

Northwest Evaluation Association

*Partnering to help all kids learn*

# **Differentiation Resources**

## CUBING ACTIVITY

1. Think of an object, or topic like “Idaho Potatoes” or “Fly fishing in the Rockies.” You can customize the topic to the state or area you are in. For this workshop we are using a Starlight mint.
2. Prepare enough cubes so that you have one for each table. Write the following verbs on the cubes:

**Describe it** (Consider the subject closely – perhaps with your senses as well as your mind)

**Compare it** (What is it similar to? What is it different from?)

**Associate it** (What does it make you think of? What comes to mind when you think of it? Perhaps people? Places? Things? Feelings? Let your mind go and see what feelings you have for the subject)

**Analyze it** (Take it apart and examine it. Use your imagination.)

**Apply it** (Tell what you can do with it. How can it be used?)

**Argue for or Against it** (Take a stand. Use any kind of reasoning that you want – logical, silly, anywhere in between.)

(Other verbs you could use: Rearrange it, Illustrate it, Question it, Evaluate it, Connect it, Change it, Solve it)

3. Give each table a cube and have participants take turns tossing the cube and verbalizing the topic using the verb on the cube. If the same verb is tossed more than once, the second participant must come up with something entirely different than the first.
4. Allow 5-10 minutes for this activity.

\*\*Alternative Activity: Do this as a whole group if time is short. Give the topic, toss the cube and have a volunteer “stand and deliver.”

# CUBING

## as a Strategy to Address Learner Differences

Cubing is a strategy designed to help student think about a topic or idea from many different angles. Cubes help students avoid “flat” thinking, thinking that is one dimensional and lacks elaboration.

A cube includes six commands, one on each of its six faces, followed by a prompt that describes the task the student should do related to the command.

**Command:** DESCRIBE

**Prompt 1:** Describe the rainforest using as much information as you can, and involving as many of your senses as possible in your description.

**Prompt 2:** Describe how your life would change if you moved to the canopy of the rainforest, using as much information as you can about this canopy, involving as many of your senses as possible in your description, and being sure to explain why these changes would take place.

**Command:** DIAGRAM

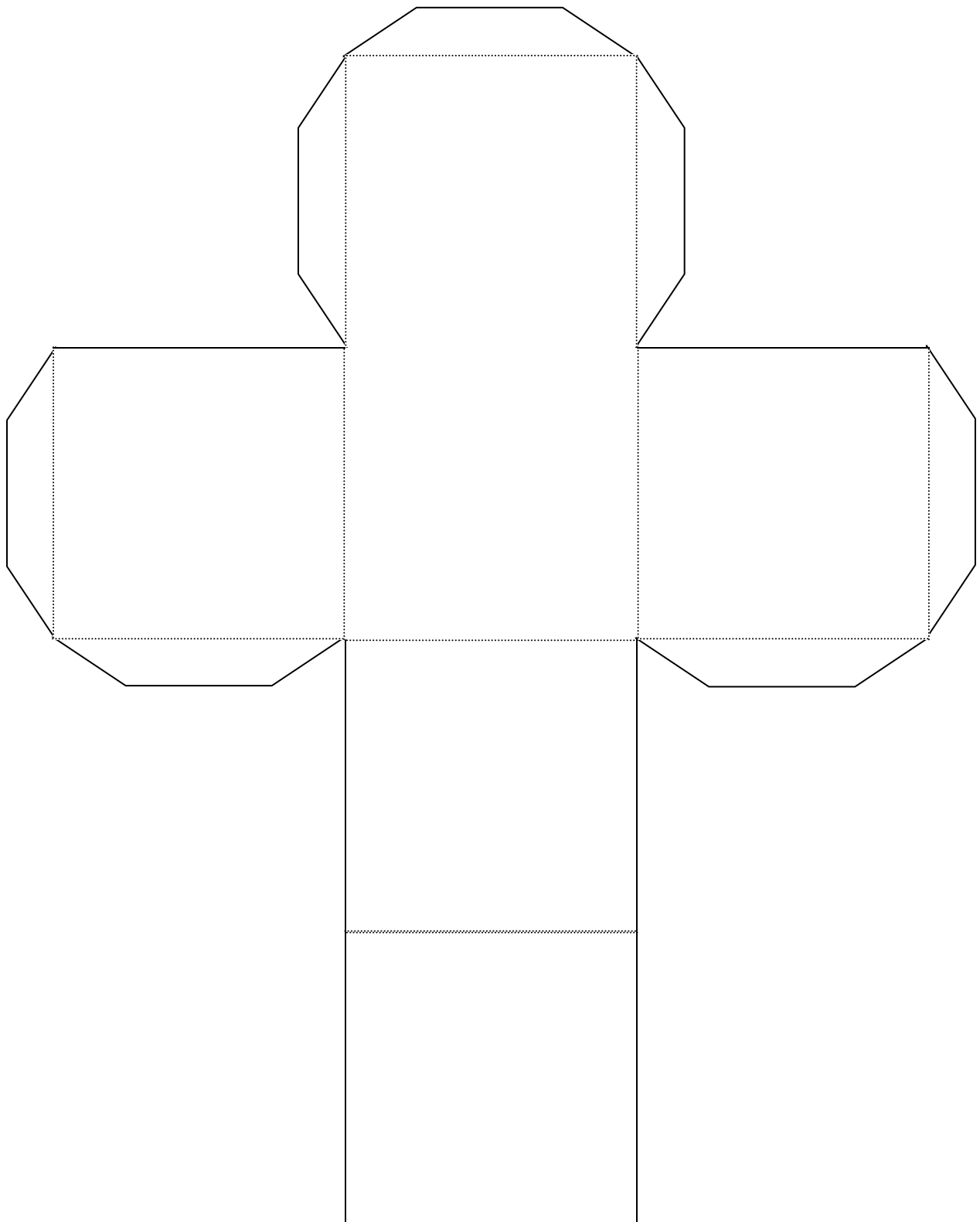
**Prompt 1:** Diagram the relationship between human use of the rainforest and the positives and negatives that come from that use.

**Prompt 2:** Diagram the relationship between human use of the rainforest over the past 100 years and how the positives and negatives that come from that use have changed over the years. Show the impact in at least five areas.

There are many different thinking commands that can go on a cube, for example, apply, connect, argue, evaluate, and support. Cubes can be used to differentiate activities. You can use two or more cubes with the same commands, modify the prompts as in the examples above, so they are at different levels of difficulty.

Cubing is a great way to differentiate an activity based on student interest or learning profile. You might want to have multiple cubes to use in a single review activity. You might decide to keep two or three faces the same on all versions of the cube, for example, list, describe, and analyze. One of the cubes, however, might have the remaining faces designed for students who like writing: make a limerick, write a journal entry, create a pun. Another cube might work better for more oral learners: tell a story, present an argument for or against, write or present a song. A third cube might be designed for students with visual or spatial strengths: make a model, draw a sketch, make a Venn diagram with images rather than words. Students might then be assigned to tables with cubes that are most appropriate for their learning needs. Each student rolls the cube a designated number of times, and the face that points up on each roll becomes a task for that student to complete.

Use this template to design your own “cubes” as an instructional strategy in your classrooms.



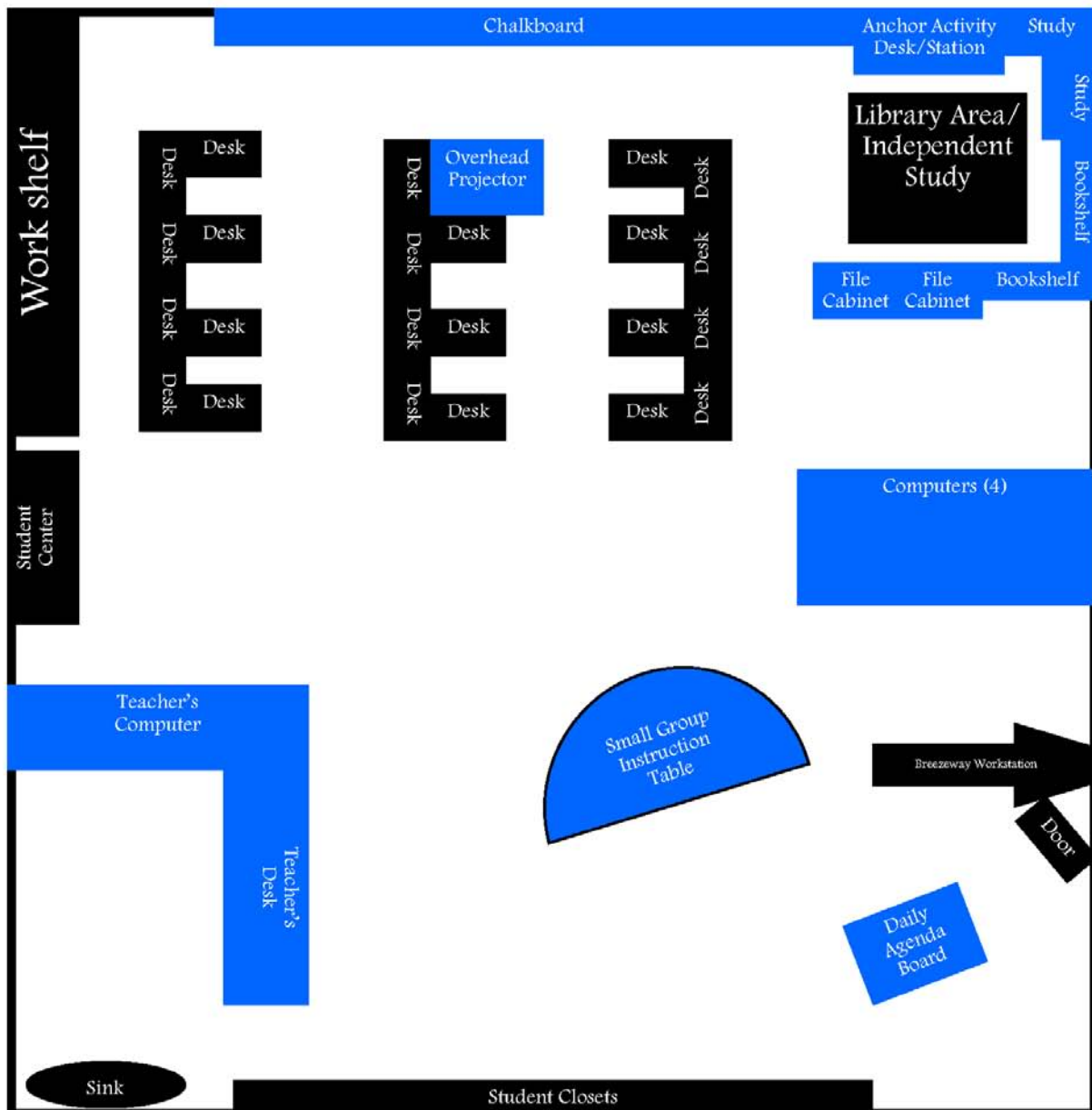
## Student Conference Checklist

- Introduce parent(s) to the teacher. Speak loudly and clearly.
- Show your parents where to sit. Open your folder.
- Tell you parents why you are in charge of leading your conference
- Encourage your parents to ask questions.
- Share your work. Read through and/or give them time to look it over.
- Share comments about your report card. A copy will be in your folder. Discuss your good grades and not so good grades.
- Tell your parents what you do best in school and why.
- Tell your parents about 2 ways you need to improve in school.
- Ask your parent(s) if they have any questions or comments.
- Ask your teacher if there are any additional comments to be made.
- Thank your parent(s) for coming!

## Student Conference Checklist

- Show your parents where to sit. Open your folder.
- Encourage your parents to ask questions.
- Share your MAP Test scores. Read through and/or give them time to look it over. ISTEP cut-off/GT Program?
- Share comments about your report card. A copy will be at the meeting. Discuss your good grades and not so good grades.
- Tell your parents what you feel that you have improved this year!
- Also, share with your parents what you feel that you haven't improved on!
- Ask your parent(s) if they have any questions or comments.
- Ask your teacher if there are any additional comments to be made.
- Thank your parent(s) for coming!

# Room Set-Up of a Differentiated Classroom



## Room Map Notes

- Most to all small group instruction takes place at the "U" shaped table in the back of the room.
- There is a workstation that is in the breezeway out in the hall. From the "U" shaped table, I can have three groups working cooperatively. I can also be sure that they are all on-task from that vantage point.
- The Student Center is where students turn in all work and do lunch count of a morning. My homework collectors will collect all homework from this center of a morning.
- In the front right corner of the room students may go there if there is something distracting them at their seats.
- Lanyards located at the Student Center are used during small group instruction time. These lanyards go to the "Ask Me" people, while I am working with a small group at the "U" shaped table.
- Students may get up to go to the anchor activity station at any time. If they finish with desk work, you will usually see students here.

## What a “Typical” Day Looks Like

- 7:30-7:50 Students enter room and start on Daily Language/Math Review. They will also turn in homework and do lunch count. Morning announcements are read at this time.
- 7:50-8:00 As a class, we will go over morning work on the overhead projector.
- 8:00-8:45 S.S. test review session. (This may be in the format of a Jeopardy game.) I do not differentiate as much with S.S. (Tools for DI would be more visuals, CD version of the book, and study buddies.)
- 8:45-9:25 P.E.A.M. Time - PE, Art, or Music
- 9:25-10:30 Math Stations - 3 Stations of 20 minutes in length  
Station #1 Turn ‘n Learns (Challenge)  
Station #2 Versatile Activity of Week  
Station #3 Weekly Review Station
- \*For stations, I utilize flexible grouping! Each group will have an “Ask Me” student.
- 10:30-11:00 Wordly Wise Blue Book Test  
Wordly Wise 3000 Test  
Pictionary Spelling Test (ESL Student)
- 11:00-12:00 Language Arts Ability Grouping Time  
A Wrinkle in Time-Reading Strategies (Whole Group Activity)  
Demonstrative Adjectives  
2 Groups made based on preassessment.  
Computer Lab A  
A+ Program differentiates according to preassessment.
- 12:00-1:20 Lunch/Recess/Study Hall
- 1:20-2:15 Science  
Passing Traits  
Group #1 using Punnett Squares.  
Group #2 doing a reading comprehension crossword.

### Thoughts on DI

The most difficult part about implementing DI in the classroom was when I would have a substitute or guest teacher. At first, I found that it was very difficult to get a substitute to follow through with all plans. I found that once the students were well adjusted to groupings and the procedures were clear and concise, the class seemed to function extremely well! The sub and full time teacher just act as facilitators for learning. Now, I am pretty at-ease with taking a day to do a workshop.

# Class Procedures in a Differentiated Classroom

## Mr. Moore's Rules

1. Attitude is everything!
2. Never give up!
3. Treat others as you would like to be treated!

## Work Procedures

1. When working at your desk, you need to ask at least three "Ask Me" people before you interrupt Mr. Moore's small group in the back of the room.
2. If or when you finish work at your seat, you are to do an anchor activity, versatile, or Reading Counts.
3. "Ask Me" people are not to give answers. They are just there to answer questions about directions or to help in a small way.
4. If you cannot concentrate at your desk, you may go to Mr. Moore's library area and study at the independent work stations.
5. When rotating between groups, do it quickly and quietly.

# Pioneers in our Schools

CAPE Initiative Schools

Madison County

Pendleton, Indiana

“DesCartes gives you a road map so you are not wandering around aimlessly in a desert with your class.”

– Paula May, Title I Teacher, Marie Thurston Elementary School, Alexandria

“Without NWEA, we are shooting at targets with blindfolds on.”

- Francie Metzger, Principal, Edgewood Elementary School, Elwood

## Highlighting Best Practices of the Innovative Teachers at Marie Thurston

### 1. Linda Lewis, Title I Teacher

Using math RIT scores and the NWEA Fall Placement Guidelines, the school is going to select students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade to be involved in a Math Club, to provide extra challenge for their gifted students.

### 2. Heather Bates, Title I Teacher

I took their classroom reports and found out what RIT range they fell in. I decided if they needed to focus more on Reading or Language Usage. For this particular group, I developed activities from the Reading part of DesCartes.

For example, under the subheading "Literal Reading Comprehension", I looked under the RIT scores between 201 and 210 (Locating Information) and saw that one of the requirements was to use an advertisement. I took several advertisements from the Sunday newspaper and wrote questions out for the students to answer. They had to find and understand specific information, determine what was being advertised, and understand abbreviations/shortened phrases.

We also used reference materials (specifically from the library), looked at schedules that pertained to them during the school week, read recipes (and actually made one recipe), used a table of contents and index. These are all items listed under the locating information part of DesCartes.

### 3. Paula May, Title I Teacher

Paula took third grade Title I students out of class last year two days a week, and using their RIT scores (they were all within the same RIT range), identified a goal area that they all showed weakness in.

She informed the students of this goal, and told them that she would show them that if they worked hard on this goal, they would be able to see their own growth, (like measuring their height on a yardstick), and then they could celebrate their success.

She used DesCartes to find out where their instructional level was, and developed lessons according to this information. She remediated with six weeks of intensive, focused activities centering around the Capitalization and Punctuation section of DesCartes. At the end of six weeks, Paula, on her own initiative, administered the MAP survey test (the shorter test), so the kids could see how much they had improved. Explained Paula, “these are the kids that really need to see that they can be successful, that they can achieve, that they can grow!”

Paula said she learned that these kids, who are already significantly behind grade level, need to be taught not only the information listed under their current RIT range, but also must be exposed to new material from the next RIT range in order to achieve maximum growth.

#### 4. Monica Whitted, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher

Last year three 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers were encouraged to group their classes according to RIT ranges in math only. They wanted to experiment with just one subject – not the whole day. One teacher took the low range, one the middle, and one the high group. They found that it was much easier for them to teach kids who were more homogeneously grouped together.

#### 5. Vi Hiser, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher

Vi has grouped her students according to their NWEA RIT scores in each goal area, and is going to continue to try teaching that way. She uses DesCartes to see where her kids are, and develops several lesson plans that concentrate on the things they need to learn. Especially with the low groups, she has had to find materials that were not at the “second grade” level. How long does it take to develop one lesson plan for these kids - more than one planning period... It is sometimes difficult to find appropriate materials and time to put it all together.

## Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels

### Table of Verbs

<u>Knowledge</u>	<u>Comprehension</u>	<u>Application</u>
know define memorize repeat record list recall name relate collect label specify cite enumerate tell recount	restate summarize discuss describe recognize explain express identify locate report retell review translate	exhibit solve interview simulate apply employ use demonstrate dramatize practice illustrate operate calculate show experiment

<u>Analysis</u>	<u>Synthesis</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
interpret analyze differentiate compare contrast scrutinize categorize probe investigate discover inquire detect inspect classify arrange group organize examine survey dissect inventory question test distinguish diagram	compose plan propose produce invent develop design formulate arrange assemble construct create set up prepare imagine hypothesize incorporate generalize originate predict contrive concoct systematize	judge decide appraise evaluate rate compare value revise conclude select criticize assess measure estimate infer deduce score predict choose recommend determine

# Planning Guide for Tiered Activities

## Grade 2 – Measurement (Money)

South Madison Community School Corporation  
Maple Ridge Elementary School, Pendleton, Indiana

Created by Jennifer Chestnut, Missy Farrer, Jeanne Fredericks, Jill Mohr, & Heidi Moore

### What range of learning needs are you likely to address?

**Pre-Assessment Tools** – NWEA Goal Area Class Data (Measurement) and Locally determined pre-test **Flexible Groups** were established using the assessment tools listed above and teacher observation.

**Determination** -- Based on the pre-assessment tools and observation, teachers saw a need to differentiate instruction for student learning in the academic area of measurement. Three flexible groups were established: struggling learners, grade level learners, and advanced learners.

### Struggling Learners

#### **Indiana Standard 5 – Measurement**

1.5.7 Identify and give the values of pennies, nickels, and dimes. Example: How many pennies have the same value as two nickels?

#### **DesCartes**

161-170 *Money*: Identify value of a penny, nickel, dime, and quarter  
*New Vocabulary in this Range*: names of pennies  
*New Signs & Symbols*: face of quarter, dime, penny, and nickel

#### **Indiana’s Academic Standards: Curriculum Frameworks (Grade 1): Standard Indicator 1.5.7**

- How Much Is a Hand Worth? – pp. 169-172

#### **Indiana’s Academic Standards: Curriculum Frameworks (Grade 2): Standard Indicator 2.5.12**

- Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich – pp.155-158

#### **Instructional Activities:**

- Identification of coins and worth
- Use overhead to view both sides of coin
- Manipulatives: bag of play money (bills & coins)
- Count like sets of coins to make a desired amount
- Using correct sign (\$ or ¢)

#### **Assessment:**

- Teacher observation & conferencing
- Checking student written work
- Written test

# Grade Level Learners

## Indiana Standard 5 – Measurement

2.5.12 Find the value of a collection of pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, half-dollars, and dollars. Example: You have 3 pennies, 4 nickels, and 2 dimes. How much money do you have: Explain your answer.

### **DesCartes**

161-170 See Struggling Learners found above. (Review)

171-180 *Money*: Identify value of a one dollar bill

- Determine if a collection of coins is enough to purchase an object up to and including \$1.00.
- *New Vocabulary in this Range*: coins
- *New Signs and Symbols*: \$, decimal point for cents, cent sign, recognize back of penny, nickel, dime, and quarter

## Indiana’s Academic Standards: Curriculum Frameworks (Grade 2): Standard Indicator

2.5.12

- Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich – pp.155-158

### Instructional Activities:

- Count mixed coins
- Make “a given amount” with the least amount of coins
- Make change
- Use calculators to add the cost of 3 different items to reach a total amount
- State an amount. Can you buy it with 5 dimes? 6 dimes?

### Assessment:

- Teacher observation & conferencing
- Checking student written work
- Written test

# Advanced Learners

## Indiana Standard 5 – Measurement

- 3.5.10 Find the value of any collection of coins and bills. Write amounts less than a dollar using the ¢ symbol and write larger amounts in decimal notation using the \$ symbol. Example: You have 5 quarters and 2 dollar bills. How much money is that? Write the amount.
- 3.5.11 Use play or real money to decide whether there is enough money to make a purchase. Example: You have \$5. Can you buy two books that cost \$2.15 each? What about three books that cost \$1.70 each? Explain how you know.

## DesCartes

181-190 171-180 *See On-grade Level Learners found above. (Review)*

- 181-191 *Money:* Identify the coins: pennies, nickels, and dimes
- Identify the value of a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, and one dollar bill.
  - Combine & identify the value of a collection of coins and bills up to and including \$1.00.
  - Combine and identify equivalent values of coins and bills up to and including \$1.00.
  - Make change to \$1.00 by “counting on” or subtracting
  - Compute simple addition or subtraction problems involving monetary amounts up to \$10.00.
  - New Vocabulary in this Range: about, estimate, change, quarter, dollars, nickel, pennies, dime
- 191-200 *Money:* Combine and identify the value of a collection of coins and bills up to and including \$10.00.
- Compute simple addition or subtraction problems involving monetary amounts up to \$10.00.
  - Compute and count change up to and including \$100.00.
  - Compute and count change greater than \$20.00.

## Indiana’s Academic Standards: Curriculum Frameworks (Grade 3): Standard Indicator 3.5.10 and 3.5.11

- Pigs Will Be Pigs – pp.189-190.

### Instructional Activities:

- Identify, count, and problem solve with money up to a total of \$20.00.
- Write money amounts 3 different ways: as cents, as a decimal, with written words
- Making purchases in classroom store, receiving correct change
- Using magazines, select products and identify price

### Assessment:

- Checking student work
- Teacher observation & conferencing
- Student magazine project
- Written test

# Whole Group Instruction

## “4 Block” Literacy Framework – Self-selected Reading Block

- Building Background Knowledge: need for money, how it is made, markings  
⇒ Bless the Book Teacher Activity:
  1. American Currency by Armentrout
  2. A New True Book: Money by Elkin
  3. How Money Is Made by Armentrout
  4. Money by Young
  5. Why Money Was Invented by Godfrey
  6. The Coin Counting Book by Williams

## Resources for Anchor Activities:

- [www.aaamath.com](http://www.aaamath.com)
- [www.funbrain.com](http://www.funbrain.com)
- “Worksheet Factory” – Computer program
- “Money Match Me Game” – Dellosa

## Supplies:

- Bag of money: bills and coins manipulatives for each student

# Planning Guide for Tiered Activities Grade 2 – Reading (Comprehension)

South Madison Community School Corporation  
Maple Ridge Elementary School, Pendleton, Indiana  
Created by Jeanne Fredericks and Jill Mohr

## What range of learning needs are you likely to address?

**Pre-Assessment Data** – NWEA Goal Area Class Data (Reading) and Lexile Scores

**Determination** -- Based on the information gained from the pre-assessment data and teacher observation, there was a need to differentiate student learning in the area of reading (Four Block/Guided Reading Block). Three flexible groups were established: struggling learners, grade level learners, and advanced learners.

**Application** – The NWEA Class Reading Report showed that three flexible group levels were necessary for differentiating student learning.

<u>Lexile Levels</u>	<u>Selected Book (Theme Pumpkins)</u>	<u>Lexile Level of Book</u>	<u>Classification</u>
BR - 199	PUMPKIN HEADS!	130	Fiction
200-399	PUMPKIN, PUMPKIN	260	Fiction
400-699	PUMPKINS TRIP AROUND THE WORLD	530	Non-Fiction

(Alternative: articles from magazines and the internet may be used)

**DesCartes** – DesCartes was used to help guide instruction for the three flexible groups established from the data and teacher observation.

**Word Analysis and Vocabulary Development** – Students understand relationships between words and can use component structures and clues from context to decipher word meaning.

**Beginning Readers (BR-199):** RIT Scores between 151-160

**Grade Level Learners (200-399):** RIT Scores between 161-170

Touch on RIT Scores between 171-180

**Advanced Learners (400-699):** RIT Scores between 181-190

# Whole Group & Differentiated Instruction

Purpose: to improve comprehension and integrate science investigation skills  
Differentiation by Activities

## English/Language Arts Standards

### Indiana's Academic English/Language Arts Standard 2 – READING: Reading Comprehension

#### Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 2.2.4 Ask and respond to questions to aid comprehension about important elements of informational texts.
- 2.2.5 Restate facts and details in the text to clarify and organize ideas.

### Indiana's Academic English/Language Arts Standard 4 – WRITING: Writing Process

#### Organization and Focus

- 2.4.1 Create a list of ideas for writing.

#### Research and Technology

- 2.4.2 Find ideas for writing stories and descriptions in pictures or books.

## Science Standards

### Indiana's Academic Science Standard 2 – THE NATURE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Scientific Inquiry

- 2.1.4 Make new observations when there is disagreement among initial observations

#### The Scientific Enterprise

- 2.1.5 Demonstrate the ability to work with a team but still reach and communicate one's own conclusions about findings.

#### Technology and Science

- 2.1.6 Use tools to investigate, observe, measure, design, and build things.

# Whole Group & Differentiated Instruction

**Purpose:** to improve comprehension and integrate science investigation skills

## INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Seek prior student knowledge about pumpkins and build on that prior understanding.
  - ⇒ **Whole Group Instruction**
    - √ KWL Chart
    - √ 5 Senses Chart (Look, Taste, Sound, Feel, Smell)
    - √ [www.kids--learning.org](http://www.kids--learning.org)
- Differentiated groups read assigned book according to Lexile levels. (See Teacher Selected Books above)
  - ⇒ **Differentiation**
    - √ Day 1 – students read book alone
    - √ Day 2 – reading buddies (students read with a partner)
    - √ Day 3 – teacher works with reading group
- Build vocabulary. During days 1 & 2, students select difficult words from reading to generate a vocabulary list. Students compare their generated lists with the teacher-generated list.
  - ⇒ **Differentiation by student choice with Multiple Intelligence Activities (select one)**
    - √ Create and write sentences with vocabulary words.
    - √ Act out vocabulary words.
    - √ Draw vocabulary word illustrations.

## ASSESSMENT

- Check comprehension through graphic organizers.
  - ⇒ **Differentiation**
    - √ Struggling Learners – Graphic Organizer (filmstrip)
    - √ Grade Level Learners – Graphic Organizer (story sequence)
    - √ Advanced Learners – Graphic Organizer (web)
- Groups Share Graphic Organizers. Choose one presentation activity.
  - ⇒ **Differentiation**
    - √ Reader's Theater
    - √ Write a play based on the book and act it out.
    - √ Create a poster that advertises the book.
- Complete “L” component of the “KWL” Chart to address any questions not addressed.
- Pumpkin Trivia Quiz <http://school.discovery.com>

JF/Docs: Lesson Plan for NWEA on Grade 2 Reading

## I'm ready to start tomorrow...what can I do? (Lo-Prep Differentiation)

Choices of Books  
Reading Buddies  
Work Alone/together  
Varied Computer Programs  
Varied Supplementary Materials  
Negotiated Criteria  
Varied Graphic Organizers  
Appointment Clock

Homework Options  
Varied Journal Prompts  
Flexible Seating  
Think-Pair-Share  
Jigsaw  
Mini Workshops to Reteach  
Cubing

## I'm going to work to develop some in-depth activities (Hi-Prep Differentiation)

Tiered Activities/Labs  
Independent Studies  
Alternative Assessments  
MI Options  
Spelling by Readiness  
Interest Groups  
Personal Agendas  
Group Investigation  
Graduated Rubrics

Tiered Products  
Multiple Texts  
Learning Contracts  
Compacting  
Community Mentorships  
Tiered Centers  
Literature Circles  
Tape Recorded Material  
Choice Boards

# Options for Differentiation of Instruction

To Differentiate Instruction by:

## READINESS

- adjust the “equalizer”
- add or remove scaffolding
- vary difficulty level of text and supplementary material
- vary direct instruction by small group

### Useful Instructional Strategies:

Tiered activities	Tiered products
Compacting	Learning Contracts
Tiered Tasks	Alternative Forms of Assessment

## INTEREST

- give choice of mode of expressing learning
- use interest-based mentoring of adults or more expert-like peers
- give choice of tasks and products
- give broad access to varied materials and technologies

### Useful Instructional Strategies:

Interest Centers	Interest Groups
Enrichment Clusters	Group Investigation
Choice Boards	Multiple Intelligence Options

## LEARNING PROFILE

- create an environment with flexible learning spaces and options
- allow working alone or with peers
- use part-to-whole or whole-to-part approaches
- vary teacher mode of presentation
- adjust for gender, culture and language differences

### Useful Instructional Strategies:

Multi-ability cooperative tasks	Multiple Intelligence options
---------------------------------	-------------------------------

## Some Teacher-Generated Ideas

- MS/HS – Have students who are good note-takers take their notes on carbon paper. They can then give a copy of the notes to students who struggle with note-taking.
- MS/HS – Reading teachers highlighted copies of the class reports (HI, AV, LO) for the science and social studies teachers.
- Put RIT scores on seating charts as a reminder.
- Can change up how you do “flexible grouping”
  - 1 day per week
  - same grade – cooperative
  - multi-grade
  - “Power Days” – focus on areas of strength one day and areas of concern another
- Make sure students know “what to do next”
- Set expectations at the beginning of the year; set parameters and guidelines ahead of time – for example, “If I am working with another group, you can’t come to me for help.” Let them know who they could go to for help.
  - “Captain of the Day” – rotate this based on students’ skills – they are the person who others go to if need help while teacher is doing small-group instruction
  - Rule of 3 – ask 3 people before you ask me
- Set time limits
- Do a parent night separate from conferences to explain MAP testing
- Parent/student “Book Club” over the summer. Parent and student read the same book, you give them a list of questions they can reflect on over the dinner table.
- Can use a beach ball instead of cube for differentiation
- Can use two cubes that function together, for example, Cube 1 – who, what, when, why, where, how; Cube 2 – should, will, would, etc. The students roll the 2 cubes and make up the rest of the question based on the book they read and pose those questions to the other students they are working with.
- “Word of the Day” – especially might be useful if the class goal is Word Meaning



## Anchor Activity (Sample Activities)

**What is an Anchor Activity?** *Provides meaningful, relevant, and curricular work for students when they finish an assignment or project, when they first enter the class, or when they have completed deskwork. Anchor Activities provide ongoing tasks that tie to content and instruction, and help free up the classroom teacher to work with other groups of students or individuals during periods of differentiating instruction.*

### SPELLING

- Create a greeting card. Be sure to include some of your Spelling words in the message. Use lots of color and do your best work.
- Illustrate your spelling words. Don't actually write the word, but make your picture really reflect the meaning of your word.
- Create newspaper headlines using your spelling words.
- Create an advertisement/poster for some type of product using some of your spelling words.
- Use sign language to spell your words. You can refer to the sign language cards to make sure you know the signs.
- Find a newspaper or magazine article. Find words in the article that can be replaced with your spelling words.
- Create a crossword puzzle or a word search using your spelling words. Provide an answer key and give it to a friend to complete.
- Compose a letter to a parent (or a teacher) in written form or on the computer and give it to them or e-mail it to them.
- Use some of your spelling words to write a poem. You can use the poetry resource book to learn about the different types of poetry.
- Create categories or groups for your spelling words, then figure out a way to regroup them into different categories/groups.

## READING

- Check out and read a biography about the life of someone you are interested in learning about. Then, prepare a short biography in your own words to share with the class.
- Write a letter to the author of a book you've enjoyed.
- Forecast the sales of a new book in a series or by a certain author. Justify your sales forecast.
- Create a best-seller list for your ten favorite books!
- Design illustrations what you think would go well with a favorite chapter book.
- Compare and contrast two books by the same author.
- Compare and contrast two books from the same genre (i.e.: fiction, biography, mystery, realistic fiction, humorous, etc).
- Find a fiction book and a non-fiction book that could be paired together. (Ex: a nonfiction book about the Civil War and a chapter book set during the Civil War).
- Rewrite the ending of a book you've read and make it end a different way.
- Create an original dialogue between two characters from a book you've read.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

- Choose an important event that took place in U.S. or world history (example: the first atomic bomb explosion during WWII). Explain how science advancements at the time made the event possible.
- Choose an important person from U.S. or world history. Write a letter to him/her and ask any questions you'd like answered by that person.
- Choose an important individual from some part of U.S. or world history. Then, write a first-hand journal entry that might have been written by him/her during that time period.
- Find similarities and differences between two events that took place at different times in history. You may want to illustrate the comparisons with a Venn diagram.
- Critique a political leader's "platform" on a debatable issue in current events.
- Create an imaginary continent. Then, draw and name the countries on that continent. Be sure to include borders, capital cities, etc. Then, write about one of the countries. Explain its government, culture, and laws.
- List the populations of 8-10 countries in order from greatest to smallest. Explain why you think the populations are the way they are.
- Brainstorm ways you could've contributed to your family's well-being during the depression if you lived during that time.
- Research a famous entrepreneur of the "gilded age." Find out how he/she earned a fortune and what he/she did with it.
- Find an interesting book written during a particular period in history. Explain how this book might've had an impact on how people thought about issues during that time period.

## SCIENCE

- Write a letter to a member of the government about an environmental issue we've talked about in class.
- Write a letter to a famous scientist or person who has contributed to science. Be sure to include questions you'd really like this person to answer for you.
- Come up with a list of new "essential questions" you'd like to have answered about our unit of study (or future units from our web).
- Create a perfect "habitat" for an animal of your choice. Use any format you'd like to illustrate your habitat.
- Write an experiment you could conduct to teach others about a science concept you've learned in class.
- Create a mind map/web using Inspiration on the computer to illustrate a science concept to share with others.
- Research an important event or invention in Science. Find out what was going on at the time of this event in world or U.S. history.
- Make a list of what you think are the top ten environmental issues in today's world. Be sure to put them in order of importance.
- Make a list of ten things about life that are difficult and/or inconvenient and come up with ideas for inventions that could help make these things easier or more convenient.
- Go to the library and find a non-fiction book about something scientific that interests you. Become the "resident expert" for our class and share your findings during class meeting.

## MATH

- Review Murdock's electric bills/water bills from the last three months. Find an average amount spent for the three months. Think of a list of ways we at Murdock might be able to reduce the amount of energy or water we use to save money and resources.
- Research calendars or other time-keeping devices. Find out when and by whom they were first used.
- Research money and bartering systems. Work to discover where and when these systems originated.
- Find out the names and values of at least 5 different types of foreign currency. Be sure to tell where the currencies come from and what denominations they come in.
- Plan a road trip across the U.S. stopping by at least 5 famous landmarks. Use a map/map scale to measure distances. Then, add up the total amount of mileage the entire trip (round trip) would take. Decide how many days you'd be gone and calculate the cost of gas, motel rooms, and meals for a family of four. What would the total cost of the trip be?
- Imagine a trip you'd really like to take. With permission from your teacher, visit a travel website (such as [travelocity.com](http://travelocity.com)) and check on available plane tickets and lodgings. Add up the total amount it would cost you to take the trip. How could you get the best deal?
- With your teacher's permission, visit the MapQuest website and plan a trip to somewhere in the U.S. Map the journey and figure total mileage.

## Web Sites for Anchor Activities

[http://www.stcms.si.edu/pom/pom\\_student\\_anchor.htm](http://www.stcms.si.edu/pom/pom_student_anchor.htm)

<http://wblrd.sk.ca/~bestpractice/anchor/process2.html>

<http://wblrd.sk.ca/~bestpractice/anchor/resources.html>

<http://www.aaamath.com/>

<http://www.funbrain.com/>

<http://www.lcandler.web.aplus.net>

[http://www.ilovethatteachingidea.com/ideas/subj\\_learning\\_centers.htm](http://www.ilovethatteachingidea.com/ideas/subj_learning_centers.htm)



Northwest Evaluation Association

*Partnering to help all kids learn*

**Northwest Evaluation Association**

503-624-1951 | [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org) | Created 11/2008 | © 2008 Northwest Evaluation Association