



FLIPERENTIATION: Flipped Classroom + Differentiation = Fliperentiation

BY GEORGE OBER

Teaching in the 21st Century requires a multi-dimensional approach to instruction. Fliperentiation is an In-Class Flipped instructional approach to teaching that blends technology and differentiation in a flipped classroom context. In such a flipped and blended environment, technology is infused in the classroom to accelerate learning. Students utilize existing technology to develop their own learning at their own pace. Teachers employ varied resources for using instructional technology to meet individual student learning styles in a fliperentiated classroom.

FLIPPED LEARNING:

Flipped Learning is a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space. The result is a group space transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they engage creatively in the subject matter.

DIFFERENTIATION:

Differentiated instruction is a teaching method that allows teachers to structure learning environments that address a variety of learning styles, interests, and abilities found within a classroom. Differentiated instruction is based on the belief that students learn best when they make connections between the curriculum and their diverse interests and experiences. Rather than simply “teaching to the middle” by providing a single avenue of learning for all students in a class, teachers using differentiated instruction match tasks, activities, and assessments with their students’ interests, abilities, and learning preferences.

Differentiated instruction does not happen by accident. It requires planning, commitment, and acknowledgment of the fact that diverse abilities, experiences, and interests have a tremendous impact on student learning.

FLIPERENTIATION:

The concept of “Fliperentiation” was coined by Joe Hirsch, an educator at the Akiba Academy in Dallas,

Texas. He explains that the most stubborn part of differentiation is trying to synchronize the learning of an entire class so each student learns at their own pace. “Fliperentiation” is a pedagogical approach to teaching in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space. “Fliperentiation” combines the concept of the Flipped Classroom with a blended, differentiated learning environment.

The “Fliperentiated Classroom” operates with two main objectives as its focus:

1. Blend learning with technology to provide differentiation of instruction in order to meet the individualized learning needs of each student.
2. Provide opportunities to further engage students by allowing them to work collaboratively on assignments and projects.

A basic synopsis of the Flipped Classroom Model has students learn and study content online with meaningful interactive learning activities, using video or screen-casts. They then apply that knowledge in the classroom through problem-solving and project based assignments. In a Flipped Classroom, visuals are all done outside the classroom.

In the Fliperentiation model, students have a “flipped interactive video component” and/or a specific app embedded in the lesson structure to create more opportunities for differentiated instruction and increase student engagement while fostering collaboration and higher-order thinking during classroom activities. These videos are not “lecture-based” but are supplementary, integrated components used for the further understanding, refinement and application of information. Visuals therefore, are an important part of the “Fliperentiated Classroom” process. In a “Fliperentiated Classroom”, visuals or video/images are embedded into classroom lessons as a major component of differentiated learning. These videos are not “lecture-based”, but supplementary, integrated components used for multiple instructional purposes. They are embedded into classroom lessons as an important component of differentiated learning.

BENEFITS OF INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS:

1. Differentiate instruction
2. Increases student engagement
3. Fosters student collaboration
4. Promotes higher-order thinking
5. Demonstrate processes
6. Display exemplary student work
7. Provides reference for home study

An additional benefit of “Fliperentiation” is having more engaged parents. As more students utilize technology as a regular part of their day, both in school and at home, the opportunity for their parents to become part of what they are learning in school is greatly enhanced. Parents want a stronger connection to what their child is doing in class and how they are performing and they want it in an expedient manner. “Fliperentiation” makes this possible by communicating with parents via websites, grading/assessment apps or communication apps. Connecting parents to such an individualized classroom environment will result in a stronger connection to their child’s learning and greater support for fliperentiated instruction.

By transforming traditional classroom activities into a more digitized setting, you free up classroom time for individualized student instruction, allow students to learn at their own pace, and allow for individual and collaborative learning to take place in conjunction with ongoing formative assessment. This enables the teacher to provide instant feedback to individual or groups of students based on their specific needs.

Embedding visuals with interactive web-based or iOS/android applications allows students to make stronger connections with the content they are learning. More importantly, this approach is student centered with the teacher being a facilitator of the process. This allows for the student to further develop their own learning style while being able to apply prior knowledge to future learning.

Today’s students are expected to gather information then interpret, discuss, analyze, and evaluate that information both independently and collaboratively. “Fliperentiation” allows for traditional instructional models to be transformed through the use of technology while creating a differentiated blended learning model that encourages student engagement and develops the communication and collaborative skills required in the 21st century.

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