

FORMING FLEXIBLE LEARNING GROUPS



Flexible grouping makes it possible for schools to promote higher levels of achievement for all students, including those who are gifted. Using ongoing assessments helps teachers understand high-ability students' challenge levels and informs grouping decisions. Teachers can then more effectively plan and deliver instruction that is above current levels of development.

See It

Gifted students have often mastered grade-level curriculum even before the school year begins, and they are capable of mastering new material at a faster rate and more deeply than their age peers. All students have the right to learn new things every day, but managing the range of academic levels within a classroom is a formidable task.

Far too often, it is the gifted learner who is under-challenged. Flexible learning groups that take into consideration students' readiness levels, strengths, and/or interests can be used to create a more dynamic learning environment. Groups continually change based on assessment data related to students' needs – which in the case of gifted students means advanced learning needs.

Do It

Forming flexible learning groups begins with examination of focused assessment data to determine students' level of mastery of the standards to be addressed. After the groups are built, keeping the structures fluid involves differentiated instructional strategies, practices, and support. Teaching students how to function within a flexibly grouped learning environment is part of the process.

More

- *Setting the Record Straight on Ability Grouping*, Olszewski-Kubilius, P. (May, 2013). Retrieved June 24, 2016, from www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2013/05/20
- *Flexible Grouping & Collaboration in Today's Classroom*, Brulles, D. & Brown, K. (2018)
- *Total School Cluster Grouping and Differentiation: A Comprehensive, Research-Based Plan for Raising Student Achievement and Improving Teacher Practices*, Gentry, M. (2014)
- *The Cluster Grouping Handbook: How to Challenge Gifted Students and Increase Achievement for All*, Brulles, D. & Winebrenner, S. (2018)

PRACTICES.

AT SCHOOL

