

The Hardy Educator Toolkit

TIPS AND TREASURES FOR EDUCATORS



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DIFFERENTIATION: SUPPORTING STALLED LEARNERS

When curriculum pace caters primarily to students needing extra support, on-grade-level learners may find the work repetitive and lack the intellectual stimulation they crave, leading to disengagement and a decline in

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CHOICE BOARDS

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TIERED ASSIGNMENTS

Tiered assignments are variations on a key learning objective to meet the needs of diverse learners. They offer options in complexity, support, or product.

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DIFFERENTIATION: STALLED LEARNERS

Effective learning experiences cater to the diverse needs and interests of all students in the classroom. So how can we design lessons that challenge and engage both on grade-level and advanced learners in our classrooms? Differentiated instruction involves giving students challenging but achievable tasks that cater to their strengths and interests, which can improve learning outcomes.

To learn more about the two differentiation strategies that follow, visit <https://hardyedlearningsolutions.org/resources> and check of the free asynchronous module: **Differentiation: Supporting Stalled Learners - Engaging On-Grade Level & Advanced Learners.**

CHOICE BOARDS

What: Choice boards are visual learning menus offering students **multiple engaging activities** to demonstrate understanding or practice a skill. Think grids or squares filled with options!

How: Design the board with clear categories (e.g., difficulty, learning style) and varied activities (e.g., writing, creating, presenting). Let **students choose** a set number of activities (based on time and learning goals).

Why: Choice boards **boost engagement** by catering to different learning styles and interests. They promote **ownership** of learning as students make choices. They also allow for **differentiation** by offering options at varying learning levels.

[CLICK HERE](#) to make your own choice board in under 5 minutes!

Rock Cycle Choice Board

| Option | Assignment Title | Assignment Description |
|--------|-------------------------|--|
| A | Rock Comic Strip | Create a comic strip showing the stages of the rock cycle using illustrations and captions. |
| B | Rock Cycle Song | Write and perform a song explaining the rock cycle and its processes. |
| C | Rock Cycle Diagram | Draw and label a diagram illustrating the different processes of the rock cycle. |
| D | Virtual Rock Collection | Create a digital presentation showcasing different types of rocks involved in the rock cycle. |
| E | Rock Cycle Story | Write a narrative story from the perspective of a rock going through the various stages of the rock cycle. |
| F | Rock Cycle Timeline | Create a timeline depicting the sequence of events in the rock cycle. |
| G | Rock Cycle Diorama | Build a diorama representing the rock cycle stages with labeled elements. |
| H | Rock Cycle Quiz | Develop a quiz with questions related to the processes and types of rocks in the rock cycle. |
| I | Rock Cycle Rap | Write and perform a rap song explaining the different stages and transformations in the rock cycle. |



TIERED ASSIGNMENTS

What: Tiered assignments are variations on a key learning objective to meet the needs of diverse learners. They offer options in **complexity, support, or product**.




How: Identify the key learning objective, then create 3 tiers with tasks that vary in:

- **Complexity:** Tier 1 (remember/understand), Tier 2 (apply/analyze), Tier 3 (evaluate/create)
- **Support:** Tier 1 (more scaffolding), Tier 2 (some to little scaffolding), Tier 3 (independent work)
- **Product:** Tier 1 (drawing/written response), Tier 2 (presentation), Tier 3 (research paper)

Why: Tiered assignments **promote equity** by ensuring all students learn the essential concepts **at the appropriate challenge level** for their individual needs. This boosts engagement and fosters a classroom environment that values diversity in learning styles and paces.

[CLICK HERE](#) to make your own tiered assignment in under 5 minutes!

The Pythagorean Theorem Rescue!

| Spice level | Your Mission: You're a team of emergency responders! Your job is to use your knowledge of the Pythagorean Theorem to save the day in various rescue scenarios. Choose your spice level. |
|---|---|
|  MILD | <p>Directions: Draw a diagram for each situation below and label all three sides. Put a box on your final answer for each one and show your work.</p> <p>Lost Backpacker: A hiker gets lost in the woods and needs to signal for help with a fire. They have two sticks: one 3 meters long and another 4 meters long. To create a stable signal fire, they need to lash the sticks together in a right angle. What is the minimum length of rope they need to secure the sticks together at the right angle? (Hint: This is the hypotenuse!)</p> <p>Ladder Length: You need to reach a window on the second floor of a burning building. The window is 6 meters high, and the safe distance you can place the ladder from the building is 4 meters. How long must the ladder be to safely reach the window?</p> |
|  SPICY | <p>Directions: Show your work and clearly label your final answer. Write at least one paragraph for each situation explaining how you used the Pythagorean theorem to solve it.</p> <p>Hidden Treasure: A treasure map indicates a buried chest located at a point marked by an X. You stand 8 meters from the base of a tall palm tree and 15 meters away from the X. The top of the palm tree directly above the chest is 20 meters high. How far is the chest buried from the base of the palm tree? (Hint: Imagine a right triangle formed by you, the palm tree's base, the palm tree, and the top of the palm tree directly above the chest.)</p> <p>Rafting Challenge: You're on a white-water rafting trip. To avoid a dangerous rapid, you need to steer the raft across the river at a 45-degree angle. The river is 30 meters wide. How far downstream will you be after crossing the river? (Hint: Imagine the riverbank, your starting point, and your endpoint downstream forming a right triangle.)</p> |
|  HOT | <p>Directions: See below.</p> <p>Design a Rescue: You encounter a unique rescue situation that requires the Pythagorean Theorem. Sketch the scenario and explain how you would use the theorem to determine a missing side length to complete the rescue.</p> <p>Real-World Rescue Research: Find a news story or historical event where the Pythagorean Theorem was used in a real-life rescue. Write a short summary explaining the situation and how the theorem played a role. Don't forget to include a link to the original article.</p> |

How To Make Your Own Choice Board & Tiered Assignments In Under 5 Minutes

1. Visit Magic Tools' [Choice Board Generator \(UDL\)](#)
 2. Sign in/up (free)
 3. Create!
1. Make a copy of [this template](#) and rename it
 2. Go to [Gemini](#) and sign in/up (free)
 3. Follow the directions in the [comments of this document!](#)