

Appendix — continued

**A Few Instructional and Management Strategies  
for Differentiated, Mixed-Ability Classrooms—continued**

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY	RATIONALE FOR USE	GUIDELINES FOR USE
<b>Flexible Grouping</b>	<p>Students are part of many different groups—and also work alone—based on the match of the task to student readiness, interest, or learning style. Teachers may create skills-based or interest-based groups that are heterogeneous or homogeneous in readiness level. Sometimes students select work groups, and sometimes teachers select them. Sometimes student group assignments are purposeful and sometimes random.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows both for quick mastery of information/ideas and need for additional exploration by students needing more time for mastery</li> <li>• Allows both collaborative and independent work</li> <li>• Gives students and teachers a voice in work arrangements</li> <li>• Allows students to work with a wide variety of peers</li> <li>• Encourages teachers to “try out” students in a variety of work settings</li> <li>• Keeps students from being “pegged” as advanced or struggling</li> <li>• Keeps students from being cast as those in need of help and those who are helpers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all students have opportunities to work both with students most like themselves and with students dissimilar from themselves in readiness and interest</li> <li>• Teacher assigns work groups when task is designed to match individual readiness/interest based on pre-assessment or teacher knowledge</li> <li>• Teacher assigns work groups when desirable to ensure that students work with a variety of classmates</li> <li>• Students select groups when task is well-suited for peer selection</li> <li>• Alternate purposeful assignment to groups with teacher/student selection</li> <li>• Ensure that all students learn to work cooperatively, collaboratively, and independently</li> <li>• Be sure there are clear guidelines for group functioning that are taught in advance of group work and consistently reinforced</li> </ul>

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