

Bradford Irvin
Gifted & Talented Instructional Strategies

Choice Boards

This instructional strategy provides students with the power to choose “how” to learn a subject or concept. Choice boards are graphic organizers that comprise different amounts of squares. Each square is an activity. The activities help students learn or practice a primary concept, while allowing them a choice. It allows gifted & talented and other students at different levels of readiness to work on assignments at different levels of complexity.

How to Use

1. Identify the core concept or academic goal that the students need to complete.
2. Identify the students’ interests, preferences and even levels of readiness. The activities can be different levels of complexity and can be arranged on the board in an increasing order of difficulty.
3. Plan the activities so that it provides students with a variety of mediums or methods for learning the concept.
4. Design the Choice Board either on paper, a white board, poster, etc.
5. Develop a process that best fits the classroom to assess learning and progress for each student.

When to Use

1. Provide higher level of learning (creating and evaluating)
2. Different learning styles
3. Increase motivation and desire to learn.
4. Increase student engagement.
5. Provides the teacher with more one-on-one time with students.

Variations

1. Students could work in pairs or larger teams.
2. Use tiered assignments for different levels of complexity.
3. If pairs or larger teams are desired, the gifted and talented students could be in the same group.
4. One square can also be a “free choice” allowing students to create and perform an activity of their own choice.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcgMIrI5bM>

<https://thecollaborativeclass.com/5-reasons-to-use-choice-boards-in-your-classroom>

<https://k12teacherstaffdevelopment.com/tlb/how-to-use-choice-boards-in-the-classroom>

<http://www.teachhub.com/classroom-management-differentiated-instruction-menus>

Learning Stations

This instructional strategy provides physical stations in the classroom where students work on different tasks simultaneously then rotate through them to learn content/skills related to a topic. Gifted and talented students can skip stations if they already know the material or move on to the next station when they mastered the material without any wait time. This strategy enhances and encourages learning.

How to Use

1. Conduct an ungraded pre-assessment to ascertain current knowledge of the upcoming class subject.
2. Design and produce individual content and learning goals for each station related to the class subject. The station content should incorporate different learning styles and higher-level thinking (Blooms -creating and evaluating.)
3. Set-up stations in the classroom.
4. Based on the overall class topic, individual station material, and pre-assessment results provide students with a list of content that must be mastered at each station, and an overall completion date.
5. Design and produce an assessment for each station where students can demonstrate content mastering.
6. Informal assessments should be conducted as teacher rotates through the class.

When to Use

1. Higher level learning (Blooms Levels) opportunities.
2. Promote independent learning.
3. Incorporate enrichment activities.
4. Opportunity for the teacher to have more one-on-one time.
5. Increase gifted and talented student motivation
6. Different learning styles.

Variations

1. Incorporate tiered assignments with different levels of complexity for each station. If space is limited, some tiered assignment/stations can be done at their desk. This should be done only if necessary, because of specific technology at each station.
2. Depending on the classroom space, students can be assigned to a specific station order to follow.
3. Depending on how many gifted and talented students in the classroom, they could be assigned as a group to a specific station.

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/how-does-differentiation-work-literacy-centers/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HM5I79fWTK>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lesMra2MTnQ>
<https://www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-aid-your-gifted-students>

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

This instructional strategy provides a student-center opportunity for students to work together to solve small and large problems while learning required content through the process. PBL is a great opportunity to provide differential instruction to gifted and talented students to learn on the own. Students are assigned projects, but it is essential for the students to play a major part in the decision. PBL increases motivation and a desire to learn.

How to Use

1. Check for prior knowledge ahead of the lesson by conducting quiz.
2. A project including what question or problem to be answered is mutually agreed to and assigned to heterogeneous groups (gifted & talented, ELL, etc.) students.
3. Identify learning outcomes for the project related to standards, etc.
4. Provide due dates and mutually agreed to progress check points.
5. Provide a project planner format for students doing projects for the first time.
6. Tools and resources must be identified.

When to Use

1. Higher level learning (Blooms Levels) opportunities.
2. Differentiated instruction.
3. Easier technology integration
4. Students can learn and discover independently.
5. PBL can motivate gifted and talented student(s) who are acting out.

Variations

1. Start small with lesson plans that include student choice mini projects.
2. Projects can be assigned to individual students.
3. Projects can have individual and team assignments.
4. Ask the student how they would prefer to demonstrate prior knowledge and content assessment.

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/differentiated-instruction-strategies-pbl-andrew-miller>

<https://www.edglossary.org/project-based-learning/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3jD7LJ6AWw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIg-nsGi7VO>