

THE TEACHERS GUIDE



DRAFTED BY *Better Days*



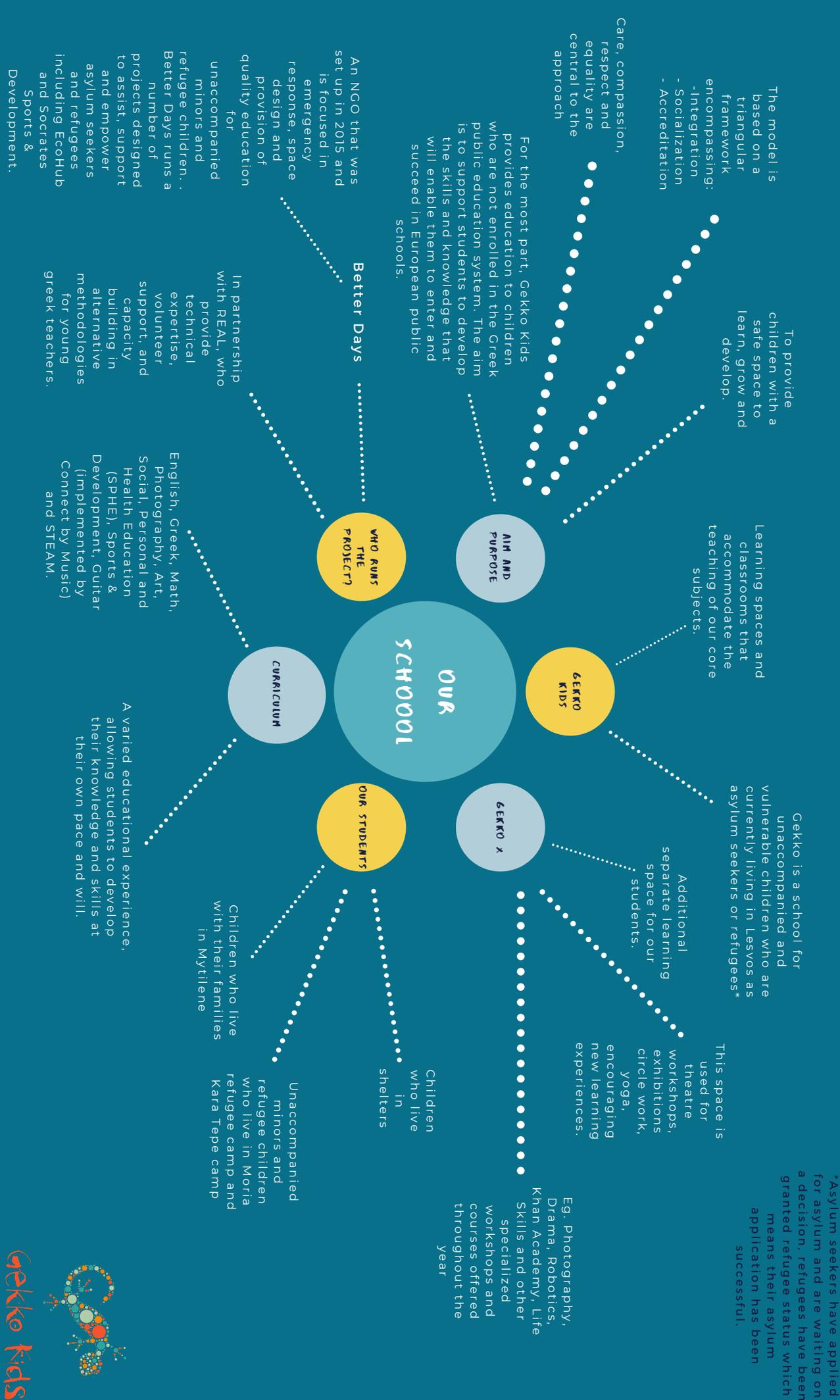


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WHAT WE'RE COVERING

Welcome to Better Days. This guide is for anyone who teaches at Gekko Kids and Gekko X, including short and long-term volunteers and paid employees. Following several years of research in education for displaced communities living in Greece we believe this is the key to effective teaching for refugee children on the move. We expect that our volunteers and staff strive to be the best they can be. To do so you must challenge out-dated and traditional notions of classroom formation and teaching methods. So open your mind and brace yourself for what follows.

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*Asylum seekers have applied for asylum and are waiting on a decision. refugees have been granted refugee status which means their asylum application has been successful.

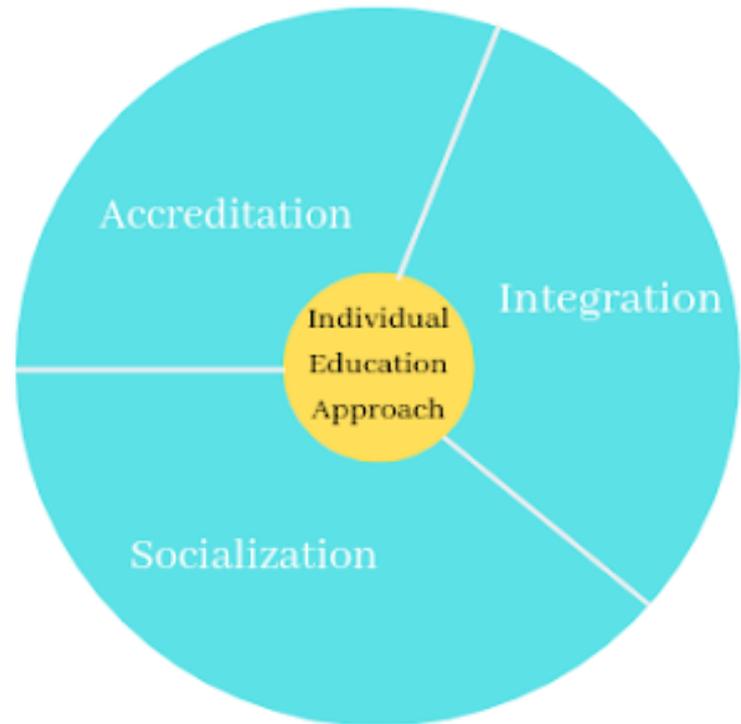
Eg. Photography, Drama, Robotics, Khan Academy, Life Skills and other specialized workshops and courses offered throughout the year



Gekko Kids PEDAGOGICAL OBJECTIVES

BETTER DAYS APPROACH TO INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION

1. To achieve individualized development & academic growth.
2. Facilitate integration into the host community & public school system.
3. Help them mature emotionally & socially.
4. Sharpen their ability to communicate, find their place in the world and choose their voice.
5. Enable accreditation, certification & unleash their potential.



Children who have been exposed to trauma or multiple traumatic experiences have less capacity to process things; new challenges can become very complicated for them. Trauma becomes a veil that doesn't allow them to see all the good around them, all the good inside of them. Essentially, it makes them less permeable to knowledge.

The student becomes 'the subject' of our education approach. During registration we aim to identify the student's individual characteristics and invite them to help us construct their educational profile. This is a very participatory process all the way. Our main priority is to provide ALL students with a positive experience on education, awaken curiosity, challenge biases and build confidence.

BLUEPRINT FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS

<p>Build a Culture of Reciprocity</p> <p>The same support I need from my teachers is the same support that my teachers need from you.</p>	<p>Know Your Audience in Context</p> <p>You think you see me, but do you see where I live.</p>	<p>Create a SAFE Environment</p> <p>I just need to know you are there when I need a place to run.</p>
<p>Foster Healthy Relationships</p> <p>You see me, you see where I live, and you want to be a part.</p>	<p>Understand the Impact of Trauma</p> <p>You recognize my pain.</p>	<p>Identify Strengths and Passions</p> <p>When you take the time to help me discover my uniqueness, I hear how special I am.</p>
<p>Provide Instructive Feedback</p> <p>When you coach me to that special place, it helps me navigate past some of the pain.</p>	<p>Facilitate Front-Brain Activities</p> <p>Anchoring me to what is special about me helps build my confidence and self-efficacy.</p>	<p>Engage Agency</p> <p>I love the contribution I make when I am engaging in what is special about me.</p>

IMAGINAL Education Group | Dr. Ivy Bonk © 2018

socrates

A FOOTBALL COURSE FOR UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN USING SEL METHODOLOGY AND MINDFULNESS TO ENABLE HEALING AND EMPOWER POSITIVE CHANGE IN YOUNG ATHLETES. TO MEET SOCRATES OBJECTIVES WE HAVE CUSTOMIZED A SEPARATE PROGRAM. TO FIND OUT MORE READ SOCRATES REPORT 2019



ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES - CHANGING OUR APPROACH



Our main goals are to restore human dignity and to promote positive experiences and normalcy. Our objectives have humble and realistic intentions: we do not aspire to completely heal the beneficiaries we work with, but to reduce the numbers of students suffering from anxiety, stress and depression. If we help our students identify their emotions we can train them to deal with them. These children enter Gekko Kids in a vulnerable state of mind, and we have the foremost responsibility of facilitating a healing process (with the resources we have), whilst acknowledging the barriers their current situation poses to education as well as to any healing process. Only then we can unleash their true potential and support them in meeting their academic goals.



'A positive environment. That's our foundation. We begin with a space and from here we cultivate an environment that can promote positive experiences, safety, and support.'

Andrew Foley, Better Days Executive Director
TedX The Capital T-Truth of Education, 2019

https://www.ted.com/talks/andrew_foley_the_capital_t_truth_of_education

IEPs

AND PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Better Days believes both in Individualized Education as well as in offering Individual Educational Plans for vulnerable cases. This individualized approach to education lies within the core of our pedagogical philosophy. The term personalized learning, or personalization, refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students.

The IEP (Individual Educational Plan) is a powerful social education tool that states every child's (PSS case) analysis of needs and objectives to achieve in a period of 3-6 months or more. A successful individual intervention requires that the School Counselor and educators work closely together to facilitate the student's social & emotional development & academic growth. The educators work from a pedagogical perspective while the School Counselor works with thoughts, behavior, emotions, and beliefs. Successful implementation of the IEP is monitored through the use of indicators (objectives per area of focus) which allow us to evaluate progress for each individual educational plan. The student will be expected to work with the school counselor for a minimum of 3 months for a successful intervention.



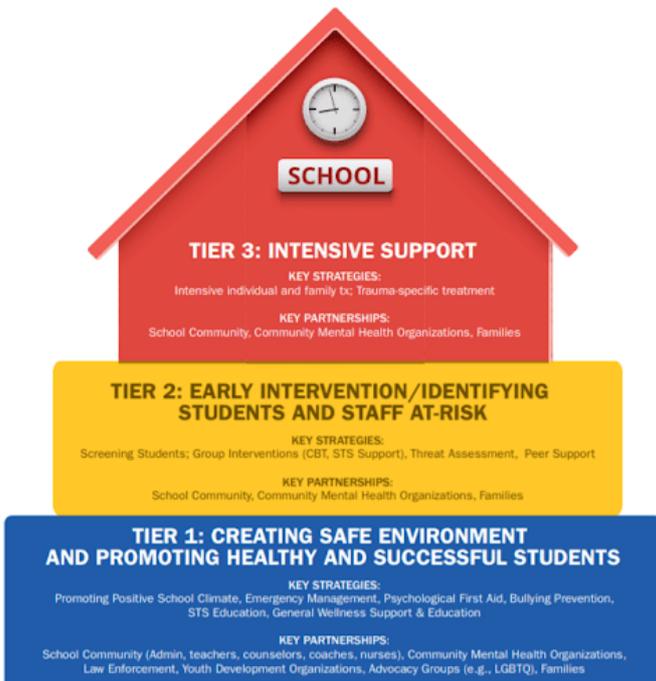
PSS

AND COUNSELLING

The wellbeing of our beneficiaries is why we have a School Counselor operating at Gekko. Her commitment to development and implementation of PSS programming is paramount. Her responsibility is to show a true respect for each individual's process, adaptability to each individual's rhythm and frequencies, and equanimity when facing unique individual needs. The School Counselor provides insightful counseling and useful techniques that the children can implement in their difficult environment. The counseling sessions' content promotes self-knowledge, provides ways to cope with feelings and facilitates individual resolutions in order to find some peace, some light through new perspectives. For children to become explorers of their own inner and outer realities, the School Counselor must function as a facilitator to the process, letting the children choose their own paths. The School Counselor designs strategies for all children depending on their demands and needs. Bonding professionally and humanly is the key in any psychosocial interaction that aims to be successful and healthy.

A PSS program has been customized for Gekko Kids and it entails mindfulness sessions to cope with anxiety, social skills groups to work on behavior, circle of girls to talk about gender-sensitive topics, grief support groups to cope with loss, emotional groups to find relief and individual sessions for further and specific support.

OUR AIM IS TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE WHERE THE CHILDREN CAN LET THEIR GUARD DOWN AND FEEL CALM, ACCEPTED, CARED ABOUT AND PROTECTED, SO THAT OTHER PROCESSES, SUCH AS EDUCATION, PLAY-BASED LEARNING AND OTHER HEALING ACTIVITIES CAN TAKE ROOT.



SEL

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING



Social Emotional Learning provides a safe space of equal fun and learning. This participative methodology creates dynamics based on equality, respect, freedom and boundaries to work on social skills and emotional education. It is the perfect strategy when it comes out of dealing with traumatized population because of its empowering boost.

Social Emotional Learning is a tool to bring education to life, making it an experience rather than a routine. SEL manifests itself via empowerment, by shifting control from the teacher to the student. The student, in traditional education, is considered the object, whereas in an SEL-oriented classroom, the student becomes the subject. In others words, SEL breaks through the stereotype of the teacher teaching in front of a whiteboard and recognizes the power of the student as a significant stakeholder in a classroom, encouraging the impact of voice and of felt experiences. The classroom becomes a place to build learning partnerships, where the teacher and the student co-create content and guide the curriculum together. SEL methodologies encourage the student to participate at parallel levels, not only by absorbing lessons, but also by expressing needs and emotions.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TO INSPIRE YOUR TEACHING AT GEKKO

IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings
https://www.unicef.org/protection/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf

How Social and Emotional Learning Transforms Classrooms
https://greatertgood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_social_emotional_learning_transforms_classrooms

IEPs - Tips for Teachers
<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/iep-teachers.html>

Video - IRC "Educating the Youngest Refugees"
<https://www.rescue.org/video/60-minutes-educating-youngest-refugees>



CLASS STRUCTURE

MAKE SURE YOU'RE COVERING THE BASES

1. Tell them the objectives *'today we will..!'*
2. Check for prior knowledge- KWL, Brainstorm, Think Pair Share etc.
3. Recap before teaching vocabulary
4. Lesson content
5. Consistent assessment during delivery of the lesson eg. Questioning, recaps.
6. Review learning and check comprehension - thumbs up/ traffic light system/ exit ticket/ 3-2-1 (more info p.13)



& MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

TO ENSURE A CALM AND
FOCUSSED ENVIRONEMENT

THE 'HANDS UP' RULE

A simple and effective way of gaining students' attention without shouting or causing more noise is to teach students to raise their hand and stop talking when they see you standing with your hand raised. Once they see you they should also raise their hand. When other students spot the teacher and students with raised hands they should also raise their hand and stop speaking. The hands up technique has a ripple effect which will effectively communicate to even large groups that their attention and silence is sought. This make take some practice initially but students will form the habit of recognizing this non verbal cue quickly. Students who have no or low levels of language will also be able to understand this signal with little explanation.

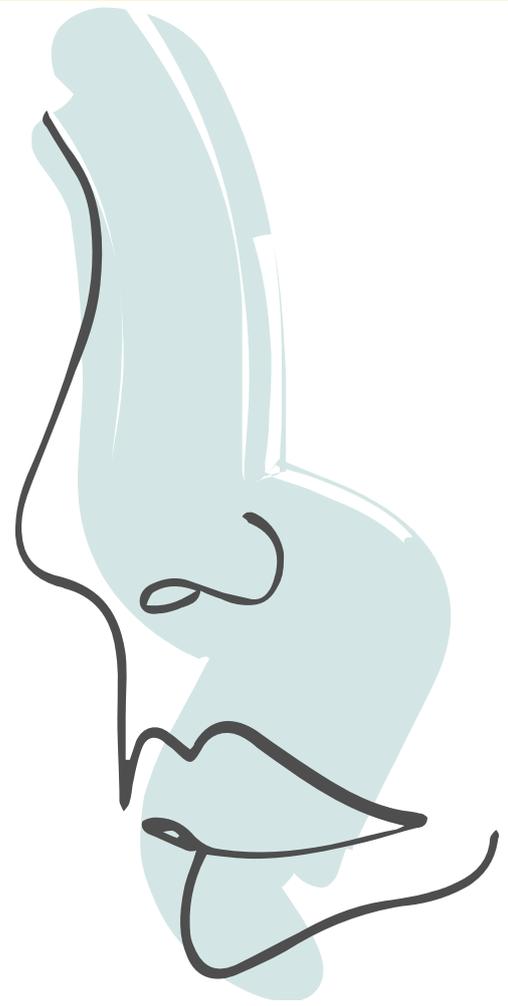


MORE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

ENCOURAGING GOOD BEHAVIOUR

ENSURING SILENCE WHEN ANOTHER STUDENT IS RESPONDING OR SPEAKING

Teaching students to listen to one another is key to building relationships and ensuring that students feel safe participating in activities in class. It is important that all students can hear when a student is speaking or responding to a question and they may need to be reminded to listen and be quiet. As the teacher, it is important that you consistently follow this protocol. This communicates to all students that you value what students have to say.



CREATING A CLASSROOM CHARTER AND REFERRING TO IT IN CLASS

If you will be working with the same group of students for an extended time it is useful to spend time working with them as a group to agree on the code of conduct for the classroom. Working together, students can identify the kind of behaviour they expect from each other and the teacher. The charter may include statements like “We listen to one another when speaking.” “We participate in class activities.” “We treat each other with respect.” Etc. The charter can be displayed on the wall in the classroom and may be referred to in light of any issues. Displaying the charter on the wall reminds students that they have responsibilities and ownership over what happens in their classroom.

MORE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES



MODEL THE BEHAVIOUR YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR STUDENTS TO PRACTICE

Students will take their cue from you as the teacher. If you shout at others, they will feel that they can also behave this way in the classroom. Remember to greet your students, praise them when possible and speak calmly. If you break the class charter you should acknowledge your mistake and apologise.

THANK YOUR STUDENTS AT THE END OF EVERY CLASS

Thank your students everyday for their attendance in your class. You have the privilege of working with a very special and motivated group of young people, acknowledge it and them often and overtly!



Gekko Kids

Speak slowly and clearly

Simplify your language

Speak in short sentences

Use actions and your hands to help communicate

Repeat instructions

Use visuals where possible

Ask other students to help with translating

Allow students to work on writing tasks in silence (don't speak during this time)

TIPS FOR OVERCOMING A LANGUAGE BARRIER

WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE



TEACHING TECHNIQUES

WE USE AT GEKKO KIDS

ACTIVE LEARNING

Active learning engages students as active participants in the learning process. It is a student-centred approach to teaching and learning, beginning with students and involving them in meaningful activities that support their learning. This is in contrast to a traditional teacher-led approach which places the teacher as the “expert” who disseminates knowledge, sets tasks and decides the entire learning process, without meaningful/significant input from students.

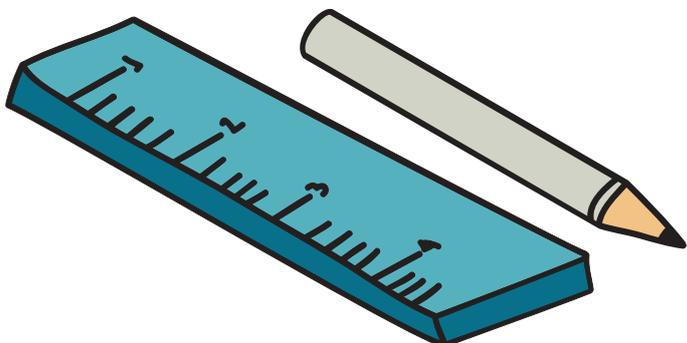


WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATION?

Differentiation allows for adapted content and methodologies which take account of students with differing abilities. No two children are alike. To differentiate effectively and support individual and diverse students in the classroom the teacher is required to be flexible in their approach in order to adjust:

- What students will learn (content)
- How students will learn (process)
- How they will demonstrate their learning (product)

HEACOX (2002) DEFINES DIFFERENTIATION AS 'CHANGING THE PACE, LEVEL OR KIND OF INSTRUCTION YOU PROVIDE IN RESPONSE TO INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS' NEEDS, STYLES OR INTERESTS'.



WORKING WITH MIXED ABILITY GROUPS

(DIFFERENTIATING YOUR TEACHING)

Mixed ability teaching is the practice of teaching to a group with different levels of competence and understanding of a subject. While teaching mixed ability groups in a classroom is more challenging for teachers, it is considered a best practice in educational environments. This is because the experience of being in a classroom with more advanced peers results in the teacher setting higher expectations for all students and increases learning opportunities for less advanced students. More advanced students also benefit from mixed ability settings as teaching others helps to consolidate their learning. While some banding of students will apply for certain subjects in Gekko (separating students into beginners, intermediate and advanced for languages for example), teachers should expect and prepare for teaching Mixed Ability classes at Gekko.

DIFFERENTIATION TECHNIQUES

TO HELP THE STUDENTS GET THE MOST OUT OF CLASS

THERE ARE SOME STRATEGIES THAT WILL HELP YOU TO DIFFERENTIATE AND TEACH MIXED ABILITY CLASSES INCLUDING:

Peer teaching- assigning more advanced students as teaching assistants and giving them specific tasks to assist other students once they have completed their own work

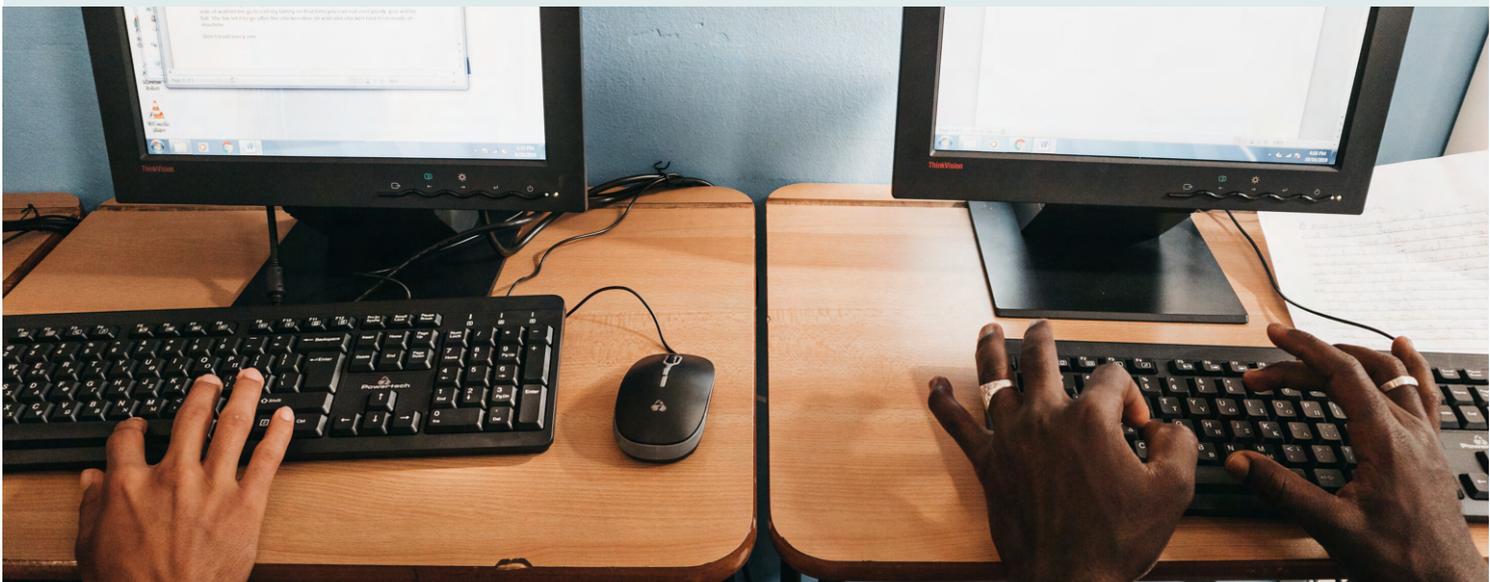
Differentiation- preparing additional/ more advanced and more basic material to meet the needs of all students (using different worksheets is an effective way of doing this)

Creating different options for the completion of class work/ projects- can students show their learning by creating posters, doing an oral presentation, creating a video, composing a written piece

Applying different learning intentions for class groups- using all, most, some eg.

NOTE

Mixed ability pairing/ group work- assigning advanced and less advanced students to work together where they can help each other. It is important that all students feel a sense of achievement in each class and are commended for their effort to learn rather than the result of a specific task. Students will not always complete every task assigned to them.



DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING STRATEGY 1: ONGOING ASSESSMENT IN LESSON

Aim: To involve students in their own learning.

When would you use this? When the teacher needs to assess understanding of content or methodology.

Method: Students hold up red, orange or green cards to indicate their understanding of the lesson so far. Alternatively, students use thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs level to do likewise.

- Red or thumbs down: Can't do it / don't understand
- Orange or thumbs level: Not sure
- Green or thumbs up: Can do this / understand

The teacher must create the cards and keep them in the class for use throughout the day.

DIFFERENTIATION TECHNIQUES

DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING STRATEGY 3: THINK-PAIR-SHARE

Aim: To encourage students to act as resources for each other.

When would you use this? When open-ended / challenging questions have been posed.

Method: Learners are posed a question, given time to think individually, then time to discuss ideas with a partner and finally they share their ideas with the rest of the class. Pairs could be organised so as to allow those of similar ability to work together.

However, mixed ability teaching is based on children of mixed ability working together as much as possible.

DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING STRATEGY 2: INCREASE WAIT TIME / THINKING TIME

Aim: To allow students to formulate answers in their own time.

When would you use this? At any stage during the lesson

Method: Increase 'wait time / thinking time' for learner response to at least 5 seconds. This allows learners to answer open questions and not those simply based on recalled facts. Another technique involves learners recording their ideas on mini-whiteboards or paper before displaying their answers.



GEKKO CLASSROOM TIPS

- Maintain a professional relationship with your students (hugging and other displays of physical affection are inappropriate)
- Acknowledge students' absence from class without blame (eg. We missed you yesterday in class, I'm glad to see you again today)
- Plan lessons and consider carefully the materials you use in class with students (Don't use content that could potentially trigger trauma for students- violence, guns, drowning, sinking ships etc.)
- Ensure your and your students' safety at all times (This includes not being alone with a student behind a closed door, always keep the door open if you are working with a student one-on-one)
- Keep a record of attendance for every class
- Engage in reflective practice (record your observations, learning, reflections and your students' progress after each lesson and use this information to plan for future lessons)
- Refer any potential issues or concerns about students to the PSS Manager
- Thank your students everyday for their attendance, effort and work in your class.

- Welcome and greet your students by name at the beginning of every class even/especially if they are late!
- Be on time for your classes (you should ideally be in the classroom, prepared and ready to begin your lesson before your students arrive)
- Always speak to students in a calm and respectful tone (sarcasm and raised voices should never be used)
- Be mindful of sensitive topics (eg. Don't ask questions about family members or their journey to Lesvos)
- Notice and praise the effort made by students (not just the result)



REMEMBER, IF THE STUDENTS CAN'T LEARN THE WAY YOU TEACH, CHANGE THE WAY YOU TEACH! IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A TEACHER TO RESPOND TO THEIR NEEDS AND NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.



EcoHub Eco-Literacy

Working with School of Peace since 2017 at OHF, we have worked with hundreds of younger children 6-18yrs and adults providing ecological literacy and healing activities, well as training on natural cosmetology, permacultural and gardening skills. Find more about our educational methods and work using the garden as a classroom at 'EcoHub 20018' & 'EcoHub 2019' or at www.medium.com:

Is this what Green Humanitarian Aid looks like?
<https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/is-this-how-green-humanitarian-aid-looks-like-2b54c3f82c1b>

'2. Education Refined in a Greenhouse',
<https://medium.com/@betterdaysngo/no-textbook-no-classroom-education-redefined-in-a-greenhouse-10acbf205b1>

Written by Rachael Le Clear, Better Days EcoHub Manager

'We are delighted to be back in the classroom and look forward to the dirty hands, the sunny smiles, the insects and other creepy crawlers, and the discoveries this season will bring: new sights, new sounds, new smells, and new flavors! And, interwoven among them, new connections between people and nature, and of new bridges between cultures as we come together to learn as one'

Quote from EcoHub Final Report 2029.

