The Junior Certificate School Programme
Mixed Ability Teaching
Laois Education Centre
Agenda

Mixed Ability

JCSP Overview Updates
K-W-L Research and Rationale
Coffee and Book Display

Differentiation: Sample Lessons
Planning for Mixed Ability
Lunch

Sharing Practice
Assessment
Conclusion and Evaluations

Junior Certificate School Programme
What is the JCSP?

A Social Inclusion Programme

The JCSP is an intervention within the Junior Cycle aimed at those students who are identified as being at risk of leaving school early perhaps without completing The Junior Certificate.

All JCSP Students sit the Junior Cert examinations
Established 1979 National Programme 1996

236 schools & centres
Approx. 15,000 students

Part of School Support Programme DEIS

Targets potential early school leavers

69%
JCSP - AIMS of the Programme

To retain students

To build strong and positive learning foundations

To bridge the gap

To make school relevant and accessible to young people who find it difficult to cope with the school system.
JCSP - Elements of the Framework

Teaching team

Profiling

Success, affirmation and celebrations

Active learning cross-curricular outdoor education

Literacy and numeracy strategy

Initiatives

Parents

Framework supports mixed ability
The JCSP Programme promotes:

- Whole school approach
- Active teaching methodologies
- Student centred learning
- Engaging students in relevant real life experiences

The JCSP Profiling Framework is a student focused framework to support differentiation in the mixed Ability Classroom
The JCSP Programme targets improvement in all identified areas of need.
Updates

• Mixed Ability Teaching and Learning Group
• Statement review – History, Home Economics, Science, Maths
• New Maths statements aligned with Project Maths (Common Introductory Course)
• Statements and new JC
• Statement tracker
# K-W-L on Mixed Ability

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I Know</th>
<th>What I Want to Know</th>
<th>What I Have Learned</th>
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Practice in schools

- Streaming
- Mixed Ability
- Banding / Setting
Definition of Mixed Ability Classroom

A very clear difference in **academic** ability among the students

Clear differences in **learning style**, speed and aptitude among the students

Different levels of **interest** and **motivation**

Clear differences in the students’ **background knowledge**, knowledge of the world and their skills and talents in other areas
Rationale for Mixed Ability

- Disappearance of ‘the problem class’
- Student motivation
- Individual needs met more efficiently
- Attainment levels
- Teacher benefits
‘Remedial classes keep remedial students remedial’

- Decline in teacher expectations
- Materials are oversimplified
- Level of discourse is inadequate
- Pace slackens considerably

Research shows that moving struggling learners to homogeneous groups away from regular class results in:

‘The Differentiated Classroom’ Carol Ann Tomlinson
Rationale Against Mixed Ability

- The more able not extended sufficiently
- The less able can’t keep up
- Teachers don’t have the skills e.g to teach literacy
- More work in setting tasks for different levels
- Classroom management
- Not enough time to plan
- Not enough resources
- The changing role of the teacher
Emer Smyth and Selina McCoy 2011
Streaming - Research

Social Class Divide

- Streaming is found to account for part of the social class gap in academic achievement.

Working class young people achieve lower exam grades

- More likely to attend schools where streaming is used
- Likely to be allocated to lower stream classes in these schools

(smyth et al, 2007)
Junior Certificate School Programme

Setting - Research

Negatives

Greater inequality in results

Very little difference in average scores

Issues around differentiation

Weak positive results for higher sets

Lower sets lower grades
Mixed Ability in Irish Schools

(Smyth et al, 2007, 2011)

Use of mixed ability base classes in Irish second level schools has increased over time

Majority of schools allocate students to set groups for at least some subjects (generally maths, English and Irish and sometimes a foreign language)

Teacher and student expectations in shaping the proportion of students taking higher level
Students in streamed schools, especially students in lower streams, make less progress in reading and maths.

Introducing Mixed Ability classes does not necessarily result in Mixed Ability teaching.

Some teachers of Mixed Ability tend to teach to the “middle stream in the class”.
Conclusions of research

- Move away from streaming
- Postpone decisions about higher level
- Support for differentiation within the classroom
Approaches that enhance student outcomes

- Goal setting
- Classroom focus
- Challenging material
- Active engagement
- Group work
- Formative assessment
- Expectations
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<th>All students must</th>
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<th>Some students could (Use choice)</th>
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The Teaching and Learning Quality Framework

Teaching and Learning

Learner outcomes
- Attainment of subject and programme objectives

Learning experiences
- Learning environment
- Engagement in learning
- Learning to learn

Teachers’ practice
- Preparation for teaching
- Teaching approaches
- Management of students
- Assessment

Theme
Sub-themes
The Exceptionally Able

“...good practice for exceptionally able students is also good practice for all students and can improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school”

Schools should consider 5-10% of its school population as being in this cohort irrespective of the school context.
Central to success in Mixed Ability classroom

Why do we differentiate?

What is differentiation?

Who do we differentiate for?

How do we differentiate?
Mixed Ability Teaching

What is differentiation?
Differentiation

Tomlinson (1999) suggests that at its most basic level, differentiating instruction means ‘shaking up’ what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas and expressing what they learn.

This means that a range of learning possibilities is available for students to acquire the content, understand the information and meet the learning objectives.
Problems in Mixed Ability Classrooms

‘One size fits all’ won’t work

Teachers must be prepared for struggling learners in a mixed ability setting. They will not succeed by osmosis.

Differentiated materials and approaches must be used to engage them in learning.

Advanced learners should not be given ‘extra’ workload, or be asked to act as peer coaches throughout the day.

No growth for the advanced learner will be achieved with this approach.
Group work
JCSP
LCVP
Extra Curricular
Resource & LS

Time
Planning
Curriculum pressures
Materials
Changing practice
(students & teachers)
New staff induction to
differentiated practice
Upskill in methodologies

Subject Dept
SEN Link
Build Differentiated
resource bank
ICT to share resources

Classroom
management
Resources
Perseverence (5-10
years)
JCSP Promoting Mixed Ability

Inclusion

Active Learning

JCSP Initiatives

Reading Culture

Differentiation

AFL

Positive behaviour
Who do we differentiate for?
Know who you are teaching

An important element of **Differentiation** is that you get to know as much as you can about the individual students in your class.

JCSP Profiling enables you to learn about the strengths of your students and the areas to target for improvement.

Profiling enables teachers to plan where to start a lesson.
Student Profile

• Learning styles/interest questionnaires to students

• Google forms
How do we differentiate?
Teachers can differentiate...

...according to their students’

Adapted from *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (Tomlinson, 1999)
Learning Outcomes

**Know**
- Facts
- Vocabulary
- Definitions
- Information

**Understand**
- Concepts
- Essential Truths
- Big Ideas

**Do**
- Skills
- Thinking
- Planning
- Synthesis
Differentiation

How?

Assessment for Learning
Pre Assessment is Key

Knowing the ‘readiness’ of the student

Tapping into students’ prior knowledge

All instruction should be based on pre assessment
Assessment for Learning
Pre-Assessment

- KWL
- Show Me Boards
- Think Pair Share
- Questioning
- Keyword Activities
- Interest
- Motivation
Think Pair Share

Describe to the person beside you how you have used any pre-assessment methodology.
Differentiation: Adapting the Content

- Prior Knowledge
- Key Concepts
- Vocabulary: Access to the curriculum
- Readability: Scaffold the learning
- Tiered Materials
- Statements
- Must
- Should
- Could
Profiling in mixed ability settings – examples from schools

• Use JCSP statements with all students
  – *school awards statements to all students.*
  – *JCSP students in addition receive Final Profile.*
  – *Use the Profile Tracker to record progress.*

• Use Statements with JCSP Students – groups

• JCSP students take 3 option subjects of 4

• JCSP students withdrawn at different time each week to work on statements and initiatives
Inclusive Model

Timetabled Meetings
- Entire class profiled awarded by school
- JCSP Students get Final Profile (use profile tracker)
- All Student do Initiatives
- Numeracy
- Literacy

JCSP students meet coordinator as group
JCSP Supporting Teaching and Learning

Welcome to JCSP
Welcome to the new look JCSP Literacy and Numeracy website. We hope that you will find it interesting and useful. You will find resources and materials that you may find useful along with research. The resources have been developed specifically with second level students in mind, aimed at supplementing the textbooks and enhancing the teaching and learning in schools.

Literacy
- Literacy initiatives
- Planning Guidelines
- JCSP Resources
- Make a Book
- Accelerated Reading

Numeracy
- Initiatives
- Planning Guidelines
- JCSP Resources
- Reports

Library
- About the Project
- Library Project Highlights
- Research
- School Libraries/Helpful Hints
- Library Project Resources

http://www.jcspliteracy.ie
Differentiation: Adapting the Process

- One to One
- Team Teaching
- Peer Tutoring
- Whole Class Direct Instruction
- Co-operative Learning
- ICT

Organisational changes
Group-work in the Mixed Ability Classroom
Groups can be

- Random – student/teacher selected
- Friendship – student selected
- Interest
- Mixed ability
- Ability
Making sure everyone participates

Assign roles – summariser/note-taker/reporter/time-keeper etc

Set ground rules – taking turns/listening/being respectful

Everyone should know at all times what they should be doing

Let students know that you will check that they are contributing to the group

Placemat – everyone must fill in their section – easy to check

Writing on large sheets – everyone uses a different colour of pen

Reflection sheet
## Individual reflection sheet for group work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I did that helped the group</th>
<th>What I did that hindered the group</th>
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<th>What other people did that helped</th>
<th>What other people did that hindered</th>
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Samples of Differentiated Lessons

History

English
History Lesson
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<th>All students must</th>
<th>Most students should</th>
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War of Independence
KUD : Learning Outcomes

**Know**
- Main Facts
- Key Vocabulary
- Sequence of Events
- Historical Terms

**Understand**
- Concepts on Conflict
- Truth v Fiction
- Main Idea

**Do**
- Group Work
- SQP2RS
- Present Ideas
English Lesson
<table>
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<th>All students must</th>
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English: The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

Resources:

- JCSP Statements
- JCSP workbook – www.jcspliteracy.ie – order through your JCSP coordinator
- Dictionary Workbook – Largy College – www.jcspliteracy.ie
- Oxford University Press – free resources in the *Oxford Reading Lounge* -
  http://fds.oup.com/www0.oup.com/readinglounge/free_resources.html
Resources continued

• Class set of dictionaries

You can also order the following resources through your JCSP coordinator:

• KWL – posters and pads
• Keywords – notebooks and pads
• Visual-verbal-squares – posters and pads
• 3-2-1 – posters and pads
• Main Idea – posters and pads
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<tr>
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<th>Most students should</th>
<th>Some students could (Use choice)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Complete the KWL and 3-2-1 activities</td>
<td>Represent tension in novel graphically and answer questions JCSP workbook, p. 14</td>
<td>Use the internet to research the author or Write an alternative ending to the book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the novel and complete English Statement 5; work on CC Statement 3 - Working with others</td>
<td>Understand and give examples of foreshadowing (Eg: see lesson 2, Oxford Rollercoasters)</td>
<td>Own choice reading</td>
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<td>Present at least one piece of extended written work</td>
<td>Write from various characters’ viewpoints</td>
<td>Read the poems <em>Dulce et Decorum est</em> - answer questions in handout and <em>Base Details</em> - answer questions in <em>Poetry Workbook</em></td>
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<td>Present one oral or written book review</td>
<td>Explore themes of violence and evil</td>
<td>Complete Reading Assessment Progress Sheet, Oxford Rollercoasters (OHT 15b)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete selected activities in the workbook</td>
<td>Understand and find examples of setting, mood, atmosphere and discuss how the author creates them</td>
<td>Read another war novel such as <em>Goodnight Mister Tom</em> and compare it to the class novel</td>
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<td>Participate in group work</td>
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<td>Complete English Statements</td>
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Chapters 1 and 2: Learning Outcomes

- Retrieve specific information from the text to answer questions and make predictions
- Use discussion skills to form a view about characters and the likely direction of the story

From Oxford Rollercoasters
Example: Chapters 1 and 2

• **Starter:** Exploring the book cover and blurb – **KWL** – complete *What I Know*

• **Introduction:** Class reading of chapters 1 and 2 – Keywords/Visual-Verbal-Square

• **Prediction:** Think-Pair-Share-Square

• **Whole class:** Sharing the evidence

• **Homework:** JCSP workbook – chapter 1, questions 1-6 or activity
Extension / Anchor Activity

• Read the alternative blurbs provided in *Oxford Rollercoasters, Writer’s Craft 1.2*

• As a group discuss John Boyne’s comments about them – drawing particular attention to his use of the word ‘horror’

• Write your own blurb
Extension/Anchor Activities

- Own choice reading
  - Word Millionaire
  - Reading Challenge
  - Readalong
- Create a powerpoint for class
- Animoto
- Glogster
- Comic Life
# Students’ recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My name</th>
<th>Title of book</th>
<th>Author’s name</th>
<th>Why I’m recommending it</th>
<th>People I think would like this book</th>
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From *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom* by Susan Winebrenner (2001)
Reading Response Sheet for students reading on their own – from *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom* by Susan Winebrenner (2001)

- Student’s name
- Title of book
- Author
- My reactions to today’s reading
- What’s really great about this book so far
- What I would like to change in this book
- An interesting word from this book
www.tes.co.uk
Secondary English
KS 3

- Goodnight Mister Tom
- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas
- Skellig
- Holes....
Lunch
Mixed Ability Teaching

Sharing Practice:

Siobhan Dalton
Deborah Galbraith
Roseanna Nolan

Piper’s Hill College
Assessment
Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Enables teachers and students to focus on three key questions -

1. Where are students now in their learning?
2. Where are students going in their learning?
3. How will students get to the next point in their learning?

NCCA Assessment Guidelines p9.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment OF Learning (Summative)</th>
<th>Assessment FOR Learning (Formative)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Happens after learning takes place</td>
<td>An integral part of learning process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information is gathered by teacher</td>
<td>Information is shared with learner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information is usually transferred into marks</td>
<td>Information is available on quality of learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison with performance of others</td>
<td>Is linked to learning outcomes and success criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looks back on past learning</td>
<td>Looks forward to the next stage of learning</td>
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In conclusion...
Top Tips!

- Take stock of where you are
- Celebrate achievements/successes
- List strategies that work for you
- Think about needs of students
- Consider new strategies
- Get advice from or observe a colleague
- Start small with a favourite topic/subject
Plan and prepare: space, activities, resources, feedback and assessment

Make learning intention clear

Communicate high expectations

Reflect on your practice; keep notes

Seek student feedback

Share with colleagues
Useful resources

• www.activemaths.co.uk – games and printable worksheets
• www.breakingnewsenglish.com - news articles accompanied by lots of activities – cloze exercises, synonyms, writing etc (American; free.)
• www.differentiationcentral.com
• www.worldofteaching.com
• www.elsp.ie
• www.worksheetswork.com