## How Do You Individualize?

Three strategies for supporting every learner

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Choices allow children in·di·vid·u·al·ize: to take an active role in to adapt to the needs or Offer Choices their learning. Making decisions increases their special circumstances sense of responsibility for of an individual. their daily activities. Create activities and offer new materials in learning centers. Invite children to choose which center to visit and decide what to do there. For example, be-Respect children's choices by tures make an activity, fore a field trip to allowing them plenty of time to a nearby grocery the classroom, and the carry out their plans and finish store, Mr. Robinson reviewed words related to grocery that can be customized stores with Darnell so he can under-For example, 4-year-old Kaitlin strugstand what the gles with fine motor tasks. Her teacher needs, and interests. grocer says. includes a counting activity using tweezers and cotton balls in the math center. Kaitlin chooses to stay at the center until she masters the use of the tool. **Universal Design** The Universal Design for Learning approach ensures that all children have opportunities to participate and learn. Create an environment and plan activities that promote all chilfor Learning (UDL) engagement, representation, and expression

More specialized individualization, intensity, and frequency of instruction Teachers, families, and specialized professionals, such as speech and hearing therapists, work together to individualize help for children who are still struggling Tier 2 Teachers modify and adapt teaching for children who have not yet mastered the skill. Tier 1 Less specialized individualization, All children receive developmentally intensity, and frequency appropriate education. of instruction Gather information from many sources over time Look for learning patterns Make decisions based on your observations Follow developmentally appropriate practices Observe how the children react to your teaching

## **Response to Intervention (RTI)**

RTI is a three-tier framework that helps teachers adapt the level and intensity of instruction and supports to match the needs of individual children. Teachers use this framework to identify children's abilities and needs and plan an appropriate program.

For example, after Ms. McKeever offers manipulatives and activities so the preschoolers can explore counting, Nisha and Tariq still struggle. After Ms. McKeever provides more individualized attention to the pair, Tariq understands the concepts. When Nisha still struggles, Ms. McKeever meets with her family and school professionals to develop more individualized help.

## Learn more about these strategies

- Beneke, S.J., & M.M. Ostrosky. 2013. "The Potential for the Project Approach to Support Diverse Young Learners." Young Children 68 (2): 22-28.
- Gadzikowski, A. 2013. "Differentiation Strategies for Exceptionally Bright Children." Young Children 68 (2): 8–14.
- Lindeman, K.W. 2013. "Response to Intervention and Early Childhood Best Practices: Working Hand in Hand So All Children Can Learn." Young Children 68 (2): 16–21.

## EFERENCE

DEC (Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children), NAEYC, & NHSA (National Head Start Association). 2013. "Frameworks for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood: Description and Implications." Missoula, MT: DEC; Washington, DC: NAEYC; Alexandria, VA: NHSA. www.naeyc.org/content/frameworks-response-intervention.

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