Differentiating instruction is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that seeks to recognize, learn about, and address the learning needs of all students.

To that end, teachers use varied approaches for curriculum, instruction, and assessment that promote learning opportunities and outcomes across learning environments.
Elements and Characteristics of and Strategies for Differentiating Instruction

**Learning Environment**
*(the context in which learning occurs)*
- Safe, challenging, and collaborative community
- Access to resource-rich classrooms
- Flexible movement and use of space
- Multiple settings and environments
- Flexible scheduling

**Content**
*(strategies for content delivery)*
- Planning for differentiation
- Tiering
- Compacting
- Accelerating
- Enhancing content for depth, complexity, and novelty

**Process**
*(strategies for engaged learning and sense-making)*
- Flexible Grouping
- Questioning for Critical Thinking
- Problem-Based Learning
- Contracting
- Learning Centers

**Product/Performance**
*(the means by which students will communicate understanding)*
- Open-ended tasks
- Authentic/real world solutions
- Extension, innovation, creation of new ideas and products
- Multiple forms and formats using varied techniques and materials

**Assessing the Learners’**
- readiness
- interests
- learning styles/preferences

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Differentiation Overview