

STRATEGY 1: Most Difficult First

What is the strategy?

All students should be allowed to show what they know by trying the most difficult problems or questions first. If they have mastered them, they move on to work at their level. If they have not mastered them, they must do the entire set.

Possible Uses:

- Two-sided paper (Easy/Hard) – Pick which one works for you.
- Provide most difficult questions to do first. If they can do it, no need to go to easy ones; if not, backtrack. (Know your target audience.)
- Centres with varying degrees of difficulty.
- Computer math games.
- Labelling diagrams.
- Math concepts
- Writing assignments

STRATEGY 2: Independent Study

What is the strategy?

With teacher support and coaching, the student learns how to decide on a focus, develop a plan of action and follow through, and monitor the learning process. The student takes part in developing criteria for evaluation and works with the teacher as a partner. Interest inventories may be used to find appropriate student topics.

Possible Uses:

- **Science Fair – as an option**
- **Science Olympics**
- **Research Projects/Lesson Extension/Personal Ideas**
- **Use for biographies**
- **Show their multiple intelligence through whatever project**
- **Choose own book but all answer the same questions (one sheet to fill out)**

STRATEGY 3: Jigsaw Groups

What is the strategy?

Create homogeneous groups where students investigate part of a concept using materials suited to their learning level. Those groups then jigsaw into heterogeneous groups where each student is the expert in the part they studied. Bloom's Taxonomy and The ThinkTrix Model provide possible levels of investigation.

Possible Uses:

- **Covers high content, low skill very efficiently**
- **Camouflage differentiated instruction**
- **Cross-curricular**
- **Covers multiple topics quickly**
- **Covering a broad range of topics when only required to master specific concepts**
- **Social studies – the pyramids**
- **Mathematical representation, visual representation, model**
- **Curriculum outcomes could be covered where volume is larger**

STRATEGY 4: Curriculum Compacting

What is the strategy?

Teachers identify what students have already mastered through testing, conferencing or observation. Then planning is done to help students fill any learning gaps. Once completed, students have time to engage in advanced learning experiences.

Possible Uses:

- **Apply learning from literacy circle to a novel of choice where concepts and connections related to the novel are applied.**
Research a related area.
- **This could be used to help group your students according to ability**
- **Math class – see where their learning is not mastered or what they have mastered in a unit and have the students help each other (in centres)**
- **Simplify with checklist → met expected outcomes**

STRATEGY 5: Extension Menu (Think-Tac-Toe)

What is the strategy?

When students have earned 'free' time, the extension menu offers students activity choices in the form of a 3x3 grid. Choices are linked to the area of study and/or to specific outcomes. The choices embody differentiation by representing a variety of learning styles, intelligences, preferences and higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Possible Uses:

- **Chemistry – Grade 9 science – expanding individual understanding/appreciation of elements/scientists who discovered them, etc.**
- **Book report – choices of how to present**
- **Enrichment based on their strengths and interests**
- **You could use Tic-Tac-Toe menus for any topic (math problem solving, word study, etc.)**
- **Make a board game**
- **Self-directed activities**

STRATEGY 6: Entrance and Exit Cards

What is the strategy?

Entrance and exit cards are quick assessment tools to help teachers become more aware of student understanding of the concepts being taught. Entrance and exit cards are written student responses to questions posed before or after a learning activity or at the beginning or end of a day.

Possible Uses:

- **Entrance and exit cards give the students an immediate task on which to focus**
- **Can be used for quick assessment – what is one thing you learned, etc.**
- **Like a KWL chart – assessment**
- **Insight to students' understanding for any subject**
- **Fractions**

STRATEGY 7: SCAMPER

What is the strategy?

SCAMPER is a strategy to assist the brainstorming process or to develop creative thinking skills. The strategy works best when students are attempting to solve a problem or create something new.

Possible Uses:

- **Developing new technology ideas**
- **Writing – creating twisted fairy tales**
- **Discovery process – science experiments, history**
- **Extension of a finished creative writing piece**
- **Creative writing/Writers' Workshop activity**
- **Character creatures**
- **Persuasive writing/poetry - guidelines**

STRATEGY 8: RAFT

What is the strategy?

RAFT motivates and encourages creative writing as well as divergent thinking using content from any subject students must learn. A purpose for writing is set by choosing a **ROLE**, **AUDIENCE**, **FORMAT** and **TOPIC**. Differentiation occurs as students experiment with each aspect of the writing.

Possible Uses:

- **Literature circle**
- **Writing – bring in 10 pieces of footwear and students write as if they are one piece of footwear**
- **Creativity – art, drama, inferences, risk taker**
- **Using different drama props to get into character**
- **Shakespeare – drama**

STRATEGY 9: Content Complexity (Using Themes)

What is the strategy?

Themes may be used to increase the complexity of content within an area of study. When used within a specific subject, the theme can allow students to examine connections within their learning. When used across the curriculum, a theme will allow students to see the interrelatedness of areas of study. The theme can serve as 'the big idea' that guides instruction for students of all abilities.

Possible Uses:

- **Teachers may use this strategy to organize units of study. In the elementary classroom, the theme may serve as a way to connect social studies, health and science outcomes to English language arts.**
- **In the secondary classroom, the theme may unite seemingly separate ideas about science, math or social studies. Connecting everything back to the 'big idea' develops depth of understanding and allows analogies to be made.**

STRATEGY 10: Tiered Assignments

What is the strategy?

Assignments are developed to meet the needs of a group of students functioning at different levels. Teachers can create tiered assignments by taking into consideration the students' academic achievements, learning styles and strengths and interests.

Possible Uses:

- **In the elementary classroom teachers can use this strategy to provide more and less challenging math problems to solve or to provide writing prompts.**
- **In the secondary classroom, tiered assignments can be used as stepping stones – if students can complete the highest tier, they can 'buy time' for independent study. Students entering at the lower tiers may need to work their way up.**