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**HTH 240-Implementing Inclusive Classrooms**  
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**Reflection Differentiation in the Classroom**

Beginning this class I didn't really know how I was going to incorporate differentiation into my classroom. I thought that I was already providing choices and variety in my current assignments. But upon completion of this unit I realized how much more I should and can do to advance students. For example incorporating additional choices for various types of learners that includes their individual needs and skill levels, creating projects that tap into and use students prior know ledge and experiences, and making course content further relevant and meaningful to each learner.

When I began to think about how to individualize the project guidelines I had a bit of a struggle. My classes are all creative courses (animation, photography, graphic design) and I tend to create my projects in the same manner. I finally decided to create a Think Tac Toe for an upcoming photo restoration project. Being imaginative in nature myself I found that I kept going back to generating basically the same assignment yet wording it in three different ways. I knew this is not what I really wanted and needed to revise my own thinking. So I then tried to approach the writing of the assignment using a practical and then an analytical point of view, a bit of a challenge. Finally I came up with a completed edition (attached) that I was happy with and ready to implement to the class.

Once the assignment and guidelines were given the students seemed to buzz with delight that they had choices in the project and not just a set of dictated instructions. I was excited that I had incorporated change and variety within the content and opened up new possibilities to students, it was a breath of fresh air for all of us. In the end the students will generate a variety of final outcomes that include a mix of different ideas, notions, and executions that are somewhat individualized.

The students have been working on the assignment for about a week now and still seem very excited. I discussed having choice with some of the students and found that the majority was able to connect with one of the options I had given. They really seem to be enjoying the project thus far, hopefully not a novelty that will wear off. I can see the affects the assignment is having on the students and I see change for the better. Also I have begun using the same process for an animation assignment and hope to see the variety of outcomes and the same excitement as I saw in the photography classes.

Within my multimedia classes there always seem to be a huge gap of technological skill levels, ranging student backgrounds, various reasons for taking the course, and a mix of special needs and learning disabled students. The blend of students really can create havoc on a teacher and structuring the assignments to reach all the students. I see a real need to create projects that offer basic and advanced standards. This gives students further choice in completing skill sets, tool use, writing, and assessments at their own level. Also those that are frequent early finishers will hopefully have more challenges that will keep them interested and working for longer periods of time.

Before viewing the video content with my peer we first discussed the differentiation assignment and the approach I was taking with it. She was very interested in the examples I showed her and how I was beginning to integrate various levels of learners within the curriculum, without them knowing. We went on to further discuss the importance of choice, using students' previous knowledge, incorporating skill levels, and using their experiences from outside of the classroom. It takes extra time to put together but we both agreed worth it.

There were various things about the video that I thought went very well and of course others that should be improved upon. Overall during the lesson there were some things that stood out to me that directly related to the content we have been discussing. We noticed that the students and I were connected and we greeted each other with respect and took part in small talk awaiting the bell. The classroom setting was comfortable and safe and students were happy to be here.

During the lesson implementation we noted some significant mannerisms that we felt supported differentiation. The pacing and content of the assignment was consistent and understood by most of the students. As they followed along we noticed that I was constantly circling the room speaking and or asking questions regarding the subject matter and using plenty of hand gestures and body language. The students seem to like my interaction with them during the lecture and were engaged.

We did notice that even though my voice was loud enough to hear it became somewhat monotone after a while. I also repeated the word kind of way too often and will now be more conscious of that in my speech. Sometimes the students would get off track if I spent too much time helping another and they were waiting for me to move on in the lecture. Although this was a challenge I was able to get everyone right back on track by engaging him or her in a new tool or provoking them with a question.

At the end of the lesson I left time for catch up and student inquiry. I made sure that we all ended at the same spot, which is not always easy and it cost some of our class time but well worth it. If I overload their brains they stop responding, been there once or twice before. You can hear me in the video asking how their brains are, ready or not for more? They usually let me know when they have had enough or need more processing time. I thought the video was helpful in allowing me to see some challenges I need to tackle yet it also showed me many valuable things I already do every day.

For the future I plan to continue to implement differentiation and pedagogical content within the subject matter and the teaching environment. By using and practicing these skills within my classroom I hope to see the following outcomes:

- Skill levels of each student improved over time
- Increased teacher response time to a number of students needs, even on a large scale
- Students and teacher create a learning environment that actively involves everyone
- Gaps in skill levels will eventually decrease over time
- Enhance my knowledge about the types of student learners I have
- Increase my awareness to students' individual needs