Classroom Tip Sheet: Differentiating Instruction

Every month in our email newsletter we ask our instructors to provide us with a classroom-focused teaching tip. Their tips are a reflection of the Teaching for Understanding strategies that are taught in WIDE World courses. We hope these tips prove valuable to you in your own teaching practice.

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Differentiating Instruction: Strategies for Effective Classroom Practice

Research studies show the value of student reflection in class – effective reflection does not have to take a lot of class time and it leads to deeper understanding.

Reflection Activities

- Write reflection questions in big and bold type on banners around your classroom and refer to them as you are teaching.

- At the end of the day, write a reflection question on the board. When kids come into class the next morning, invite them to discuss the question in pairs or groups.

- Written reflection is an excellent assignment that helps students to organize what they are learning. You can use a reflection journal in class. For extra punch, send the journals home with students to collect parents’ comments. Or you can assign 4-5 sentences as homework each night, asking students to respond to the big questions you are focusing on in class.

Sample Reflection Questions

- What did you learn about (the subject taught) today?

- How do you feel about (the subject taught)?

- Would you prefer Choice A or Choice B? Why?

Good reflection questions personalize the curriculum for students by inviting them to connect the content with their own lives, feel excitement for their topic, or delve into aspects of the topic which they find personally interesting.