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Self-Study Inquiry in Individualized Instruction

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Self-Study Inquiry in Learning Preference & Differentiation

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Research Questions

1. How does an awareness of student learning styles affect teacher lesson planning and the development of different activities and teaching methods?
2. How can a teacher simultaneously engage students with a wide variety of ability levels in the same classroom?

Genevieve’s Classroom: Differentiated Instruction

Methodology:

Genevieve used students’ assignments from the first unit to diagnose their ability levels. She then created a unit that incorporated effective differentiation strategies such as offering options and using open-ended questions.



Two bunnies created by students to represent Lennie from *Of Mice and Men*.

Of Mice and Men: Differentiated Assignment Chart				
Create a soundtrack to go along with the novel. Provide written explanation for why each song is relevant to a particular character or event.	Create a facebook page for either Curley, George, or Curley's wife.	Watch the film <i>Forrest Gump</i> . Create a one-page reflection relating a character in <i>Forrest Gump</i> to a character in <i>Of Mice and Men</i> .	Keep a reading journal, taking time to reflect or comment on the events in the chapters as you read. This should be your response to the text rather than a summary of the plot.	Create a detailed diorama of a scene from the novel. Provide an explanation of the significance of the scene.
Develop a set of 20 tweets to track either Lennie or George's journey throughout the novel.	Rewrite the end of the novel in detail.	Read <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> or <i>Cannary Row</i> . Using similarities within the novels, explain what image of America and Americans is Steinbeck trying to deliver?	Research John Steinbeck, and create a poster or Power Point presentation that details his life and work.	With a partner, create a board game based on <i>Of Mice and Men</i> . The game must be able to be played by at least 4 players. It will be played by classmates not in your group.
Create a collage, using magazine, not internet, pictures that reflect people, places, and events of the novel. You must write an explanation for each picture.	Make a stuffed rabbit that is representative of Lennie as a character.	Read the poem "To a Mouse." Relate the poem to the novel and explain why you think Steinbeck chose to title his novel after this poem.	Write an epilogue to the story. What happens to George? Where does he end up in life? Does he ever achieve his dreams?	Compose a song from the perspective of one of the characters in the novel. Make sure that it demonstrates his/her perspective, feelings, fears, etc. It will be performed for the class.
Create 5-6 one-page journal entries from Lennie's perspective concerning George.	Develop 20 higher-level analysis questions (how, why, under what circumstances, etc.) over the entire novel. You must provide answers.	Create a poster that shows the common migrant worker during the Great Depression. Research the background these men usually came from. Label his characteristics, and compare him to Slim or George.	With a partner, start a supported class debate whether or not George acted appropriately in his final scene with Lennie.	Research the treatment of the mentally handicapped through American history. How would Lennie have been treated? Report your findings in a poster with text and visuals.

Jaclyn’s Classroom: Learning Styles

Methodology:

Students completed a learning style inventory. Then , Jaclyn used this information to tailor her lessons to students’ visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning preferences. She implemented a variety of activities to meet their needs.

Learning Style Inventory				
Name	Date	Signature		
Directions: To gain a better understanding of yourself as a learner, you need to evaluate the way you prefer to learn or process information. By doing so, you will be able to develop strategies which will enhance your learning potential. The following evaluation is a short, quick way of assessing your learning style. Place a check <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the appropriate box after each statement.				
This 24-item survey is not timed.				
Answer each question as honestly as you can.				
		Other	Sometimes	Seldom
1.	I can remember more about a subject through the lecture method with information, explanations and discussion.			
2.	I prefer information to be written on the chalkboard, with the use of visual aids and assigned readings.			
3.	I like to write things down or to take notes for visual review.			
4.	I prefer to use posters, models, or actual practice and some activities in class.			
5.	I require explanations of diagrams, graphs, or visual directions.			
6.	I enjoy working with my hands or making things.			
7.	I am skillful with and enjoy developing and making graphs and charts.			
8.	I can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds.			
9.	I remember best by writing things down several times.			
10.	I can understand and follow directions on maps.			
11.	I do better at academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes.			
12.	I play with coins or keys in pockets.			
13.	I learn to spell better by repeating the words out loud than by writing the word on papers.			
14.	I can better understand a news article by reading about it in the paper than by listening to the radio.			
15.	I chew gum, smoke, or snack during studies.			
16.	I feel the best way to remember is to picture it in your head.			
17.	I learn spelling by "finger spelling" words (in the air with or without my eyes closed).			
18.	I would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material in a textbook.			
19.	I am good at working and solving jigsaw puzzles and mazes.			
20.	I grip objects in my hands during learning period.			
21.	I prefer listening to the news on the radio rather than reading about it in the newspaper.			
22.	I get information on an interesting subject by reading relevant materials.			
23.	I feel very comfortable touching others, hugging, handshaking, etc.			
24.	I follow oral directions better than written ones.			

“Flashcards, memory game, guided notes. – I’m very visual and by doing these activities I learned the material better”

– Jose

“Guided notes – saw it on board, listened to you talk, wrote notes”

– Ana



Preliminary Findings

Our teaching was greatly influenced by our awareness of both the students’ learning preferences and ability levels.

Through implementing a variety of individualized activities and assignments, students were more engaged, seemed to enjoy the class more, and enhanced their achievement.

