

A Tool for Planning Differentiated Lessons

The Equalizer

1. Foundational



Transformational

Information, Ideas, Materials, Applications

2. Concrete



Abstract

Representations, Ideas, Applications, Materials

3. Simple



Complex

Resources, Research, Issues, Problems, Skills, Goals

4. Single Facet



Multiple Facets

Disciplinary Connections, Directions, Stages of Development

5. Small Leap



Great Leap

Application, Insight, Transfer

6. More Structured



More Open

Solutions, Decisions, Approaches

7. Clearly Defined Problems



Fuzzy Problems

In Process, In Research, In Products

8. Less Independence



Greater Independence

Planning, Designing, Monitoring

9. Slower



Quicker

Pace of Study, Pace of Thought

Thinking About the Equalizer

1. Foundational



Transformational

Information, Ideas, Materials, Applications

- | | |
|---|---|
| -close to text or experience | -removed from text or experience |
| -expert idea and skill to similar or familiar setting | -export idea or skill to unexpected or unfamiliar setting |
| -use key idea or skill alone | -use key idea or skill with unrelated idea or skill |
| -fundamental skills and knowledge emphasized | -use but move beyond fundamental skills and knowledge |
| -fewer permutations of skills and ideas | -more permutations of skills and ideas |

2. Concrete



Abstract

Representations, Ideas, Applications, Materials

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| -hold in hands or hands-on | -hold in mind or minds on |
| -tangible | -intangible |
| -literal | -symbolic or metaphorical |
| -physical manipulation | -mental manipulation |
| -event based | -idea based |
| -event to principle | -principle without event |
| -demonstrated and explained | -not demonstrated or explained |

3. Simple



Complex

Resources, Research, Issues, Problems, Skills, Goals

- | | |
|--|--|
| -use idea or skill being taught | -combine idea or skill being taught with those previously taught |
| -work with no one, or few abstractions | -work with multiple abstractions |
| -emphasizes appropriateness | -emphasizes elegance |
| -requires relatively less originality | -requires relatively more originality |
| -more common vocabulary | -more advanced vocabulary |
| -more accessible readability | -more advanced readability |

4. Single Facet



Multiple Facets

Disciplinary Connections, Directions, Stages of Development

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| -fewer parts | -more parts |
| -fewer steps | -more steps |
| -fewer stages | -more stages |

5. Small Leap



Great Leap

Application, Insight, Transfer

- | | |
|--|--|
| -few unknowns | -many unknowns |
| -relative comfort with most elements | -relative unfamiliarity with many elements |
| -less need to change familiar elements | -more need to change familiar elements |
| -requires less flexible thought | -requires more flexible thought |
| -few gaps in required knowledge | -significant gaps in required knowledge |
| -more evolutionary | -more revolutionary |

6. More Structured



More Open

Solutions, Decisions, Approaches

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| -more directions or more precise directions | -fewer directions |
| -more modeling | -less modeling |
| -relatively less student choice | -relatively more student choice |

7. Clearly Defined Problems



Fuzzy Problems

In Process, In Research, In Products

- | | |
|---|--|
| -few unknowns | -more unknowns |
| -more algorithmic | -more heuristic |
| -narrower range of acceptable responses or approaches | -wider range of acceptable responses or approaches |
| -only relevant data provided | -extraneous data provided |
| -problem specified | -problem unspecified or ambiguous |

8. Less Independence



Greater Independence

Planning, Designing, Monitoring

- | | |
|---|---|
| -more teacher or adult guidance and monitoring on | -less teacher or adult guidance and monitoring on |
| • problem identification | • problem identification |
| • goal setting | • goal setting |
| • establishing timelines | • establishing timelines |
| • following timelines | • following timelines |
| • securing resources | • securing resources |
| • use of resources | • use of resources |
| • criteria for success | • criteria for success |
| • formulation of a product | • formulation of a product |
| • evaluation | • evaluation |
| -more teacher scaffolding | -less teacher scaffolding |
| -learning the skills of independence | -demonstrating the skills of independence |

9. Slower



Quicker

Pace of Study, Pace of Thought

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| -more time to work | -less time to work |
| -more practice | -less practice |
| -more teaching and reteaching | -less teaching and reteaching |
| -process more systematically | -process more rapidly |
| -probe breadth and depth | -hit the high points |