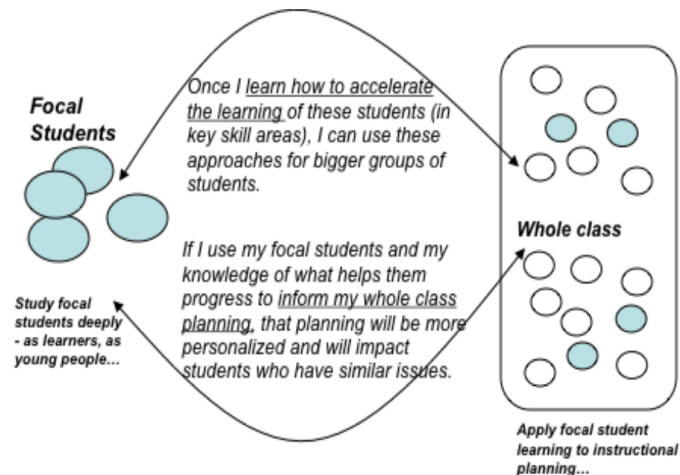


PLANNING FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS - FOCAL STUDENT STRATEGY

Rationale: By focusing on focal students, teachers become more effective for all students. “Focal students help teachers develop the discipline of deeply understanding the students' needs, adjusting their teaching to meet those needs, and in doing so, impacting the rest of the classroom as the quality of their teaching rises. We call this the "ripple effect". In the classrooms in which the teacher has adopted a focal student mindset—that is, a teacher who continuously assesses learning of her/his focal students, examines data, and uses that information to plan instruction toward mastery of standards—student achievement is accelerating.” - National Equity Project



Four Common Diverse Learner Profiles


Struggling Reader - Student reading multiple levels below grade level due to a lack of adequate instruction or due to a disability like dyslexia

Student that struggles to maintain focus - either due to environmental factors or a disability like ADHD, the student has a difficult time staying focused during lessons and completing work


English language learner - A student that has significant language challenges due to being new to the country or due to limited exposure to language-rich environments (e.g. visiting museums, trips outside of their community)

High achiever/gifted student - Student that stands out in the classroom as one that needs to be challenged academically (i.e. early finisher or bored)


Struggling Reader - Student reading multiple levels below grade level due to a lack of adequate instruction or due to a disability like dyslexia

Learner Profile	Barriers to Learning	Scaffolds
 <p>Dacia</p> <p>Dacia is a 4th-grade student with severely compromised word attack skills, word identification, and spelling. Reading is not her preferred activity, and Dacia struggles to read and comprehend grade-level text. In class, she often needs support with distinguishing the main idea from extraneous details. Dacia interacts verbally with peers more freely during unstructured activities in the classroom. She does respond positively to individualized teacher attention. Dacia is active in the Student Council and plays on the school's basketball team.</p>	<p>Engagement - How will the student be motivated and sustain engagement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited participation in the discussion Appears embarrassed to share and/or is slow to respond to questions about the text Unsure or inaccurate answers when questioned directly after independent reading activities Works less and less as the period goes on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate time for students to plan response: After asking a question, build in a few moments for students to write their ideas before sharing. Provide students with a sentence starter or word bank if needed. Provide a strategic partner for the student: Using a Think-Pair-Share strategy, ensure the student has a partner with stronger reading skills who can support with referring back to the text. Provide each pair with sentence stems to facilitate discussion. Tap into prior knowledge and interests: Provide a non-text hook (e.g., video, pictures) to build student background knowledge of the topic prior to the assignment. Give students an interests survey and incorporate into lessons. Consistently recognize students' efforts: Provide specific praise and/or reinforcement for expected work habits to maintain time on-task throughout the lesson.
	<p>Representation - How content is presented? How is information displayed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks decoding skills to read unknown words Low word reading accuracy limits fluency and comprehension Difficulty reading and following multistep directions Difficulty reading and comprehending grade level text independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide visual aides: Use less text heavy presentations, incorporating videos, photos, and virtual manipulatives into instructional materials. Provide graphic organizers; consider partially completing organizer as a model to get started. Model the learning objective or task: Think aloud to give a narrative of an internal process for students to follow. Give visual examples of what students will be learning or are expected to accomplish. This modeling strategy can be used when showing how to take notes or prepare to read a new text. Front load by providing options to engage with texts before the main lesson content: Give students access to an audiobook of the next novel study in advance. Provide access to audio recordings, read aloud, and partner reading with current text. Pre-teach vocabulary using the Frayer model or other explicit vocabulary strategies. Break down challenging text: Chunk the reading into smaller, more manageable pieces of text. Model and assign students opportunities to rewrite these smaller chunks into their own words (gist statements). Prompt students to refer back to gist statements in order to complete comprehension tasks.
	<p>Action + Expression - How will the student work strategically to accomplish the learning goal? How will they show what they know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty determining appropriate next step in a process to complete an assignment Unclear on what's expected and whether their work meets expectations Unclear written communication and often takes a long time to express thoughts in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide exemplars of expected action: Clarify learning goal by providing work exemplars for each assignment type; model use of exemplar to guide student work before independent practice. Utilize word problem strategies that support literacy skills: Use strategies like CUBES or Read-Draw-Write. Model strategies frequently and hold accountable for use through annotations and partner discussions. Support self-monitoring and evaluation: Provide a rubric and time in the lesson for self-evaluation. After modeling use of tools, hold students accountable for monitoring reading comprehension during independent reading or editing their own writing. Support independent writing with framing strategies: Provide thinking maps, sentence stems, paragraph frames, or word banks of key vocabulary or transition phrases. Utilize writing software applications to support efficiency and clarity of writing. Provide opportunities for student partners to read aloud during editing and revising stages.


Student that struggles to focus - A student who has difficulty staying focused during lessons and completing work either due to environmental factors or a disability like ADHD

Learner Profile	Barriers to Learning	Scaffolds
 <p>Alex</p> <p>Alex is a 9th-grade student with ADHD-inattentive type. Alex is outgoing, has many friends, and enjoys activities that are active like P.E. According to assessment data, his reading skills are about a year behind his peers. During class, Alex is frequently off task and struggles to complete work tasks independently. He has difficulty with organization and following multi-step directions. Alex currently takes medication daily to manage anxiety and has one weekly session with the school counselor to work on executive functioning skills.</p>	<p>Engagement - How will the student be motivated and sustain engagement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appears disinterested in the topic ● Limited participation in group discussions ● Works inconsistently on independent tasks oftentimes only partially completes them ● Easily distracted by visual stimuli 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tap into prior knowledge and interests: Provide a non-text hook (e.g., video, pictures) to build student background knowledge of the topic prior to the assignment. Give students an interests survey and incorporate it into lessons. ● Embed brief times to process: Implement the “Stop and Jot” strategy with elementary or secondary students or a quick “Turn and Talk” at strategic points in each lesson. ● Consistently recognize students' efforts toward learning goals: Provide specific praise and/or reinforcement for maintaining time-on-task throughout the lesson. Create a mistake-friendly classroom. ● Student-centered class design: Add flexible seating (a secondary example) to your room, change the lighting (i.e., light filters to reduce fluorescent light), and/or remove much of the visuals on the walls unless they will be referenced frequently.
	<p>Representation - How content is presented? How is the information displayed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty restating ideas in the text or what a peer or teacher has said ● Not retaining what was covered earlier in class ● Difficulty making inferences and/or thinking critically about a text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarify directions: Provide key directions and questions in writing (on a slide or on a desk reference sheet) in addition to sharing them orally; give students a personal copy of the visual anchor ● Support information processing: Model using a graphic organizer, provide guided notes with partially completed problems, or chart ideas/evidence throughout lesson ● Front-load by engaging with texts before the main lesson content: Give students access to an audiobook of the next novel study in advance. Provide access to audio recordings, read aloud, and partner reading with the current text. Pre-teach vocabulary using the Frayer model or other explicit vocabulary strategies. ● Break it down into smaller steps: Break multi-step directions into smaller steps and highlight each step. Keep the directions visible during the task. Chunk the reading into smaller, more manageable pieces of text. Model and assign students opportunities to rewrite these smaller chunks into their own words (gist statements).
	<p>Action + Expression - How will the student work strategically to accomplish the learning goal? How will they show what they know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty getting started ● Difficulty determining appropriate next step in a process to complete an assignment ● Difficulty evaluating progress toward a goal and adjusting course as necessary ● Unclear on what’s expected and whether their work meets expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide exemplars of expected action: Clarify learning goal by providing work exemplars for each assignment type; model use of exemplar to guide student work before independent practice. ● Provide tools for independent work time: Hand out a math desk reference sheet, provide a read, draw, write template, or a checklist like this one for group discussions. Provide visuals to manage the classroom. ● Monitor progress toward goals: Break projects into smaller sections then set and celebrate mini-deadlines or have students complete a learning goal template for the month ● Support independent writing with framing strategies: Provide thinking maps, sentence stems, paragraph frames, or word banks of key vocabulary or transition phrases. Utilize writing software applications to support efficiency and clarity of writing. Provide opportunities for student partners to read aloud during editing and revising stages.

English language learner - Student that has significant English language challenges due to speaking a different language at home OR due to limited exposure to language-rich environments

Learner Profile	Barriers to Learning	Scaffolds
 <p style="text-align: center;">Imani</p> <p>Imani is a 7th-grade student who has been in the US for 3 years and is in her 3rd school in 3 years. Her limited vocabulary and background knowledge greatly limit her comprehension of grade-level texts. Imani loves playing the piano and talking about her favorite musician. She lives with an older brother and her mother who works long hours. She reports spending most of her time listening to music and chatting with friends on Whatsapp.</p>	<p>Engagement - How will the student be motivated and sustain engagement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure of answers when questioned directly after independent reading activities • Oftentimes, lacks sufficient background knowledge on the theme of the unit • Limited participation when the class discusses the text or word problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vary student groupings: strategic pairing with a classmate during independent reading, structured small-group work, or teacher-led small-group to provide additional guided practice • Give more time to process information: “Stop and Jot” or time to talk with a first language peer (think-pair-share or turn-and-talk) • Concise instruction of background knowledge: Use a photo, a short video, realia, or provide instructional level texts on the same theme as the unit in advance using Readworks or NewsELA. Simple Wikipedia is great as well for multilingual learners and most elementary students. • Translation: Teach students to translate slides or web pages into their native language when necessary or consistently turn on subtitles in the student’s native language when viewing videos on YouTube or other platforms
	<p>Representation - How content is presented? How is the information displayed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low word reading fluency limits comprehension • Difficulty reading and following multistep directions • Difficulty understanding complex text (i.e. varied sentence structure) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit vocabulary instruction: Explicitly teach math vocabulary using this strategy and these math vocabulary cards. Teach sight words using multisensory Snap cards or pre-teach Tier 2 vocabulary for the unit. • Explicit instruction on reading complex text: Model a process to analyze complex text such as the Juicy Language Protocol after reading the research behind it. • Show & Tell: Teacher models while sharing their thinking and does consistent guided practice on the student’s strategy to make sense of the text such as the first read of a Close Read (i.e. gist statements) • Provide visual aids: Use less text-heavy presentations, incorporating videos, photos, virtual manipulatives, or pairing visuals with key vocabulary using Google add-ons such as Unsplash or Flaticon; Use graphic organizers for math and reading
	<p>Action + Expression- How will the student work strategically to accomplish the learning goal? How will they show what they know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear on what’s expected and whether their work meets expectations • Appropriate use of academic language during class discussions and writing is a challenge • Expressing thoughts in writing takes longer than most peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide exemplars or checklists of expected action: Clarify learning goal by providing work exemplars for each assignment type; model use of exemplar to guide student work before independent practice. • Increase use of academic vocabulary: Provide students with access to a word bank or consider these tips when using sentence stems during discussions • Increase writing opportunities: Explicitly teach students how to take notes and give them a note-taking frame with visuals already added; have students activate their thinking or complete a quick write summarizing what they learned in a daily journal; consider these tips for leveraging writing in math • Support independent writing with framing strategies: Provide thinking maps, paragraph frames, or transition phrases.

High achiever/gifted student - Student that stands out in the classroom as one that needs to be challenged academically (i.e. early finisher/bored)

Learner Profile	Barriers to Learning	Scaffolds
 <p>Manuel</p> <p>Manuel is a 2nd-grade student who consistently scores in the proficient range (not advanced) in reading and math on state assessments. He reads on a 5th-grade level. Manuel can complete his work independently, yet often appears unengaged with the content during class. He is very verbal but struggles to organize his thoughts in writing. The teacher reports hearing him talking to friends about skateboarding and Roblox.</p>	<p>Engagement - How will the student be motivated and sustain engagement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears disinterested or does not participate in the discussion possibly due to a lack of challenge • Often used as a helper for other students rather than extending his learning • Is easily frustrated when he struggles/ makes mistakes due to a fixed mindset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap Into Prior Knowledge: Ask students to share their own experiences and ideas about the content and have them connect it to their own lives. Incorporate student interests into lessons (i.e. cell division = Wolverine) • Incorporate Choice: Add choice on writing prompts or a math task (e.g. choose one of the following...) if the remaining problems adequately assess the standard; Leverage the power of choice in early childhood or secondary • Utilize strategic/cluster grouping: Partner with another student who has a high understanding of the content so they can push each other's thinking; provide additional thinking or questioning prompts to support this work. • Create a culture that values mistakes: Incorporate a routine like "My favorite no" that values learning from mistakes; Use growth mindset vs. fixed mindset language (research, language frames)
	<p>Representation - How content is presented? How is the information displayed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May already know the information being covered • Rigor of the text not challenging • Finishes work early and may then disrupt the learning of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a pretest to allow the student to demonstrate mastery (>80%): Use results of pre-assessment to guide whole & small group instruction. Use math tools like Fureka diagnostic mini-assessments, Assistments, or K-5 Fureka links. Implement a Learning Contract if they show early mastery of the goals of a unit. • Challenge them as readers: Use NewsELA or Readworks to increase the Lexile level on articles on the same topic of the core curriculum, extending background knowledge and vocabulary; pair supplemental texts and ask them to compare and contrast to the core texts. • Add depth and complexity to tasks: Choose a higher-level thinking question stem that is more rigorous than the lesson standard's verb. Offer a debatable question and challenge them to defend. • Maintain systems for early finishers: Set up a system and clear, posted visuals for what to do when assigned work is finished, like this one or these (K-2, 3-5, middle school, 9-12).
	<p>Action + Expression - How will the student work strategically to accomplish the learning goal? How will they show what they know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resist completing all of the practice tasks when they already have a high mastery level • May not be clear on the teacher's expectations • Have difficulty evaluating whether their work meets expectations • Clearly conveying complex ideas in writing is challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Difficult First: Offer the most difficult problems/tasks first and if they get them right, students get credit for all of the practice. This frees up time to work on more challenging work. • What's the First Thing? Give students a task and a clear starting point. Cold call on students and ask "What's the first thing you're going to do?" before releasing for their independent work. • Provide self-checking materials: Give students a copy of an exemplar written response or math problem. Ask them to compare their response to the exemplar. Have them discuss in pairs or in writing, either "why their answer was accurate/inaccurate" OR "Summarize what made the exemplar response a great example" • "Write First, Talk Second" or "Talk First, Write Second" In order for students to best show what (and why) they know in writing, set up two stations and give them an option of choosing whether to talk or write first. Add in a few minutes after stations for students to revise their writing. This could also be done in math.