

Quick Tips for Differentiation: Assignment Menus & DOK

Karin K. Hess

Here are 3 ways to approach differentiating curriculum without creating completely different lessons – Focus on one aspect (content/concepts, process, or product) at a time, or use combinations of the three components through an assessment menu (see sample below)

- ❖ **Content (texts/ concepts) – different students get different – but related – content/texts** (e.g., different texts on same topic or by same author, with different levels of complexity; different texts that relate to topic, concept, theme, or same genre – different origins of myths, different subtopics or perspectives related to a study of cultures or time periods)
- ❖ **Process (Depth of Knowledge/DOK) – vary the DOK/process skills for the same text/content** (e.g., work independently or with others; analyze within one text or across multiple texts; compare & contrast versus deeper analysis). This differentiation can provide scaffolding for students who may need it before completing a more complex assignment.
- ❖ **Product – same content (text/concepts) and application of same process skills (DOK), but products may vary by choice/strengths/interest** (e.g., presentation, pamphlet, poster, letter, model, use of technology, illustration, etc.). Assess products with a “common” rubric.

Sample Uses of Assignment Menus: Describe multiple assignments that students choose to complete to get a total of 10 points (“10” is an arbitrary number used only as an illustration). For example, some students successfully complete fewer “3-point” assignments or more “1- and 2-point” challenge assignments to accomplish the required 10 points.

OR “You must complete 3 assignments for this unit, one under each column & row (e.g., column headings could also be text-to-self/personal, text-to-text/making connections, and text-to-world/broader issue-based). Choose a “1” a “2” and a level “3” challenge assignment.

Text: <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>			
Differentiated Challenge Levels	Initial Understanding (DOK 1 or 2)	Analysis & Interpretation (DOK 2, 3, or 4)	Opinion/Response to Text (DOK 2, 3, or 4)
3 Desserts	Create a 20-question quiz & answer key (true/false, matching, fill-in questions) that assesses sequence of major events, character motivations, etc. OR Create a graphic organizer with plot & subplot notes and facts. (DOK 1&2)	Compare/ contrast what happens to Boo Radley and Tom Robinson. Explain how each is related to the title of the novel. Analyze evidence from the text to support your response. (DOK 3) OR Also integrate another text’s character(s) or theme with your analyses (DOK 4)	Develop and conduct a class survey on your peers’ perspective of at least one underlying theme in the novel (e.g., related to prejudice, human dignity, growing up). Present and discuss your results, comparing the class’s perspective to a theme in the novel. What influences those perspectives? What conclusions can you draw? Use survey data and text references as support. (DOK 4)
2 Main Courses	Make a map of the neighborhood that shows where important events took place (Finch house, Radley house, school, etc.) Label places <u>with their significance</u> . (DOK 2)	In an essay, explain with text support why Atticus should /should not have taken the case (DOK 3) OR Compare/contrast 2 main characters: traits, motivations, biases, changes over the plot (DOK 2)	Write a letter to Harper Lee expressing your impressions of the book’s theme(s), using text evidence to support your claims. (DOK 3)
1 Appetizers	Make a timeline of major events in the story. (DOK 2)	Chose a character and illustrate graphically what that character understands at the end that s/he did not understand in the beginning of the story. (DOK 2)	Create 3 journal entries/ different days from (Calpurnia’s) point of view. Entries should show how you think (Calpurnia) sees life. (DOK 2) OR Write to a character showing empathy with their perspective. (DOK 2)