Week 2: Differentiated Instruction & Time-Saving with AI

Video: Where You're Wasting the Most Time (and How to Fix It Fast)

The Problem: As teachers, you're often expected to be multiple educators at once: creating a general lesson, then adapting it for SPED, ELL, and gifted learners, adding visuals, and ensuring both engagement and standards alignment. This isn't a problem with your time management; it's a **system issue** that leads to overwhelm and burnout.

The Solution: You don't need to create separate versions of every assignment. Instead, you need **one flexible idea that you can scale up or down with AI in minutes.** AI tools offer unprecedented support, allowing you to lighten your load without compromising quality. This isn't cheating; it's about being a smart, resourceful educator who uses every available tool to support every student, without burning out.

The Strategy:

1. **Start with one activity you already love:** This could be a reading passage, a math problem set, a short writing prompt, or a science task.

Use the Core Prompt:

"Take this [activity/passage/lesson idea] and create 3 leveled versions:
Entry-level (SPED/ELL),
On-grade level,
Extension for gifted.

Make it age-appropriate, scaffolded, and clear."

2.
3. **Refine it:** Ask for visuals, hands-on elements, or any other specific adjustments you need. Remember, AI provides the draft; you shape it.

   ○ **Keep in mind:** You're creating **access points**, meeting your students exactly where they are. Let AI handle the rewriting and tiering so you can focus on connection and delivery.

Your Action Step: Pick one lesson or assignment you're already using this week. Try the prompt, see what it gives you, tweak it if needed, and use what works. This single step can save you at least 30 minutes.

Video: How to Plan for SPED, ELL & Gifted

The Challenge: If you've ever stared at a blank document, wondering how to differentiate for *everyone*, you know the struggle. It's not that you don't care; it's that the system expects you to manage three separate classrooms within one, which simply isn't sustainable.

The Solution: Use AI to generate differentiated versions of any lesson or topic from a single input. This dramatically simplifies planning for your **SPED students, ELL learners, gifted kids, and on-grade-level students** alike.

The Strategy:

1. **Pick Your Starting Point:** Choose any topic or lesson idea you already use, such as a science concept, a reading passage, a writing prompt, or a math problem. No need to reinvent anything; you're just leveling it.

Use the Go-To Differentiation Prompt:

"Create three differentiated versions of a [subject] lesson for [topic] at [grade level].
Version 1: Simplified with supports for SPED & ELL
Version 2: On-grade level
Version 3: Enrichment version for gifted students
Include: objective, activity, and quick assessment for each version. Keep it age-appropriate and aligned to standards."

2.
   - This prompt generates three distinct levels for the **same topic and standards**, all adjusted for access without the need to write three entirely new lessons.

Bonus Prompts to Refine:

- "Add visuals and graphic organizers to the SPED/ELL version."
- "Turn the gifted version into a self-directed project."
- "Make this suitable for remote or hybrid learning."
- "Add a rubric for all 3 levels."

Remember: Differentiation is about creating **access**, not chaos. With AI support, you can achieve this crucial goal without sacrificing your valuable time, energy, or creativity.

Your Action Step: Pick one topic you're teaching this week. Use the prompt to generate three levels. Tweak what you like, and save what works. If you do this just once a week, you'll soon have a full library of leveled, inclusive content.

Video: Scaffolded in Seconds — No Teacher Brain Required

The Scenario: There are days when your brain just says, "I literally cannot build one more scaffold. Not today." You're tired, you've explained the concept five different ways, and now you're supposed to rewrite it, just simpler? Let's take that off your plate.

The Solution: Let AI build those essential scaffolds for you. This ensures every student gets access to the learning, even if they're coming in at a completely different level, all without emptying your tank.

What is Scaffolding, Really? Scaffolding is simply providing students with **stepping stones**—ways to break down something complex into smaller, more understandable parts. This includes things like:

- Sentence starters
- Word banks
- Visuals
- Checklists
- Tiered instructions

Today, you'll learn how to build these in seconds.

The Strategy:

1. **Pick a Task You're Already Doing:** This could be a reading passage, a writing assignment, a lab report, a DBQ, or a project task. Choose one thing that students often struggle with.

Use This Prompt:

"Take this [insert task or concept] and add scaffolds for students who need more support. Include sentence frames, visuals, simplified directions, and vocabulary support. Make it grade-appropriate, clear, and printable."

2. **Example:** If you're assigning an argumentative writing prompt, you can ask:

   "Scaffold this argumentative writing prompt for 6th grade. Add sentence starters, a graphic organizer, and a checklist."

   ○ **Boom!** You'll instantly get a graphic organizer, sentence frames (like "One reason is..." or "According to the article..."), and a checklist students can use while writing. You didn't have to create any of it from scratch.

3. **Make It Your Style:** Want it more visual? Ask for a diagram. Need it more hands-on? Ask for a sorting task. Want to use it in Google Classroom? Ask it to format as a worksheet or slide. AI gives you the raw material; you just shape it.

Why This Matters: Scaffolding doesn't mean lowering expectations. It means **lifting students up** to where the learning is. Now, you can do that without draining your energy or staying up past midnight. You're still the expert; AI is just the assistant.

Your Action Step: Pick one assignment you're already giving this week. Use the scaffold prompt. Save what works. Print, post, or assign it—done. Even doing this just once a week will save you massive time and mental energy.

Video: No Prep, No Problem — Brainsy Fixes the Gaps

Let's Be Real: There are days when you walk into the classroom and think, "I have nothing. I didn't plan. I have 20 kids staring at me, and I'm running on fumes." You're not alone; this happens to every teacher. The difference now is that you have a tool to fill those gaps.

The Solution: Use AI—Brainsy, ChatGPT, or whatever tool you prefer—to instantly generate a solid lesson, activity, or support material when you're in "just make it through the day" mode.

Why This Matters: Life happens. Kids get sick. Meetings pop up. Planning periods disappear. The guilt spiral of "I should've prepped better" or "I wish I had time to differentiate this" ends today. AI provides a **reliable fallback system** that still feels intentional, differentiated, and useful, even when you're in survival mode.

Key Scenarios & Prompts:

Scenario 1: The "I Need a Sub Plan" Emergency

 "Create a 45-minute lesson for [grade/subject] that requires no materials, works with a sub, and includes an objective, step-by-step instructions, and a built-in student accountability activity."

1.
   ○ **Boom!** That's your emergency sub plan, done.

Scenario 2: You Didn't Finish Planning

 "I'm teaching [topic] in [grade/subject] and didn't plan today. Give me an age-appropriate mini-lesson I can teach right now — include an intro, activity, and simple assessment."

2.
   ○ Emergency plan, handled.

Scenario 3: Your Curriculum Has Gaps

"I'm teaching [unit or topic] but the curriculum skips over [missing concept]. Create a short bridge lesson to cover that gap. Include visuals and examples."

3.
    ○   Use this to quickly patch weak spots and fill in missing background knowledge.

Scenario 4: Students Didn't Get It — and You're Out of Time

"Give me a reteach activity for [concept] that explains it in a different way and includes a quick practice task."

4.
    ○   Use this for small groups, 1:1 support, or quick reteaching without redoing your whole plan.

The Best Part: You don't have to reinvent or reformat anything. AI delivers a complete lesson or activity ready to drop into Google Docs, Google Slides, Brainsy, or your LMS. This isn't cheating; it's called being smart and staying afloat. You're not expected to be perfectly planned 100% of the time, but now, even when you're not prepared, you're still prepared.

Your Action Step: Pick one moment this week where you anticipate chaos. Use one of the emergency prompts above. Save it and keep it in a "Just in Case" folder. Give yourself a safety net because you deserve one.

Video: Create Your Go-To Differentiation Prompt Bank

Congratulations! You've made it to the end of Week 2, tackling one of the biggest time-drains in teaching: differentiation. You now know how to do it fast, intentionally, and without writing three separate lessons. Now, let's make this skill permanent.

The Goal Today: Build your personal AI Prompt Bank—the one you'll use repeatedly when planning, modifying tasks, or supporting diverse learners. This is the ultimate "work smarter, not harder" strategy for teachers.

The Strategy:

1. **Steal These Core Differentiation Prompts:** Copy and save these in your Google Drive, sticky notes, or wherever you keep your planning resources.

#1: Leveled Lesson Generator
"Create 3 versions of a [topic] lesson for [grade level]:

• Entry-level (SPED/ELL)
• On-grade level
• Enrichment for gifted students.
Include objectives, activity, and assessment."

○

#2: Scaffold Builder
 "Scaffold this task for SPED/ELL learners.
Add: sentence starters, visuals, simplified instructions, and vocabulary support."

○

#3: Extension Creator
 "Create a self-directed enrichment version of this task for gifted students.
Include a creative application, research component, or peer teaching element."

○

#4: Visual Learning Aid
 "Make a visual or graphic organizer to support [concept] for [grade level]."

○

#5: Sub Plan Lifesaver
 "Give me a 45-minute no-prep lesson on [topic] for [grade level].
Must include instructions a sub can follow + student accountability piece."

○
○ These are your **power prompts**—your AI shortcut to differentiation. You can mix and match them with anything you teach, use them for batch-planning, or on the fly when your brain is fried.

Why This Works: Prompts are like recipes. You don't need to create a new one every time you cook; you reuse what works. This prompt bank is your teacher recipe book.

Your Action Step: Save these prompts somewhere easily accessible. Create a folder, a document, or a slide deck—whatever works for you. If you want to go big, start adding your own custom prompts, tweaking the language to match your style, or creating ones for specific units or subjects. Before long, you'll have a full planning toolkit that runs on autopilot.

Final Thought: AI is a tool; you are the teacher. Together, you are unstoppable. You've just built a real system for supporting all learners, without losing your mind or your Sunday. I'm proud of you. Week 3 is next, and it's all about grading faster (without sounding like a robot). Let's go!