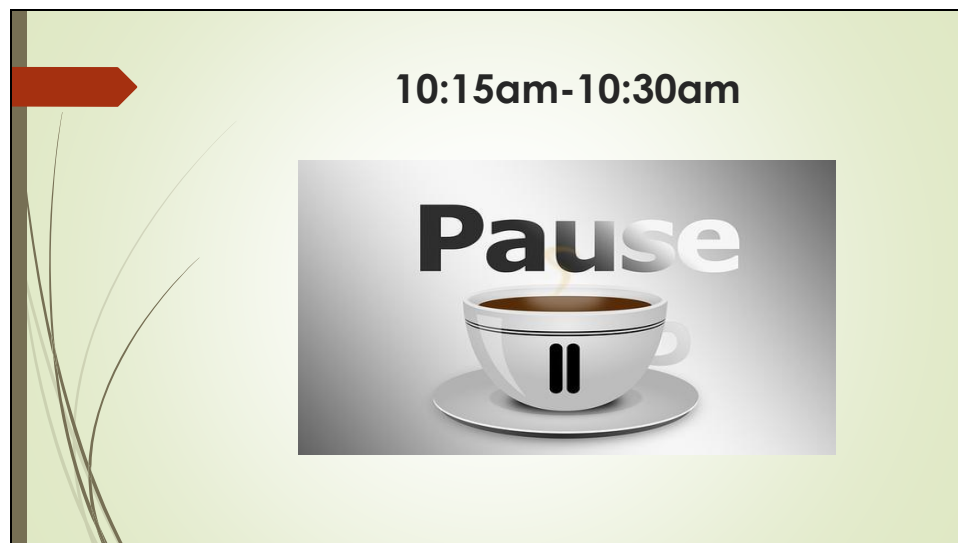
In the classroom...

Tomlinson (2014) believed that in a differentiated classroom, teachers believe in the capacity of their students and their capability to succeed. Though differentiated instruction, teachers can help build their students' capacity to the rigor of accelerated coursework.

- Consider students' interests, readiness levels and learning styles with respect to diversity and culture.
- Focus on classroom environment, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom leadership and management .
- Academic and social supports that focus on the individual student should be in place (Chase et al., 2014) to help students maximize their learning.

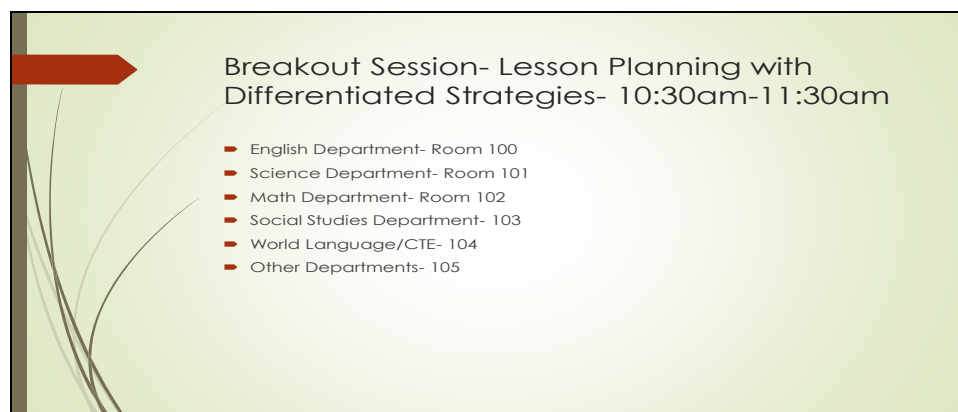
Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation. Ask participants how they can implement these instructional strategies in their classroom. Ask them to briefly comment on what this would look like; ask them to comment on which barriers would prevent the implementation. Brainstorm whole group on how to dissolve the mentioned barriers.

Slide 14



Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.

Slide 15



Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session. Be sure ask participants to keep in mind the various learning levels and styles of their students when creating lesson plans. Have participants to share out how each instructional strategy could meet the individual needs of their learners and how it could be assessed.

Slide 16

Lesson Plan Learning Objectives

Differentiated Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Responsiveness/Inclusion Breakout Session Lesson Planning	Day One Lesson Plan	Day Two Lesson Plan	Day Three Lesson Plan
Science Department	Students will be able to compare planets and tell how they are detected (Biology).	Students will be able to compare solids, liquids, and gases (Chemistry).	Students will be able to understand and investigate kinetic and potential energy (Physics).
English Department	Students will be able to analyze archetypes in classical literature (English 2).	Students will be able to compare and contrast various themes across literature works (English 1).	Students will be able to analyze the development of characters through literary devices (English 3).
Mathematics Department	Students will be able to graph linear inequalities on a coordinate plane (Algebra 1).	Students will be able to understand reflectional and rotational symmetry in 2D shapes (Geometry).	Students will be able to describe symmetry with even and odd functions of a graph (Trigonometry).
Social Studies Department	Students will be able to explain the influence of climate on biomes (World Geography).	Students will be able to evaluate the risks and responsibilities of borrowing money (Economics).	Students will be able to understand levels and states of consciousness (Psychology).
World Language/ CTE Departments	Students will be able to understand and apply appropriate formal/informal register (Spanish 1).	Students will be able to build a database and import and export databases (CTE).	Students will be able to compare distinguishing characteristics of French family routine (French 2).
Other Departments	Students will be able to understand social influences of taking drugs (Health).	Students will be able to create an original work of art (Art).	Students will be able to design a personal fitness program (PE).

Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day one lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating differentiation strategies: Students will be able to compare planets and tell how they are detected (Biology); Students will be able to analyze archetypes in classical literature (English 2); Students will be able to graph linear inequalities on a coordinate plane (Algebra 1). Students will be able to explain the influence of climate on biomes (World Geography); Students will be able to understand and apply appropriate formal/informal register (Spanish 1); Students will be able to understand social influences of taking drugs (Health).

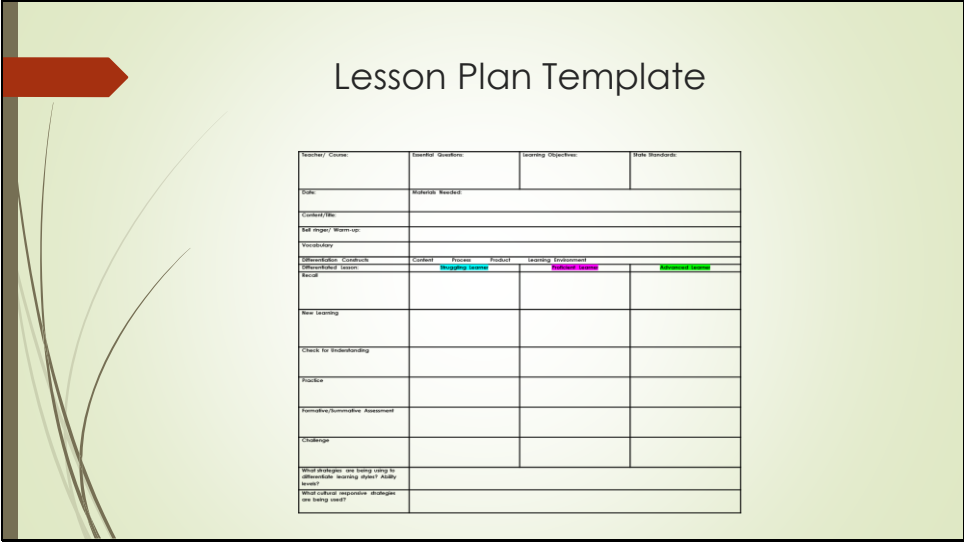
Slide 17

Lesson Plan Checklist- "Do you have everything?"

- Essential questions?
- Learning objectives?
- Warm up/bell ringer?
- Activity to activate prior knowledge?
- Whole group and Independent practice?
- Formative/summative assessment?
- Variety of instructional strategies?
- Strategies tailored to student needs?
- Strategies with respect to culture?
- List of students who will need individualized instruction?

Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students. Because this type of planning is time consuming, ask participants, “When would be the best time to lesson plan? Would it be best to lesson plan by the week, bi-week, or monthly?” In addition, “Could this type of lesson planning be split with your peers to help with time?”

Slide 18



Lesson Plan Template

Teacher/ Course	Essential Questions	Learning Objectives	State Standards
Title		Material Needed	
Context/Title			
Exit Strategy/ Warm-up			
Vocabulary			
Essential Question/ Content	Content	Process	Product
Essential Question	Learning Strategy	Learning Strategy	Learning Strategy
Exit			
Exit Strategy			
Check for Understanding			
Assess			
Formative/Summative Assessment			
Challenge			
What strategies are being used to differentiate learning opportunities?			
What cultural response strategies are being used?			

The participants will use this lesson plan template to create a lesson incorporating the key items learned for the day. Each participant will be asked to individually complete their lesson plan template so that they may use it as a resource for future lesson planning.

Slide 19



Lunch time on your own.

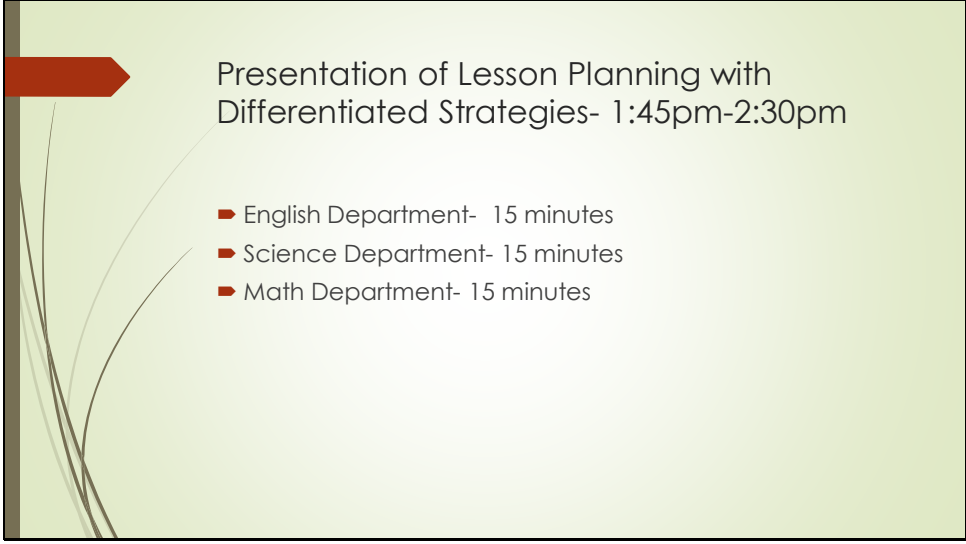
Slide 20

A slide with a light green background and a decorative vertical bar on the left side featuring a red arrow pointing right and some thin, curved lines. The text "Continuation of Breakout Sessions- 1:15pm-1:45pm" is centered at the top. Below the text is a list of departments and rooms, each preceded by a red square bullet point.

- English Department- Room 100
- Science Department- Room 101
- Math Department- Room 102
- Social Studies Department- 103
- World Language/CTE- 104
- Other Departments- 105

Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.

Slide 21



Presentation of Lesson Planning with Differentiated Strategies- 1:45pm-2:30pm

- English Department- 15 minutes
- Science Department- 15 minutes
- Math Department- 15 minutes

Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

Slide 22

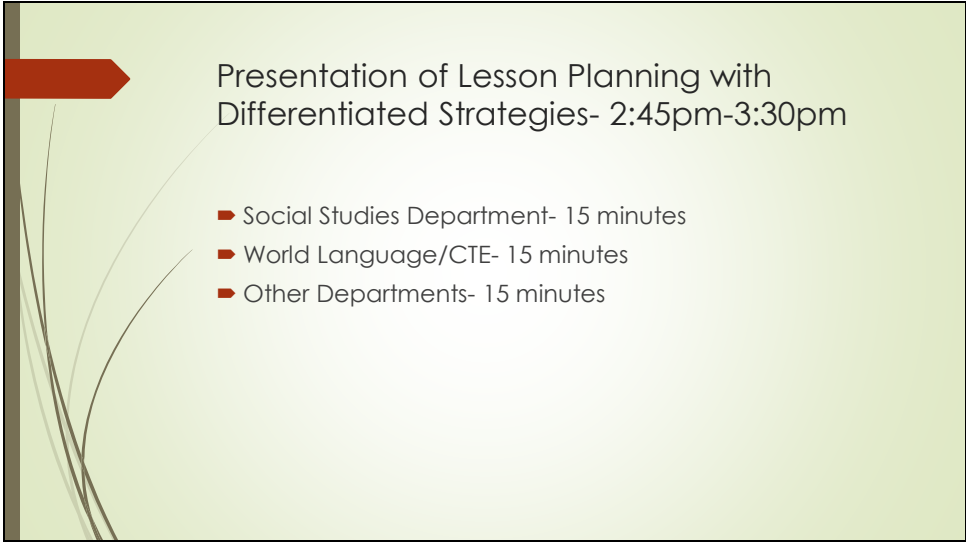


2:30pm-2:45pm



Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; tell the participants the location of the restrooms and other important local logistical information they need for their break.

Slide 23



Presentation of Lesson Planning with Differentiated Strategies- 2:45pm-3:30pm

- Social Studies Department- 15 minutes
- World Language/CTE- 15 minutes
- Other Departments- 15 minutes

Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

Slide 24



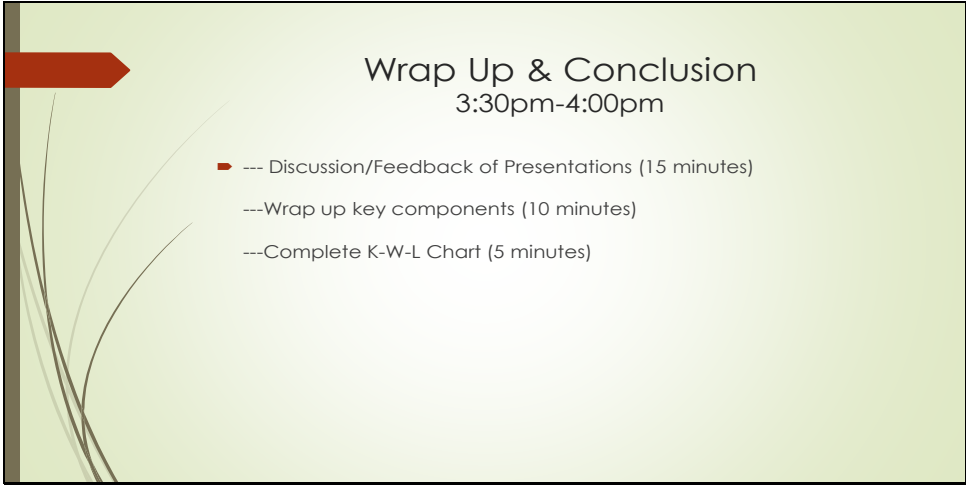
Wrap Up & Conclusion
3:30pm-4:00pm



Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of differentiation and strategies. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: "After the

training today, what is your perspective on today's topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?" Conclude with describing the next day's training goal.

Slide 25



Slide 25 features a light green background with a dark green arrow pointing right on the left side. The text is centered and reads:


Wrap Up & Conclusion

3:30pm-4:00pm

- Discussion/Feedback of Presentations (15 minutes)
- Wrap up key components (10 minutes)
- Complete K-W-L Chart (5 minutes)


Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of differentiation and strategies. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: "After the training today, what is your perspective on today's topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?" Conclude with describing the next day's training goal.

Slide 26



Slide 26 features a light green background with a dark green arrow pointing right on the left side. The text is centered and reads:

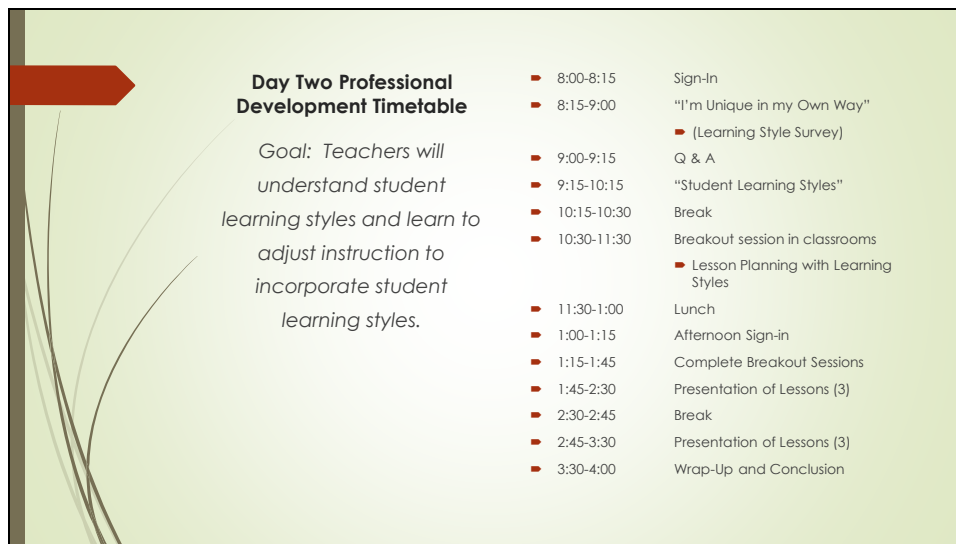
Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Responsive Pedagogy- 8:00am – 12:00pm



A calendar icon is centered below the text, showing a red header with the word "Day" in white and a large black number "2" on a white background.

Note that this begins the training for day two.

Slide 27



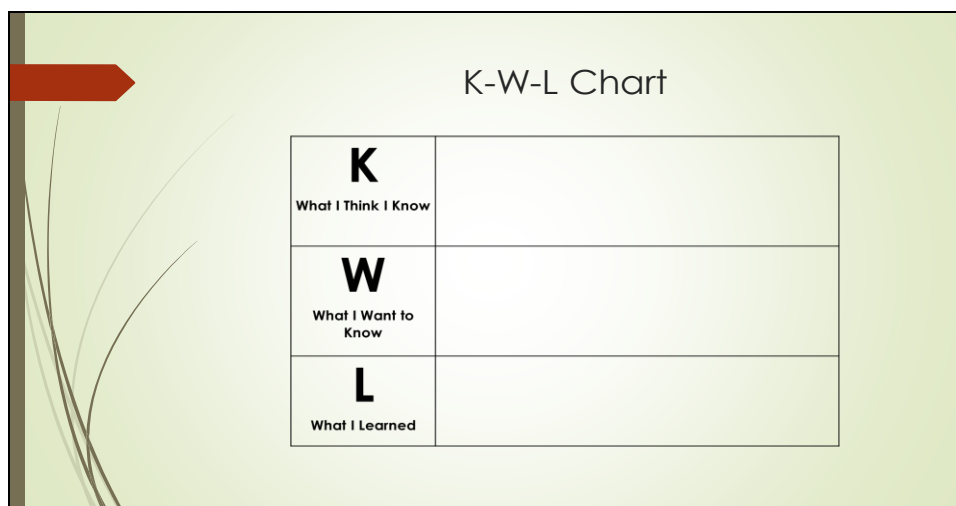
Day Two Professional Development Timetable

Goal: Teachers will understand student learning styles and learn to adjust instruction to incorporate student learning styles.

- 8:00-8:15 Sign-In
- 8:15-9:00 "I'm Unique in my Own Way"
(Learning Style Survey)
- 9:00-9:15 Q & A
- 9:15-10:15 "Student Learning Styles"
- 10:15-10:30 Break
- 10:30-11:30 Breakout session in classrooms
Lesson Planning with Learning Styles
- 11:30-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-1:15 Afternoon Sign-in
- 1:15-1:45 Complete Breakout Sessions
- 1:45-2:30 Presentation of Lessons (3)
- 2:30-2:45 Break
- 2:45-3:30 Presentation of Lessons (3)
- 3:30-4:00 Wrap-Up and Conclusion

Review the specific agenda for day two. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will begin with teachers taking a learning style survey and learning about student learning styles. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate student learning styles just learned in the previous session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.

Slide 28

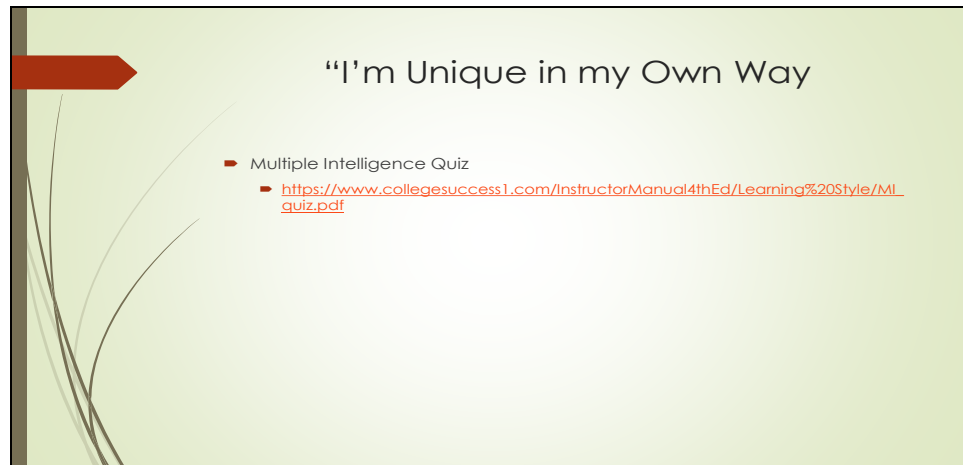


K-W-L Chart

K What I Think I Know	
W What I Want to Know	
L What I Learned	

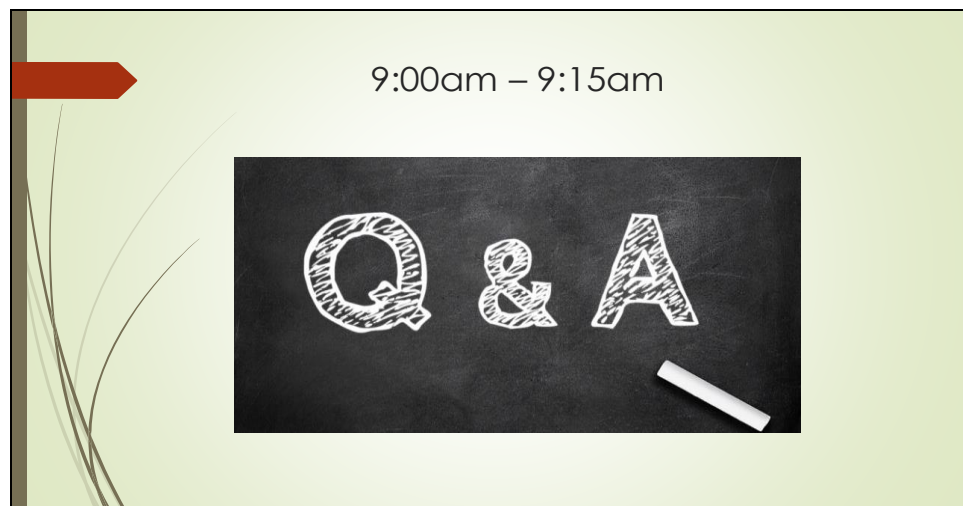
Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about student learning styles. They will then complete what they would like to know about student learning styles. At the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day. In addition, have participants to reflect on their classroom experiences. Where have I seen or experienced this before? What did I do? How can I be different the next time?

Slide 29



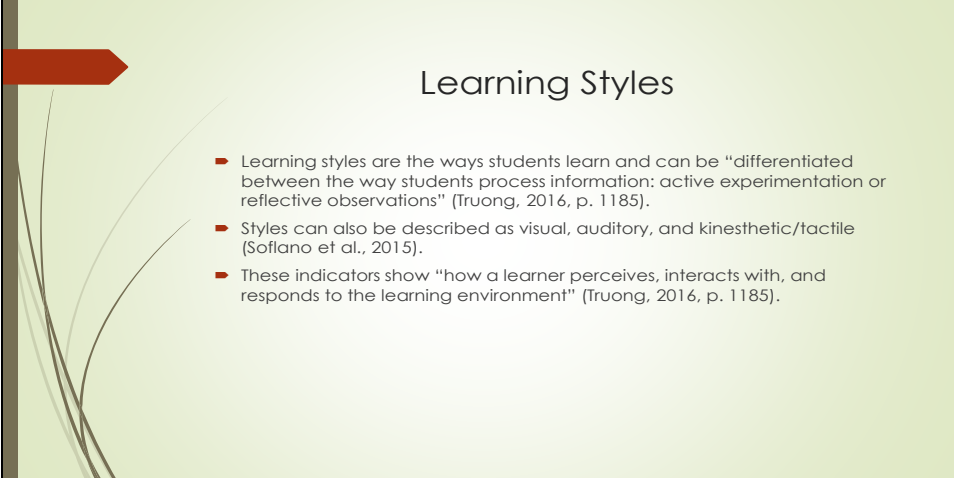
This is a multiple intelligence quiz. Have participants spend 20 minutes or less completing the quiz. Rank each statement 1-5 with 1, that's not like me at all to 5, the statement is definitely me. They should also complete the graph at the end once they have added up the totals. Share out the results so that participants can see the different learning levels throughout the room.

Slide 30



During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

Slide 31



Slide 31 features a light green background with a dark green arrow pointing right on the left side. The title "Learning Styles" is centered at the top. Below the title is a bulleted list of three points.

Learning Styles

- Learning styles are the ways students learn and can be "differentiated between the way students process information: active experimentation or reflective observations" (Truong, 2016, p. 1185).
- Styles can also be described as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile (Soflano et al., 2015).
- These indicators show "how a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment" (Truong, 2016, p. 1185).

Begin to discuss learning styles, how everyone learns differently. Acknowledge that it takes time to get to know their students first and then to understand each student is learning patterns/styles. Have participants reflect on the various assignments they have given their students and reflect on how the students responded. What happened when you give students paper and pencil assignments? Group work? Projects? How did your students respond?

Slide 32



Slide 32 features a light green background with a dark green arrow pointing right on the left side. The title "Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences" is centered at the top. Below the title is a bulleted list of seven intelligences.

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

- Verbal/Linguistic
- Logical/Math
- Visual/Spatial
- Interpersonal
- Musical
- Naturalistic
- Bodily/Kinesthetic

Provide a brief overview of who Howard Gardner and his contributions. Describe and provide examples of each intelligence relating it back to the quiz taken.

Slide 33

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences
An Explanation

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2EdujrM0vA>
 - Filmmakers- Practical Psychology
- *In his theory of multiple intelligences, Dr. Howard Gardner describes how humans can be intellectually smart in a variety of different ways.*

Show the multiple intelligence video. This will give participants a visual and a deeper explanation of multiple intelligence. This also breaks up the monotony of give and take of information. Ask participants, “What can be learned about multiple intelligences? How can the use of learning styles change how your students respond to your instruction?”

Slide 34

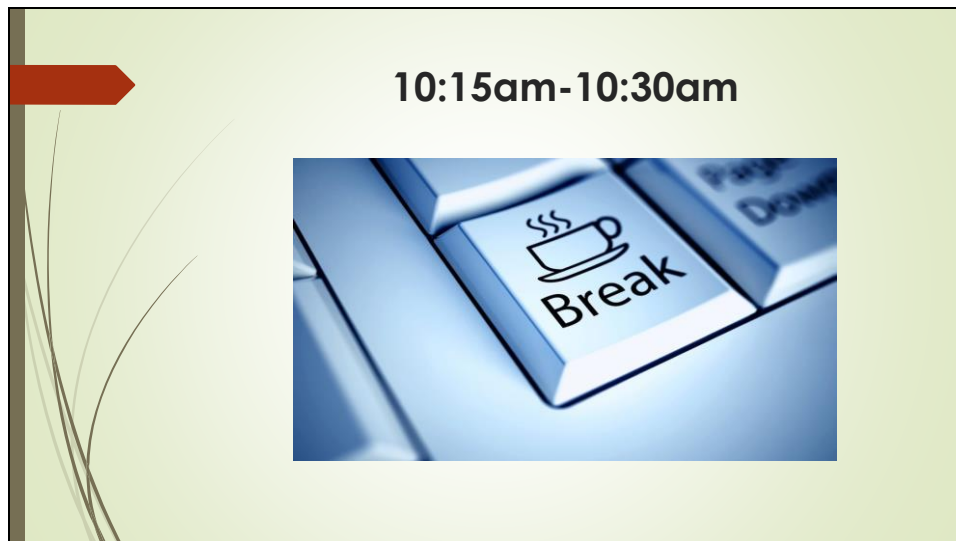
In the classroom...

Teachers should aim to meet the individual learning needs of their students, transforming and changing how instruction is delivered.

- Understand that students learn differently and will vary with across content areas.
- Student's prior experiences also play a role in their learning styles. Work to understand who your students are.
- Incorporation of learning styles can help to increase a student's academic achievement and confidence.

Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation.

Slide 35



Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.

Slide 36

 Slide 36: Breakout Session- Lesson Planning with Learning Styles- 10:30am-11:30am. The slide has a light green background with a red arrow pointing right on the left side. The text is as follows:

- English Department- Room 100
- Science Department- Room 101
- Math Department- Room 102
- Social Studies Department- 103
- World Language/CTE- 104
- Other Departments- 105

Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session. Be sure ask participants to keep in mind the various learning levels and styles of their students when creating lesson plans. Have participants to share out how each instructional strategy could meet the individual needs of their learners and how it could be assessed.

Slide 37

Lesson Plan Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Response Pedagogy Breakout Session Lesson Planning	Day One Lesson Plan	Day Two Lesson Plan	Day Three Lesson Plan
Science Department	Students will be able to compare planets and tell how they are detected (Biology).	Students will be able to compare solids, liquids, and gases (Chemistry).	Students will be able to understand and investigate kinetic and potential energy (Physics).
English Department	Students will be able to analyze archetypes in classical literature (English 2).	Students will be able to compare and contrast various themes across literature works (English 1).	Students will be able to analyze the development of characters through literary devices (English 3).
Mathematics Department	Students will be able to graph linear inequalities on a coordinate plane (Algebra 1).	Students will be able to understand reflectional and rotational symmetry in a plane figure (Geometry).	Students will be able to describe symmetry with even and odd functions of a graph (Precalculus).
Social Studies Department	Students will be able to explain the influence of climate on business (World Geography).	Students will be able to evaluate the risks and responsibilities of borrowing money (Economics).	Students will be able to understand levels and states of consciousness (Psychology).
World Language/ CTE Departments	Students will be able to understand and apply appropriate formal/informal register (Spanish 1).	Students will be able to build a database and import and export databases (CTE).	Students will be able to compare distinguishing characteristics of French family routine (French 2).
Other Departments	Students will be able to understand social influences of taking drugs (Health).	Students will be able to create an original work of art (Art).	Students will be able to design a personal fitness program (PE).

Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day two lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating student learning styles: Students will be able to compare solids, liquids, and gases (Chemistry); Students will be able to compare and contrast various themes across literature works (English 1); Students will be able to understand reflectional and rotational symmetry in a plane figure (Geometry); Students will be able to evaluate the risks and responsibilities of borrowing money (Economics); Students will be able to build a database and import and export databases (CTE); Students will be able to create an original work of art (Art).

Slide 38

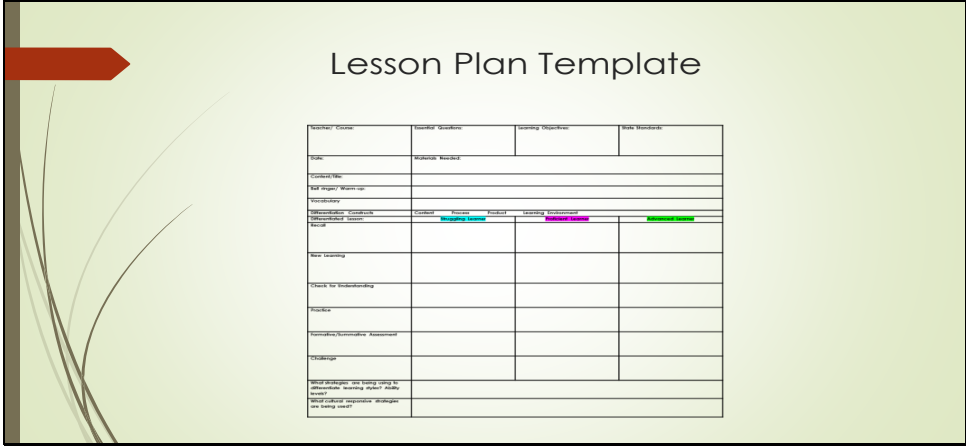
Lesson Plan Checklist- "Do you have everything?"

- Essential questions?
- Learning objectives?
- Warm up/bell ringer?
- Activity to activate prior knowledge?
- Whole group and Independent practice?
- Formative/summative assessment?
- Variety of instructional strategies?
- Strategies tailored to student needs?
- Strategies with respect to culture?
- List of students who will need individualized instruction?

Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students. Because this type of planning is time consuming, ask participants, "When would be the best time to lesson

plan? Would it be best to lesson plan by the week, bi-week, or monthly?” In addition, “Could this type of lesson planning be split with your peers to help with time?”

Slide 39



The slide features a green background with a decorative brown arrow pointing right and a faint illustration of grass on the left. The title "Lesson Plan Template" is centered at the top. Below the title is a table with the following structure:

Number/ Course	Teacher Objective	Learning Objectives	State Standards
Title	Activities/ Materials		
Content/Topic			
Self-reflection/ Reflection			
Assessment			
Instructional Strategies	Classroom	Individual	Small Group
Resources	Technology	Materials	Other
Notes			
Key Learning			
Check for Understanding			
Exit Ticket			
Formative/Summative Assessment			
Reflection			
Other/Additional notes/anything you'd like to add			
Self-reflection/ Reflection			
Notes			

The participants will use this lesson plan template to create a lesson incorporating the key items learned for the day. Each participant will be asked to individually complete their lesson plan template so that they may use it as a resource for future lesson planning.

Slide 40



Lunch time on your own.

Slide 41

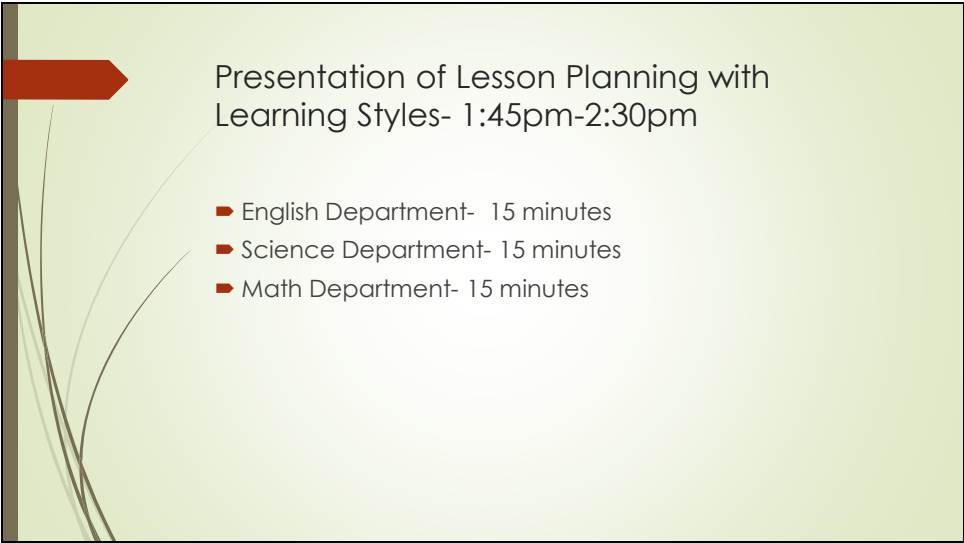


Continuation of Breakout Sessions-
1:15pm-1:45pm

- English Department- Room 100
- Science Department- Room 101
- Math Department- Room 102
- Social Studies Department- 103
- World Language/CTE- 104
- Other Departments- 105

Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.

Slide 42

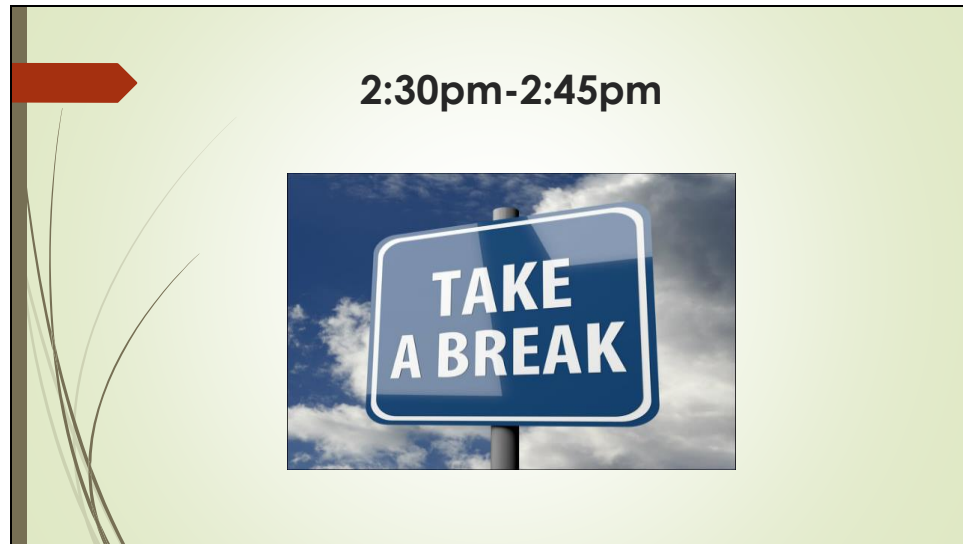


Presentation of Lesson Planning with
Learning Styles- 1:45pm-2:30pm

- English Department- 15 minutes
- Science Department- 15 minutes
- Math Department- 15 minutes

Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

Slide 43



Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; tell the participants the location of the restrooms and other important local logistical information they need for their break.

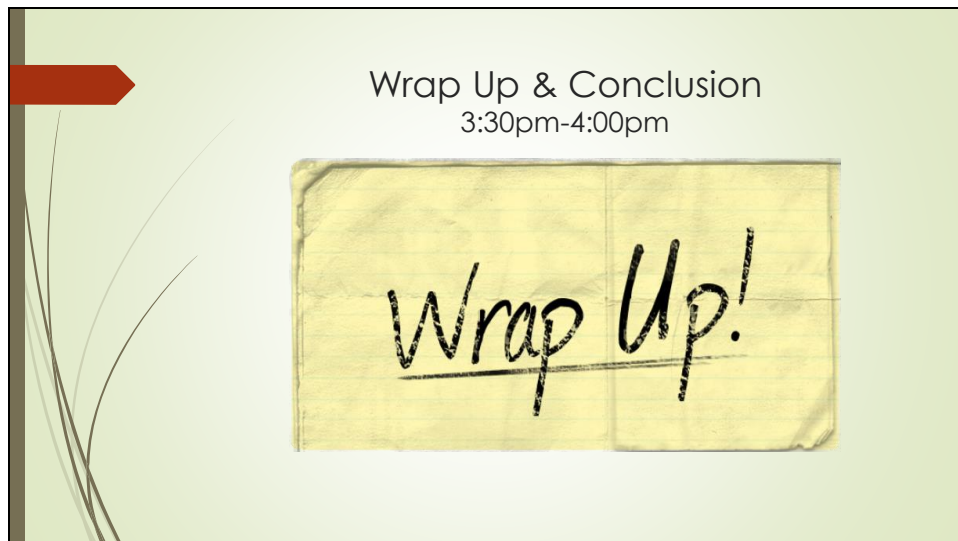
Slide 44

Presentation of Lesson Planning with Learning Styles- 2:45pm-3:30pm

- ▀ Social Studies Department- 15 minutes
- ▀ World Language/CTE- 15 minutes
- ▀ Other Departments- 15 minutes

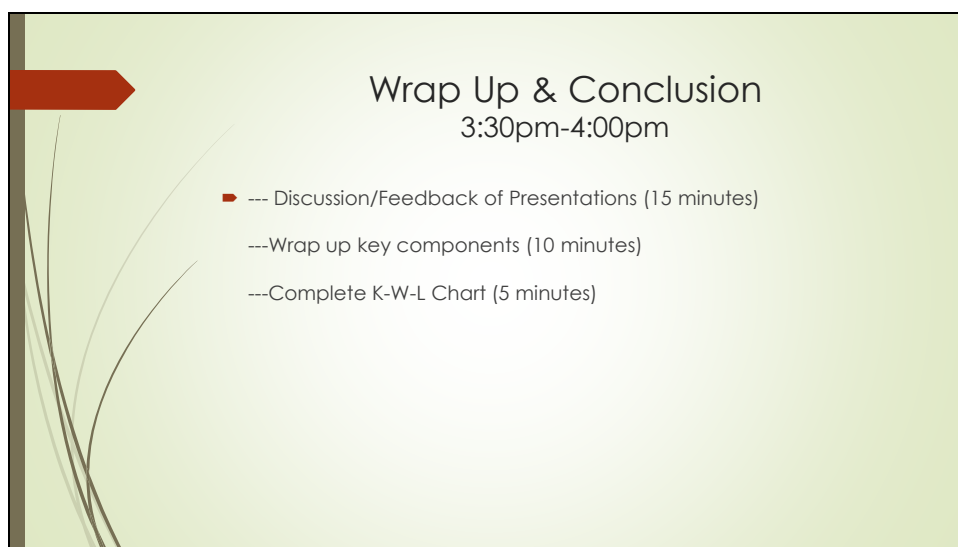
Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

Slide 45



Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of student learning styles. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: "After the training today, what is your perspective on today's topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?" If time permits, describe the next day's training goal.

Slide 46



Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of student learning styles. Have participants to

complete the “What I Learned” section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: “After the training today, what is your perspective on today’s topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?” If time permits, describe the next day’s training goal.

Slide 47



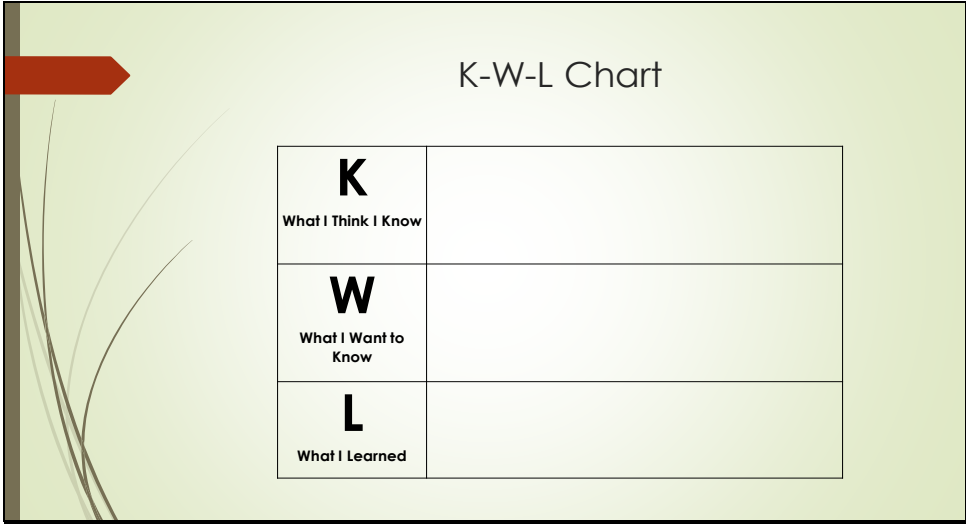
Note that this begins the training for day three.

Slide 48

Day Three Professional Development Timetable	
<i>Goal: Teachers will increase their awareness of cultural responsive pedagogy and learn to embed cultural responsive strategies in their instruction.</i>	
8:00-8:15	Sign-In
8:15-9:00	"From the Mouth of Babes" (video)
9:00-9:15	Q & A
9:15-10:15	"Cultural Responsive Pedagogy"
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Breakout session in classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson planning and incorporation of cultural responsive strategies
11:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:15	Afternoon Sign-in
1:15-1:45	Complete Breakout Sessions
1:45-2:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-3:30	Presentation of Lessons (3)
3:30-4:00	Wrap-Up and Conclusion

Review the specific agenda for day three. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will begin with a video of various students' school experiences, addressing personal biases, and learning about culturally responsive pedagogy. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate the culturally responsive strategies just learned in the previous session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.

Slide 49

A graphic titled "K-W-L Chart" on a light green background. On the left side, there is a vertical decorative element consisting of a red arrow pointing right and several thin, curved lines. The chart itself is a table with three rows and two columns. The first row is labeled "K" and "What I Think I Know". The second row is labeled "W" and "What I Want to Know". The third row is labeled "L" and "What I Learned".

K What I Think I Know	
W What I Want to Know	
L What I Learned	

Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about culturally responsive pedagogy. They will then complete what they would like to know about culturally responsive pedagogy. At the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day. In addition, have participants to reflect on their classroom experiences. Where have I seen or experienced this before? What did I do? How can I be different the next time?

Slide 50


Video Presentation(YouTube)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rspZv2a0Pp8>
 - Filmmakers: Geeta Gandbhir and Perri Peltz
- *In this mix of live-action and animation, a young boy of color navigates bias in the classroom and its impact on his future. The film also includes the voices of other children sharing their experiences, at school and at home, as they grow older.*

Show this TED talk clip of a student’s narrative. Persuade the participants to have an open mind about what they are hearing and try to understand the perspective of the student. Allow participants to have a brief discussion of the video slip. Have participants to reflect on the students they have had in their class, especially the students who are usually quiet during class discussions. Emphasize the importance of empathy. Ask the question, “Are there any students you might have accidentally overlooked?”

Slide 51

Let's Take a Look...



Have participants to look at the picture on the projector and think of what it means. Have them pay attention to what is being reflected in the mirror. Then ask the participants is what others see reflective of who they really are? How do people see you? How do you see yourself?

Slide 52


Exploring Personal Biases

- Uncovering and exploring racial and cultural attitudes
- Conscious and unconscious Biases
- "Acknowledging biases often opens doors for learning and allows people to consciously work for harmony in classrooms and communities" (Moule, 2012, p.49)

Begin with the definition of biases. Explain that in order to connect with others, they must acknowledge their personal biases whether intentional or not. Have participants to connect personal biases to their experiences to the classroom. Has there ever been a time when your personal biases interfered with your instruction or when delivering a point? Have you been close-minded to other perspectives based on your personal beliefs?

Slide 53

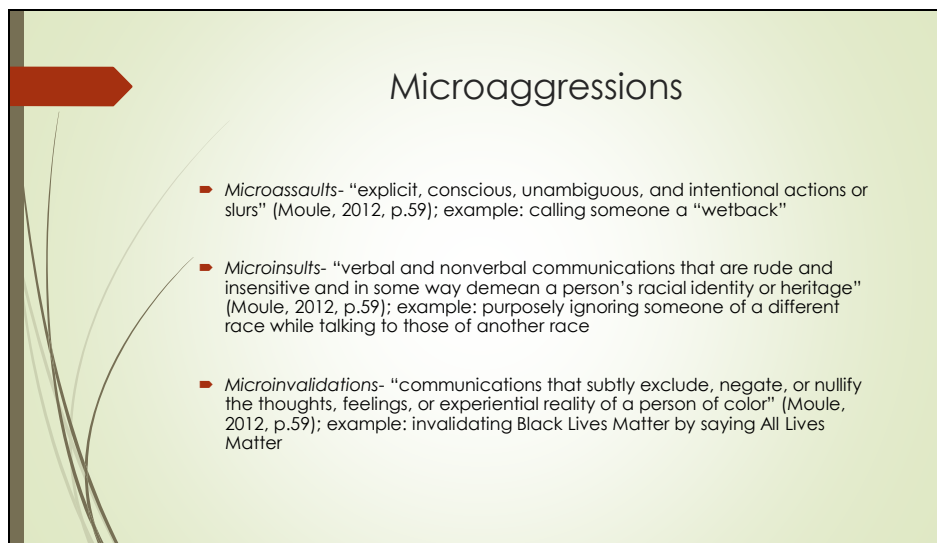
Microaggressions



- Defined as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership" (Moule, 2012, p.570.)
- Three types: microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations

Explain microaggressions and list the three different types of microaggressions. Remind participants that hearing the upcoming information may cause some uneasiness but is intended to help with see their students differently and ultimately teach them differently.

Slide 54

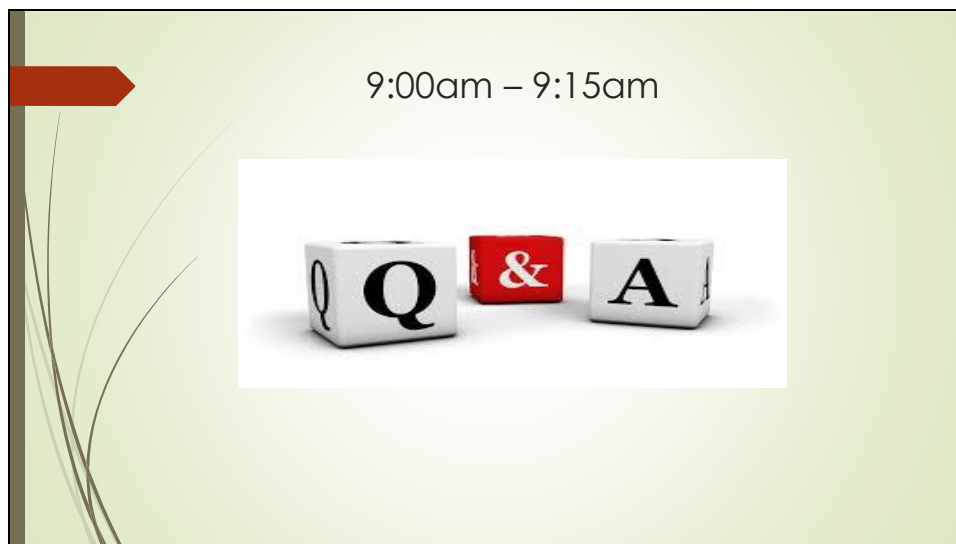


Microaggressions


- *Microassaults*- "explicit, conscious, unambiguous, and intentional actions or slurs" (Moule, 2012, p.59); example: calling someone a "wetback"
- *Microinsults*- "verbal and nonverbal communications that are rude and insensitive and in some way demean a person's racial identity or heritage" (Moule, 2012, p.59); example: purposely ignoring someone of a different race while talking to those of another race
- *Microinvalidations*- "communications that subtly exclude, negate, or nullify the thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color" (Moule, 2012, p.59); example: invalidating Black Lives Matter by saying All Lives Matter

Describe the different types of microaggressions. Provide some examples and solicit the participant examples. Be sure not to dive too deeply in the participants experiences; allow the open dialogue on the issue.

Slide 55

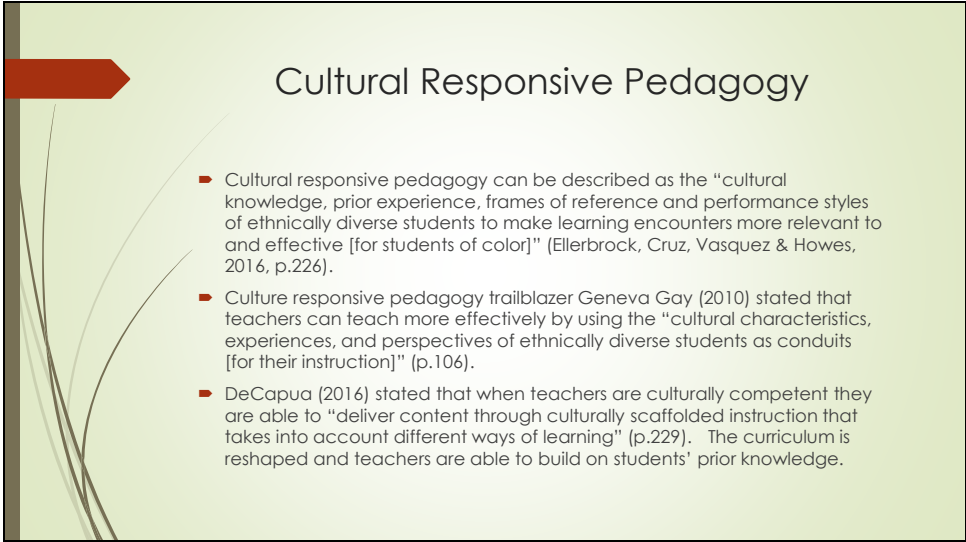


9:00am – 9:15am



During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Did you discover that perhaps you have exhibited microaggressions or have witnessed others with the same behavior? Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

Slide 56

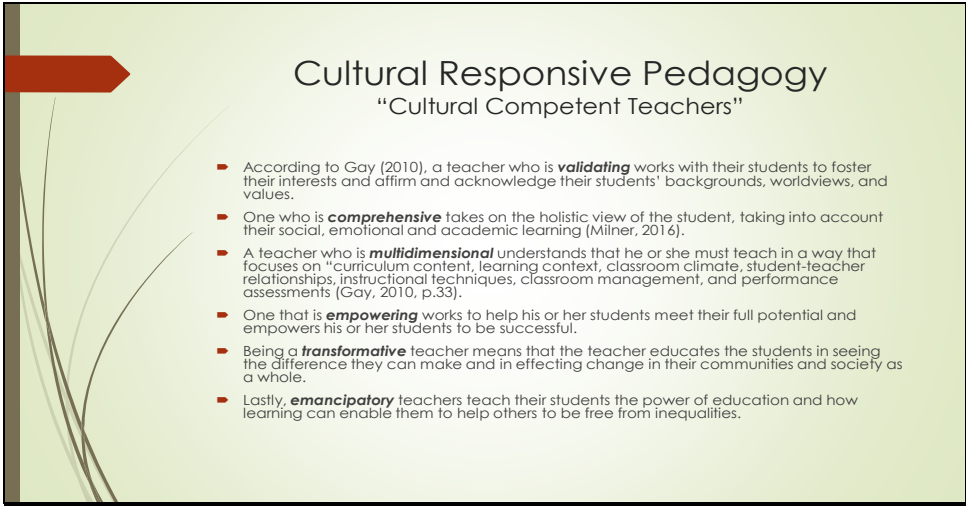


Cultural Responsive Pedagogy

- Cultural responsive pedagogy can be described as the “cultural knowledge, prior experience, frames of reference and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective [for students of color]” (Ellerbrock, Cruz, Vasquez & Howes, 2016, p.226).
- Culture responsive pedagogy trailblazer Geneva Gay (2010) stated that teachers can teach more effectively by using the “cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits [for their instruction]” (p.106).
- DeCapua (2016) stated that when teachers are culturally competent they are able to “deliver content through culturally scaffolded instruction that takes into account different ways of learning” (p.229). The curriculum is reshaped and teachers are able to build on students’ prior knowledge.

Connect the introduction activity to culture responsive pedagogy. Explain that as we work to teach differently, our thinking and response to students in our classrooms should begin to change. Explain the definition of culturally responsive pedagogy, Geneva Gay’s contributions and being culturally competent.

Slide 57



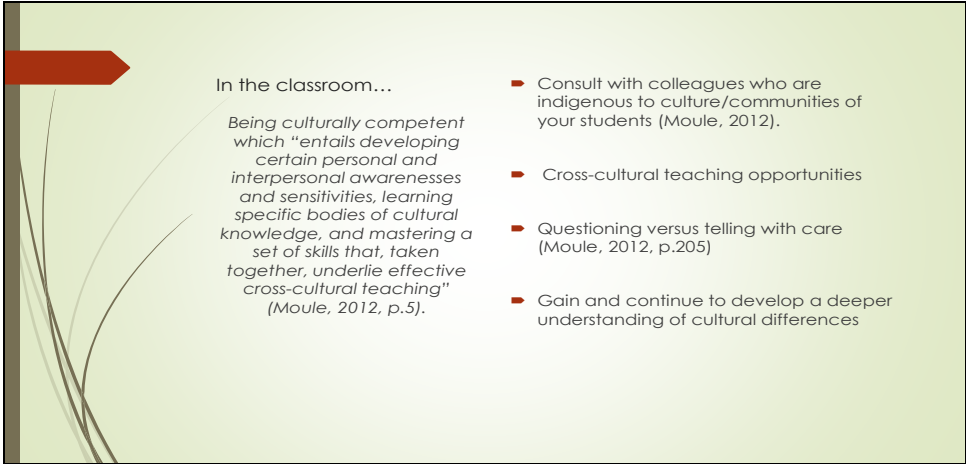
Cultural Responsive Pedagogy

“Cultural Competent Teachers”

- According to Gay (2010), a teacher who is **validating** works with their students to foster their interests and affirm and acknowledge their students’ backgrounds, worldviews, and values.
- One who is **comprehensive** takes on the holistic view of the student, taking into account their social, emotional and academic learning (Milner, 2016).
- A teacher who is **multidimensional** understands that he or she must teach in a way that focuses on “curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments (Gay, 2010, p.33).
- One that is **empowering** works to help his or her students meet their full potential and empowers his or her students to be successful.
- Being a **transformative** teacher means that the teacher educates the students in seeing the difference they can make and in effecting change in their communities and society as a whole.
- Lastly, **emancipatory** teachers teach their students the power of education and how learning can enable them to help others to be free from inequalities.

Express the importance of being culturally competent as a teacher. Explain the different ways of being culturally competent: validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. A Think Pair Share activity could be used here if time permits. Participants should pair up with someone to brainstorm what each of these examples would look like in their classrooms and perhaps how they could improve to become more culturally competent in their classrooms.

Slide 58



In the classroom...

Being culturally competent which "entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awarenesses and sensitivities, learning specific bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching" (Moule, 2012, p.5).

- Consult with colleagues who are indigenous to culture/communities of your students (Moule, 2012).
- Cross-cultural teaching opportunities
- Questioning versus telling with care (Moule, 2012, p.205)
- Gain and continue to develop a deeper understanding of cultural differences

Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation. Ask participants, "How will you work towards becoming more culturally competent?" In addition, "What could hinder you from becoming culturally competent and what could be done?"

Slide 59

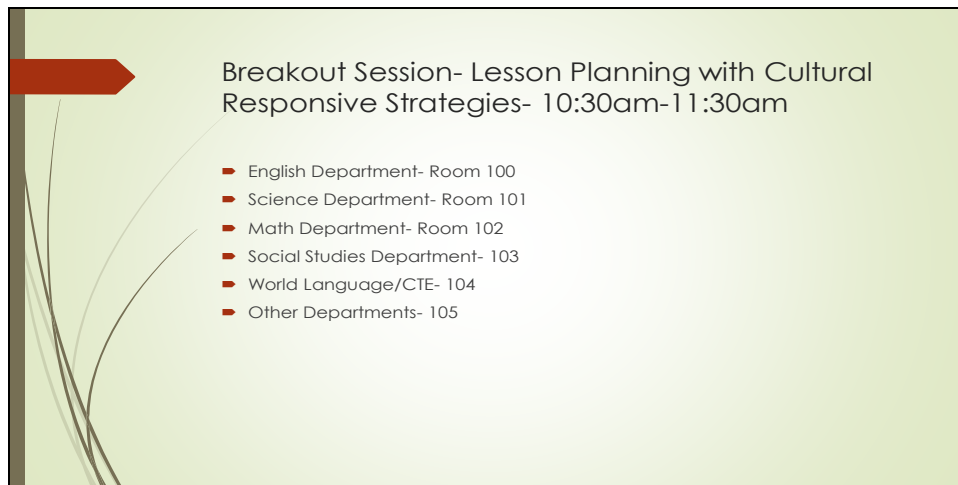


10:15am-10:30am

TAKE
a
break

Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.

Slide 60

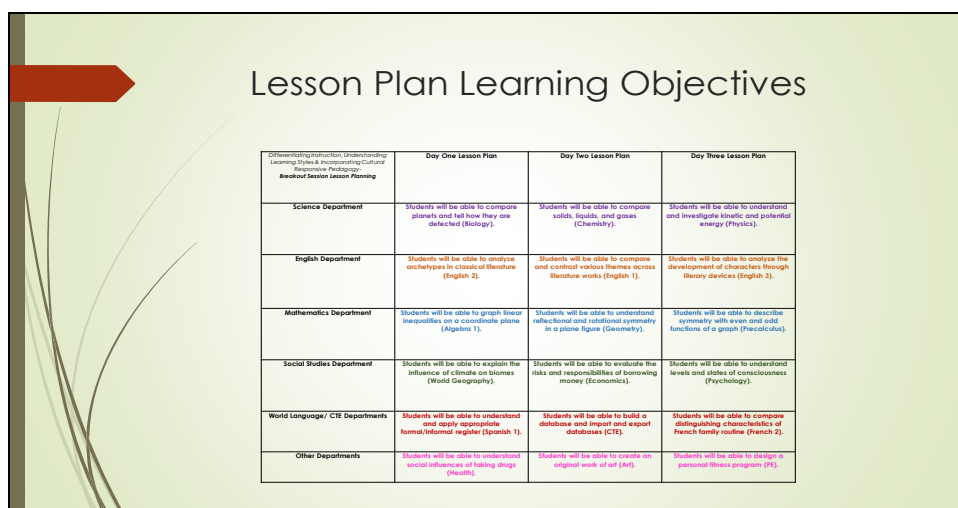


Breakout Session- Lesson Planning with Cultural Responsive Strategies- 10:30am-11:30am

- English Department- Room 100
- Science Department- Room 101
- Math Department- Room 102
- Social Studies Department- 103
- World Language/CTE- 104
- Other Departments- 105

Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session. Be sure ask participants to keep in mind the various learning levels and styles of their students when creating lesson plans. Have participants to share out how each instructional strategy could meet the individual needs of their learners and how it could be assessed.

Slide 61



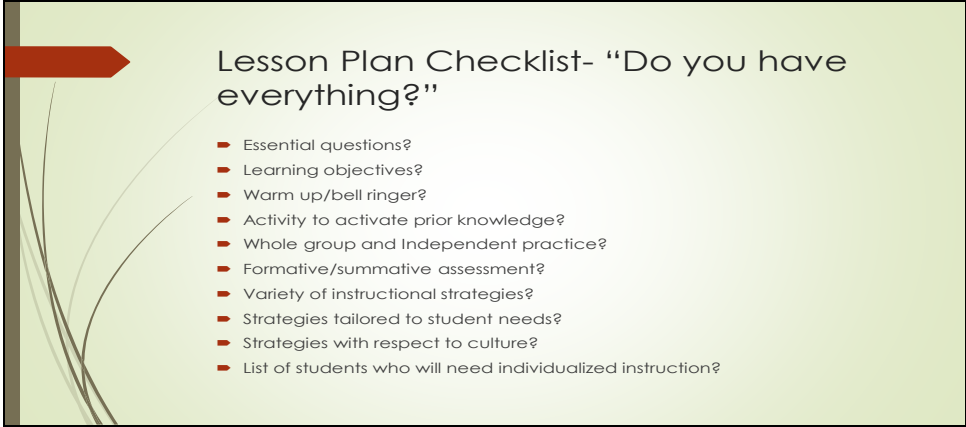
Lesson Plan Learning Objectives

Differentiating Instruction Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Responsive Pedagogy Breakout Session Lesson Planning	Day One Lesson Plan	Day Two Lesson Plan	Day Three Lesson Plan
Science Department	Students will be able to compare planets and tell how they are detected (Biology).	Students will be able to compare solids, liquids, and gases (Chemistry).	Students will be able to understand and investigate kinetic and potential energy (Physics).
English Department	Students will be able to analyze archetypes in classical literature (English 2).	Students will be able to compare and contrast various themes across Renaissance works (English 1).	Students will be able to analyze the development of characters through literary devices (English 3).
Mathematics Department	Students will be able to graph linear inequalities on a coordinate plane (Algebra 1).	Students will be able to understand reflectional and rotational symmetry in a plane figure (Geometry).	Students will be able to describe symmetry with even and odd functions of a graph (Precalculus).
Social Studies Department	Students will be able to explain the influence of climate on biomes (World Geography).	Students will be able to evaluate the risks and responsibilities of borrowing money (Economics).	Students will be able to understand levels and states of consciousness (Psychology).
World Language/ CTE Departments	Students will be able to understand and apply appropriate formal/informal register (Spanish 1).	Students will be able to build a database and import and export databases (CTE).	Students will be able to compare distinguishing characteristics of French family routine (French 2).
Other Departments	Students will be able to understand social influences of taking drugs (Health).	Students will be able to create an original work of art (Art).	Students will be able to design a personal fitness program (PE).

Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day three lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating culturally responsive strategies: Students will be able to understand and investigate kinetic and potential energy (Physics); Students will

be able to analyze the development of characters through literary devices (English 3); Students will be able to describe symmetry with even and odd functions of a graph (Precalculus); Students will be able to understand levels and states of consciousness (Psychology); Students will be able to compare distinguishing characteristics of French family routine (French 2); Students will be able to design a personal fitness program (PE).

Slide 62

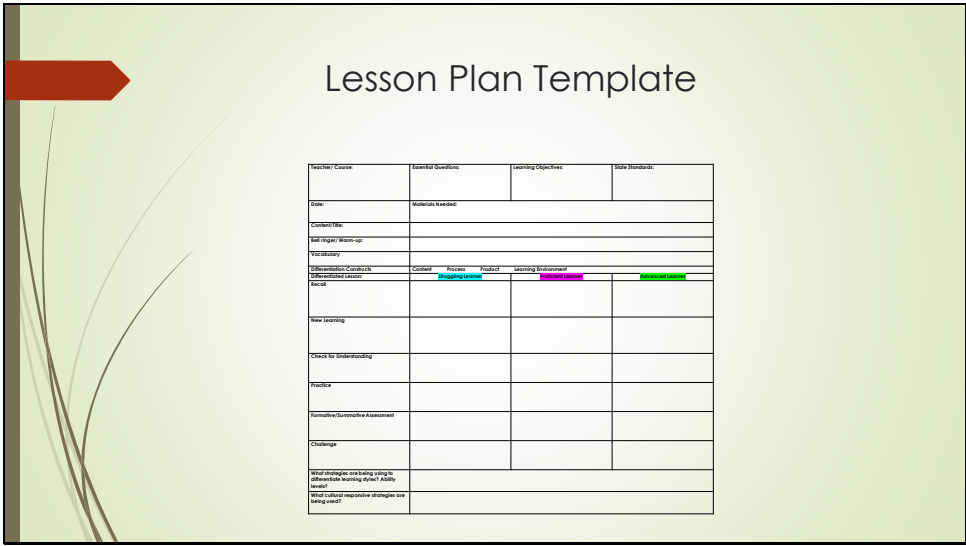


Lesson Plan Checklist- "Do you have everything?"

- Essential questions?
- Learning objectives?
- Warm up/bell ringer?
- Activity to activate prior knowledge?
- Whole group and Independent practice?
- Formative/summative assessment?
- Variety of instructional strategies?
- Strategies tailored to student needs?
- Strategies with respect to culture?
- List of students who will need individualized instruction?

Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students. Because this type of planning is time consuming, ask participants, "When would be the best time to lesson plan? Would it be best to lesson plan by the week, bi-week, or monthly?" In addition, "Could this type of lesson planning be split with your peers to help with time?"

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Lesson Plan Template

Teacher/ Course	Essential Questions	Learning Objectives	State Standards
Date	Addressed Standard		
Objectives			
Materials/ Materials			
Resources			
Instructional Strategies	Collaborative	Project	Learning Environment
Assessment/ Formative	Diagnostic/Assess	Formative/Assess	Summative/Assess
Notes			
New Learning			
Check for understanding			
Practice			
Formative/Summative Assessment			
Challenge			
What strategies are being used to differentiate learning styles/ ability levels?			
What formative/summative strategies are being used?			

Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students.

Slide 64



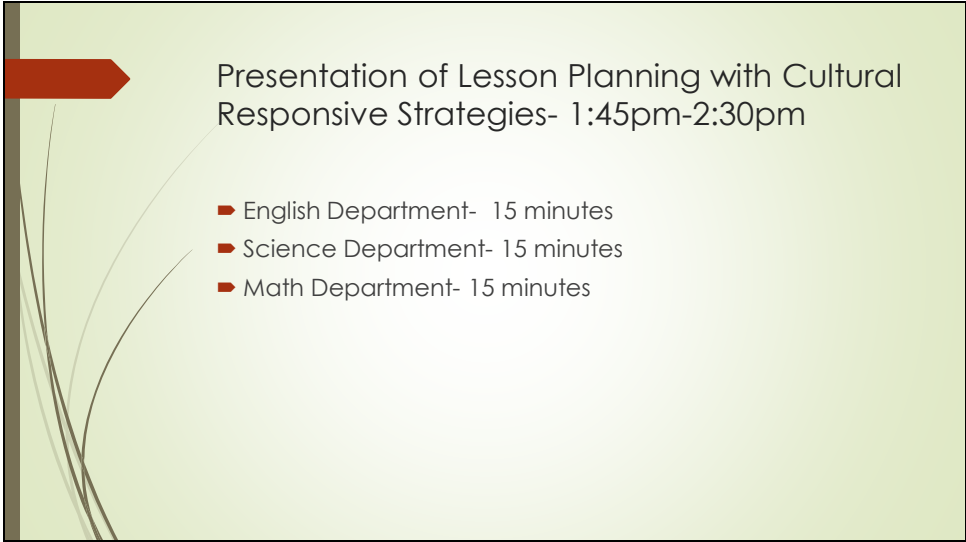
Lunch time on your own.

Slide 65



Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.

Slide 66

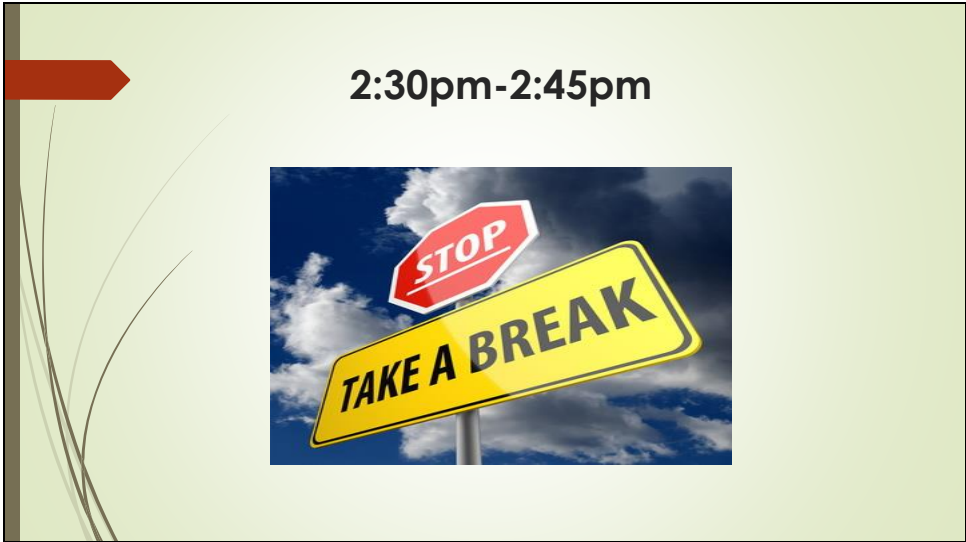


Presentation of Lesson Planning with Cultural Responsive Strategies- 1:45pm-2:30pm


- English Department- 15 minutes
- Science Department- 15 minutes
- Math Department- 15 minutes

Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

Slide 67

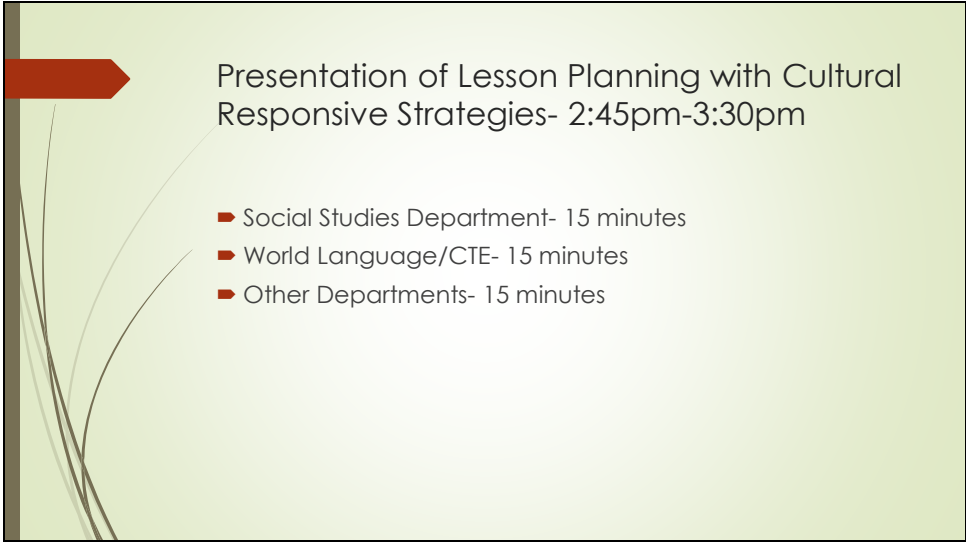


2:30pm-2:45pm



Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school.

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Presentation of Lesson Planning with Cultural Responsive Strategies- 2:45pm-3:30pm


- Social Studies Department- 15 minutes
- World Language/CTE- 15 minutes
- Other Departments- 15 minutes

Allow for three departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).

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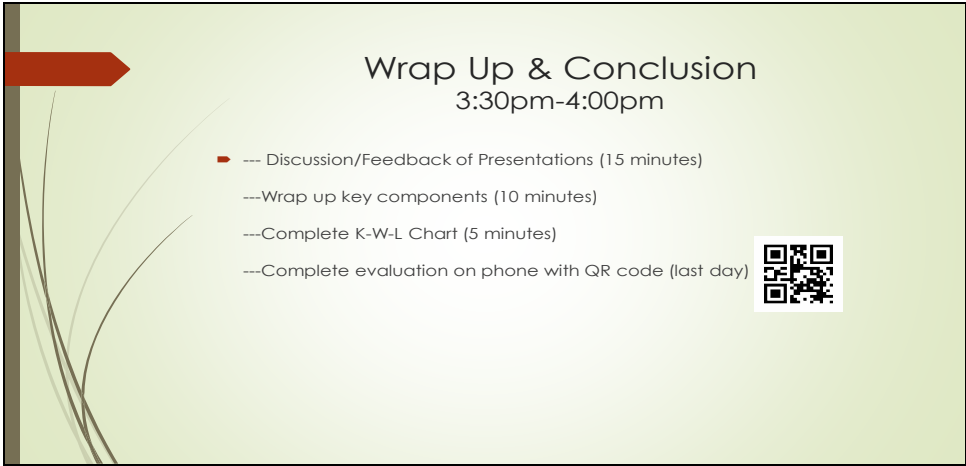
Wrap Up & Conclusion
3:30pm-4:00pm



Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of culturally responsive pedagogy. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: "After the

training today, what is your perspective on today's topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?"

Slide 70

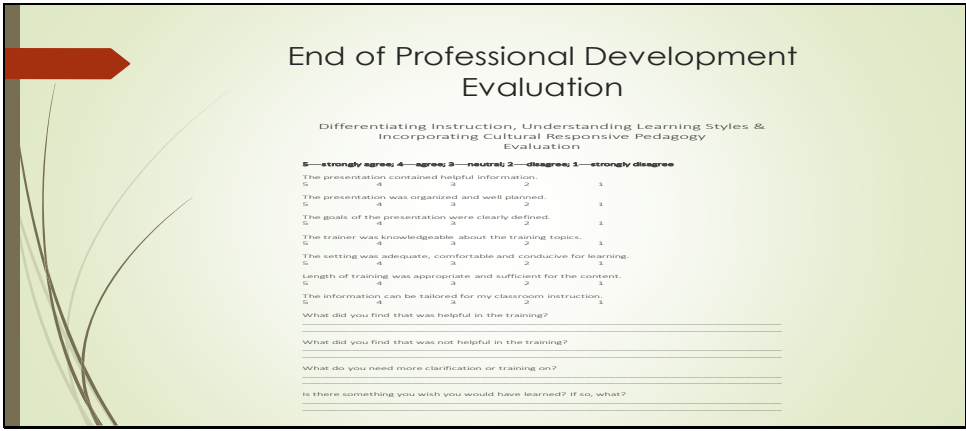


Wrap Up & Conclusion
3:30pm-4:00pm

- Discussion/Feedback of Presentations (15 minutes)
- Wrap up key components (10 minutes)
- Complete K-W-L Chart (5 minutes)
- Complete evaluation on phone with QR code (last day)

Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of culturally responsive pedagogy. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Pose the following questions: "After the training today, what is your perspective on today's topic now? What can you do differently to strengthen the effectiveness of your instruction?" Also, participants will complete the end of PD training evaluation, using their phone to scan a QR code leading to an online evaluation. There will also be paper copies of those who may not have a phone.

Slide 71



End of Professional Development Evaluation

Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Cultural Responsive Pedagogy Evaluation

5—strongly agree; 4—agree; 3—neutral; 2—disagree; 1—strongly disagree

The presentation contained helpful information.	5	4	3	2	1
The presentation was organized and well planned.	5	4	3	2	1
The goals of the presentation were clearly defined.	5	4	3	2	1
The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.	5	4	3	2	1
The setting was adequate, comfortable and conducive for learning.	5	4	3	2	1
Length of training was appropriate and sufficient for the content.	5	4	3	2	1
The information can be tailored for my classroom instruction.	5	4	3	2	1

What did you find that was helpful in the training?

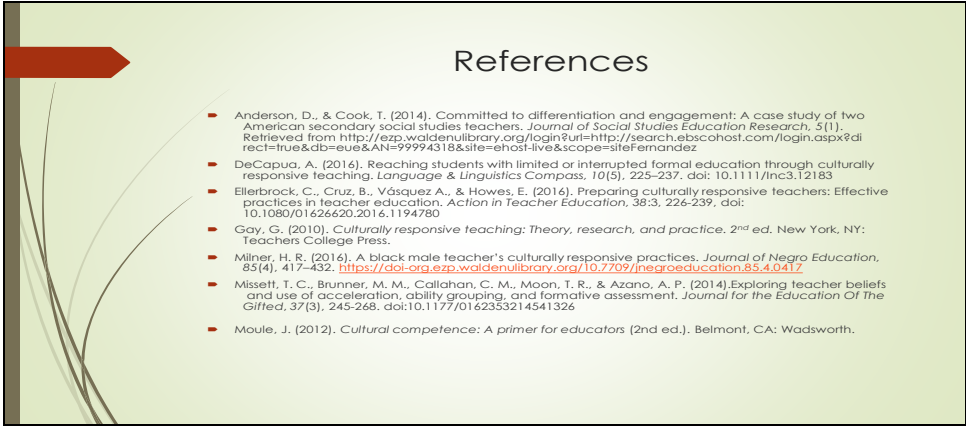
What did you find that was not helpful in the training?

What do you need more clarification or training on?

Is there something you wish you would have learned? If so, what?

Participants will complete the end of PD training evaluation, using their phone to scan a QR code leading to an online evaluation. There will also be paper copies of those who may not have a phone.

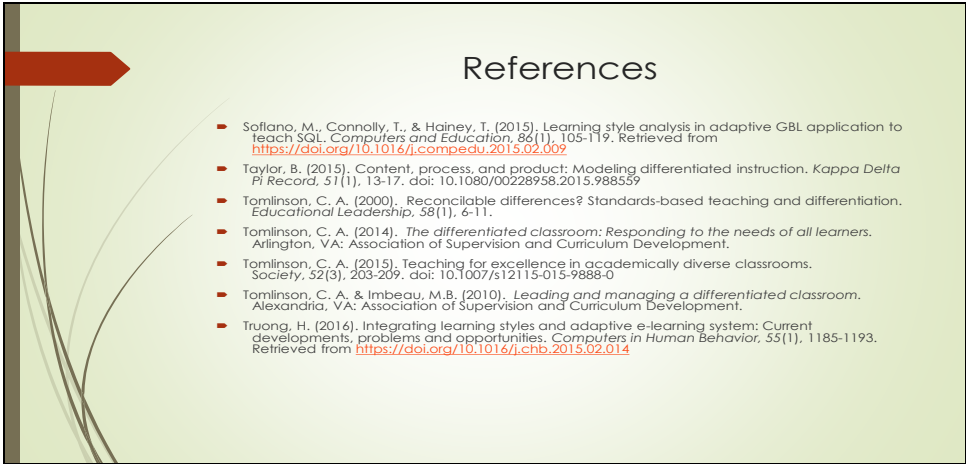
Slide 72



Slide 72 displays a slide titled "References" with a decorative background of a green arrow pointing right and abstract lines. The slide lists seven references:

- Anderson, D., & Cook, T. (2014). Committed to differentiation and engagement: A case study of two American secondary social studies teachers. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 5(1). Retrieved from <http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eu&AN=99994318&site=ehost-live&scope=site%2Fdefault>
- DeCapua, A. (2016). Reaching students with limited or interrupted formal education through culturally responsive teaching. *Language & Linguistics Compass*, 10(5), 225-237. doi: 10.1111/lnl3.12183
- Ellerbrock, C., Cruz, B., Vásquez A., & Howes, E. (2016). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Effective practices in teacher education. *Action in Teacher Education*, 38:3, 226-239. doi: 10.1080/01626620.2016.1194780
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Milner, H. R. (2016). A black male teacher's culturally responsive practices. *Journal of Negro Education*, 85(4), 417-432. <https://doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.85.4.0417>
- Missett, T. C., Brunner, M. M., Callahan, C. M., Moon, T. R., & Azano, A. P. (2014). Exploring teacher beliefs and use of acceleration, ability grouping, and formative assessment. *Journal for the Education Of The Gifted*, 37(3), 245-268. doi:10.1177/0162353214541326
- Moule, J. (2012). *Cultural competence: A primer for educators* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Slide 73



Slide 73 displays a slide titled "References" with a decorative background of a green arrow pointing right and abstract lines. The slide lists seven references:

- Soffano, M., Connolly, T., & Hajney, T. (2015). Learning style analysis in adaptive GBL application to teach SQL. *Computers and Education*, 80(1), 105-119. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2015.02.009>
- Taylor, B. (2015). Content, process, and product: Modeling differentiated instruction. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 51(1), 13-17. doi: 10.1080/00228958.2015.988559
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2000). Reconcilable differences? Standards-based teaching and differentiation. *Educational Leadership*, 58(1), 6-11.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Arlington, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2015). Teaching for excellence in academically diverse classrooms. *Society*, 52(3), 203-209. doi: 10.1007/s12115-015-9888-0
- Tomlinson, C. A. & Imbeau, M.B. (2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Truong, H. (2016). Integrating learning styles and adaptive e-learning system: Current developments, problems and opportunities. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 55(1), 1185-1193. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.02.014>

Appendix B: Professional Development Facilitator Notes

**Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
Facilitator Notes**

1. Daily Professional Development Timetable
 - a. Materials needs : Library, six breakout rooms for sessions, Promethean projector board, projector, Wi-Fi, District's Curriculum Frameworks or Adopted Curriculum, District's and school's state report cards, Teacher lesson plan template, K-W-L handout, Office supplies (pencils, pens, markers, post-it notes, chart paper, notebook paper).
 - b. Prior to training: Set out materials on tables in library and K-W-L handouts at each seat.
2. Daily Professional Development Timetable
 - a. Review the daily agenda and note locations of sessions and housekeeping business. Because there is a tight schedule for the day's events, participants can step out for restroom breaks if needed but the official break is 10:15-10:30. Vending machines can be found in the front foyer of the school.
3. Professional Development to Project Goals
 - a. Introduce the professional development training and the purpose and goals over the next three days. It is important to emphasize the importance of each goal, as these are the drivers of the training each day.
4. **Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy- 8:00am – 12:00pm**
 - a. Note that this begins the training for day one.
5. Day One Professional Development Timetable
 - a. Review the specific agenda for day one. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will focus on the school's data, learning about differentiation and useful instructional strategies. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate the differentiation strategies just learned in the previous session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.
6. K-W-L Chart
 - a. Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about differentiation. They will then complete what they would like to know about differentiation. At

the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day.

7. A Qualitative Study...

- a. Review the qualitative study. Be sure to review the purpose of the study, describing the local problem. Explain the process of data collection and data results. Connect the data to seven themes derived from the data analysis. Connect to the PD's goals.

8. Looking at our Data: West Central High School, Briarwood ISD

- a. It would be important here to begin with the district's and school's mission statements to understand where the school currently stands and the expectations that should be aligned to their data. Next, view the state report card and how the school measures in the areas of student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness. Lastly, view testing data for subgroups of African American, Hispanic, At-Risk students to compare to other subgroup of students.

9. Q & A **9:00am – 9:15am**

- a. During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

10. Differentiation

- a. Have participants to look at KWL chart they completed to what they knew about differentiation. Review Tomlinson's history with differentiation. Highlight bullet as to what differentiation focuses on.

11. Constructs of Differentiation

- a. Review the constructs of differentiation. Before you go into detail, have the participants to make notes on their paper of examples they have used with the different constructs of differentiation. Think-Pair-Share strategy can be used; have participants pair with someone to give examples and then share out with the rest of the group.

12. Differentiated Instructional Strategies

- a. Connect the constructs with the instructional strategies. These are strategies teachers can begin with when incorporating differentiation. Be sure to provide examples of what each of these would look like in the classroom.

13. In the classroom...
 - a. Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation.
14. Break: **10:15am-10:30am**
 - a. Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.
15. Breakout Session- Lesson Planning with Differentiated Strategies- **10:30am-11:30am**
 - a. Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session.
16. Lesson Plan Learning Objectives
 - a. Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day one lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating differentiation strategies: Students will be able to compare planets and tell how they are detected (Biology); Students will be able to analyze archetypes in classical literature (English 2); Students will be able to graph linear inequalities on a coordinate plane (Algebra 1). Students will be able to explain the influence of climate on biomes (World Geography); Students will be able to understand and apply appropriate formal/informal register (Spanish 1); Students will be able to understand social influences of taking drugs (Health).
17. Lesson Plan Checklist- “Do you have everything?”
 - a. Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students.
18. Lesson Plan Template
 - a. The participants will use this lesson plan template to create a lesson incorporating the key items learned for the day. Each participant will be asked to individually complete their lesson plan template so that they may use it as a resource for future lesson planning.

19. Lunch **11:30am-1:00pm**
 - a. Lunch time on your own.
20. Continuation of Breakout Sessions- **1:15pm-1:45pm**
 - a. Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.
21. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Differentiated Strategies- **1:45pm-2:30pm**
 - a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
22. Break **2:30pm-2:45pm**
 - a. Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school.
23. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Differentiated Strategies- **2:45pm-3:30pm**
 - a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
24. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
 - a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of differentiation and strategies. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. If time permits, describe the next day's training goal.
25. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
 - a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of differentiation and strategies. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. If time permits, describe the next day's training goal.
26. **Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy- 8:00am – 12:00pm**
 - a. Note that this begins the training for day two.
27. Day Two Professional Development Timetable
 - a. Review the specific agenda for day two. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will begin with teachers taking a learning style survey and learning about student learning styles. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate student learning styles just learned in the previous

session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.

28. K-W-L Chart

- a. Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about student learning styles. They will then complete what they would like to know about student learning styles. At the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day.

29. “I’m Unique in my Own Way”

- a. This is a multiple intelligence quiz. Have participants spend 20 minutes or less completing the quiz. Rank each statement 1-5 with 1, that’s not like me at all to 5, the statement is definitely me. They should also complete the graph at the end once they have added up the totals. Share out the results so that participants can see the different learning levels throughout the room.

30. Q & A **9:00am – 9:15am**

- a. During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

31. Learning Styles

- a. Begin to discuss learning styles, how everyone learns differently. Acknowledge that it takes time to get to know their students first and then to understand each student’s learning patterns/styles.

32. Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences

- a. Provide a brief overview of who Howard Gardner and his contributions. Describe and provide examples of each intelligence relating it back to the quiz taken.

33. Multiple Intelligences: An Explanation

- a. Show the multiple intelligence video. This will give participants a visual and a deeper explanation of multiple intelligence. This also breaks up the monotony of give and take of information.

34. In the classroom...

- a. Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation.

35. Break: **10:15am-10:30am**

- a. Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.

36. Breakout Session- Lesson Planning with Learning Styles- 10:30am-11:30am

- a. Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session.

37. Lesson Plan Learning Objectives

- a. Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day two lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating student learning styles: Students will be able to compare solids, liquids, and gases (Chemistry); Students will be able to compare and contrast various themes across literature works (English 1); Students will be able to understand reflectional and rotational symmetry in a plane figure (Geometry); Students will be able to evaluate the risks and responsibilities of borrowing money (Economics); Students will be able to build a database and import and export databases (CTE); Students will be able to create an original work of art (Art).

38. Lesson Plan Checklist- “Do you have everything?”

- a. Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students.

39. Lesson Plan Template

- a. The participants will use this lesson plan template to create a lesson incorporating the key items learned for the day. Each participant will be asked to individually complete their lesson plan template so that they may use it as a resource for future lesson planning.

40. Lunch: **11:30am-1:00pm**

- a. Lunch time on your own.

41. Continuation of Breakout Sessions- **1:15pm-1:45pm**

- a. Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.

42. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Learning Styles- **1:45pm-2:30pm**
 - a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
43. Break: **2:30pm-2:45pm**
 - a. Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school.
44. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Learning Styles- **2:45pm-3:30pm**
 - a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
45. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
 - a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of student learning styles. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. If time permits, describe the next day's training goal.
46. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
 - a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day's lesson of student learning styles. Have participants to complete the "What I Learned" section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. If time permits, describe the next day's training goal.
47. **Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy- 8:00am – 12:00pm**
 - a. Note that this begins the training for day three.
48. Day Three Professional Development Timetable
 - a. Review the specific agenda for day three. Also, emphasize the goal for the day. This day will begin with a video of various students' school experiences, addressing personal biases, and learning about culturally responsive pedagogy. There will also be opportunities for questions throughout the training. A breakout session will include lesson planning to incorporate the culturally responsive strategies just learned in the previous session. The day will end with an opportunity to share lesson plans created and to review the training for the day.
49. K-W-L Chart
 - a. Participants will individually begin the day with a KWL chart (placed on the tables) to chart what they think they know about culturally responsive pedagogy. They will then complete what they would like to know about

culturally responsive pedagogy. At the end of day during wrap up time, participants will chart and discuss what they learned during the day.

50. Video Presentation(YouTube)

- a. Show this TED talk clip of a student's narrative. Persuade the participants to have an open mind about what they are hearing and try to understand the perspective of the student. Allow participants to have a brief discussion of the video slip.

51. Let's Take a Look...

- a. Have participants to look at the picture on the projector what it means. Have them pay attention to what is being reflected in the mirror. Then ask the participants is what others see reflective of who they really are? How do people see you? How do you see yourself?

52. Exploring Personal Biases

- a. Begin with the definition of biases. Explain that in order to connect with others, they must acknowledge their personal biases whether intentional or not. Have participants to connect persona biases to their experiences to the classroom.

53. Microaggressions

- a. Explain microaggressions and list the three different types of microaggressions. Remind participants that hearing the upcoming information may cause some uneasiness but is intended to help with see their students differently and ultimately teach them differently.

54. Microaggressions

- a. Describe the different types of microaggressions. Provide some examples and solicit the participant examples. Be sure not to dive too deeply in the participants experiences; allow the open dialogue on the issue.

55. Q & A: **9:00am – 9:15am**

- a. During this time, participants will have an opportunity to reflect on the introduction activity. Solicit/prompt participants to ask questions and make comments about the introduction activity. Express the need for participants to be open and honest and all questions and comments are welcomed.

56. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

- a. Connect the introduction activity to culture responsive pedagogy. Explain that as we work to teach differently, our thinking and response to students in our classrooms should begin to change. Explain the definition of

culturally responsive pedagogy, Geneva Gay's contributions and being culturally competent.

57. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: "Culturally Competent Teachers"

- a. Express the importance of being culturally competent as a teacher. Explain the different ways of being culturally competent: validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. A Think Pair Share activity could be used here if time permits. Participants should pair up with someone to brainstorm what each of these examples would look like in their classrooms and perhaps how they could improve to become more culturally competent in their classrooms.

58. In the classroom...

- a. Provide participants with these take-aways; emphasize the importance. Review each one and allow participants to discuss any barriers they foresee in implementation.

59. Break: **10:15am-10:30am**

- a. Participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school. They can also prepare to move to the breakout session classrooms.

60. Breakout Session- Lesson Planning with Culturally Responsive Strategies-
10:30am-11:30am

- a. Participants will spend the next hour with their department to complete a lesson plan together on a particular learning objective and instructional strategy with support of the curriculum frameworks. Please note that all other departments that are not Core, World Language, or CTE will be together in room 105. The instructional specialists, PD trainer and program of choice coordinator will help facilitate each breakout session.

61. Lesson Plan Learning Objectives

- a. Each department as listed in the previous slide will use day three lesson objectives as the basis of the lesson, incorporating culturally responsive strategies: Students will be able to understand and investigate kinetic and potential energy (Physics); Students will be able to analyze the development of characters through literary devices (English 3); Students will be able to describe symmetry with even and odd functions of a graph (Precalculus); Students will be able to understand levels and states of consciousness (Psychology); Students will be able to compare distinguishing characteristics of French family routine (French 2); Students will be able to design a personal fitness program (PE).

62. Lesson Plan Checklist- “Do you have everything?”
- a. Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students.
63. Lesson Plan Template
- a. Remember to remind the participants to use this checklist when creating their lesson plans. Acknowledge that this type of lesson planning is time consuming but is effective in meeting the instructional and individual needs of students.
64. Lunch: **11:30am-1:00pm**
- a. Lunch time on your own.
65. Continuation of Breakout Sessions- **1:15pm-1:45pm**
- a. Participants will continue and finish breakout sessions per department and prepare to present.
66. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Culturally Responsive Strategies- **1:45pm-2:30pm**
- a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
67. Break: **2:30pm-2:45pm**
- a. Final break; participants will have a 15-minute break; restrooms and vending machines are near the front foyer of the school.
68. Presentation of Lesson Planning with Culturally Responsive Strategies- **2:45pm-3:30pm**
- a. Allow for 3 departments to present their created lesson plan for their particular learning objective (15 minutes each).
69. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
- a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day’s lesson of culturally responsive pedagogy. Have participants to complete the “What I Learned” section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day.
70. Wrap Up & Conclusion **3:30pm-4:00pm**
- a. Highlight the positives of each presentation; provide feedback on how each lesson can be strengthened. Review the day’s lesson of culturally responsive pedagogy. Have participants to complete the “What I Learned”

section of their KWL chart. Allow open discussion of what was learned for the day. Also, participants will complete the end of PD training evaluation, using their phone to scan a QR code leading to an online evaluation. There will also be paper copies of those who may not have a phone.

71. End of Professional Development Evaluation

- a. Participants will complete the end of PD training evaluation, using their phone to scan a QR code leading to an online evaluation. There will also be paper copies of those who may not have a phone.

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Date of Observation _____
Teacher/Code Number _____
Time of Observation _____
Duration of Observation _____

Interview Protocol

1. What types of professional development or training in differentiation have you participated in?

2. What types of professional development or training have you had in differentiating instruction for African American males?

3. What resources do you use to differentiate your instruction?

4. How do you evaluate that your instruction is aligned to best practices of differentiation?

5. How do you adapt your instruction to students with different learning levels?

6. What has been your experience with lesson planning and differentiating your instruction?

7. What has been your experience differentiating your instruction for African American males? Where they receptive?

8. What challenges have you experienced in differentiating your instruction?

9. How is differentiation used in the courses that precede accelerated courses?

10. How have you incorporated the learning environment, content, product, and process in differentiating your instruction?

11. Is there anything more you would like to say about this topic?

Appendix D: Observation Protocol

Date of Observation _____
Teacher/Code Number _____
Time of Observation _____
Duration of Observation _____

Observation Protocol

Research Observation	Observation/Reflective Notes
❖ Is differentiation taking place? How?	
❖ What differentiated strategies are taking place?	
❖ What evidence is there of content?	
❖ What evidence is there of product?	

❖ What evidence is there of process?	
❖ What evidence is there of learning environment?	
❖ How does the teacher engage African American/male students?	

Appendix E: Lesson Plan Template

Teacher/ Course:	Essential Questions:	Learning Objectives:	State Standards:
Date:	Materials Needed:		
Content/Title:			
Bell ringer/ Warm-up:			
Vocabulary			
Differentiation Constructs	Content Process Product Learning Environment		
Differentiated Lesson:	Struggling Learner	Proficient Learner	Advanced Learner
Recall			
New Learning			
Check for Understanding			
Practice			
Formative/Summative Assessment			
Challenge			
What strategies are being using to differentiate learning styles? Ability levels?			
What culturally responsive strategies are being used?			

Appendix F: Workshop Evaluation

Differentiating Instruction, Understanding Learning Styles & Incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Evaluation

5—strongly agree; 4—agree; 3—neutral; 2—disagree; 1—strongly disagree

The presentation contained helpful information.

5 4 3 2 1

The presentation was organized and well planned.

5 4 3 2 1

The goals of the presentation were clearly defined.

5 4 3 2 1

The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.

5 4 3 2 1

The setting was adequate, comfortable and conducive for learning.

5 4 3 2 1

Length of training was appropriate and sufficient for the content.

5 4 3 2 1

The information can be tailored for my classroom instruction.

5 4 3 2 1

What did you find that was helpful in the training?

What did you find that was not helpful in the training?

What do you need more clarification or training on?

Is there something you wish you would have learned? If so, what?
