

Figure 2.2
Comparing Classrooms

Traditional Classroom

- Student differences are masked or acted upon when problematic
- Assessment is most common at the end of learning to see “who got it”
- A relatively narrow sense of intelligence prevails
- A single definition of excellence exists
- Student interest is infrequently tapped
- Relatively few learning profile options are taken into account
- Whole-class instruction dominates
- Coverage of texts and curriculum guides drives instruction
- Mastery of facts and skills out-of-context are the focus of learning
- Single option assignments are the norm
- Time is relatively inflexible
- A single text prevails
- Single interpretations of ideas and events may be sought
- The teacher directs student behavior
- The teacher solves problems
- The teacher provides whole-class standards for grading
- A single form of assessment is often used

Differentiated Classroom

- Student differences are studied as a basis for planning
- Assessment is ongoing and diagnostic to understand how to make instruction more responsive to learner need
- Focus on multiple forms of intelligences is evident
- Excellence is defined in large measure by individual growth from a starting point
- Students are frequently guided in making interest-based learning choices
- Many learning profile options are provided for
- Many instructional arrangements are used
- Student readiness, interest, and learning profile shape instruction
- Use of essential skills to make sense of and understand key concepts and principles is the focus of learning
- Multi-option assignments are frequently used
- Time is used flexibly in accordance with student need
- Multiple materials are provided
- Multiple perspectives on ideas and events are routinely sought
- The teacher facilitates students’ skills at becoming more self-reliant learners
- Students help other students and the teacher solve problems
- Students work with the teacher to establish both whole-class and individual learning goals
- Students are assessed in multiple ways

Figure 2.1
Differentiation of Instruction

