



PRESENTER NOTES HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN OVERVIEW

This guide offers suggestions for presenting ***Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning: An Overview***. This in-service suite includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation (14 slides)
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activity:
 - » *Teach-Assess-Adjust*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
- Helpful Resources
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to help participants provide highly individualized support and enrichment opportunities to children with specific learning characteristics.
- This in-service suite is an overview of the teaching practices related to the roof of the House: *Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning*.
- The learning activity offers participants an opportunity to think about levels of individualization that are appropriate for children with diverse needs, including advanced learners, dual language learners, and children who are not making progress on their learning goals.
- A brief video shows early learning experts describing their strategies to individualize specific learning experiences for different types of children.



SLIDE 1: HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN OVERVIEW

Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves (e.g., where they are working, their current roles, etc.).
- Conduct an ice breaker that emphasizes the importance of individualizing for specific learners.

Example: In a small or large group, ask participants to share a time when they themselves needed intensive individualizing.

Possible answers:

- Learning a foreign language
- Driving in an unfamiliar area
- Keeping track of appointments or schedules
- Learning a new sport

Introduce the topic.

This *Overview* introduces educational practices that help provide highly individualized support and advancement opportunities for children with specific learning characteristics.



SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

Objectives for the presentation:

- The foundation represents effective and engaging interactions and environments.
- The pillars represent research-based curricula and teaching practices, and ongoing child assessment.
- The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning.
- All four components interact with each other and are essential to effective practices.
- This in-service suite fits into the roof of the House, *Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning*.

The presentation focuses on specific and highly individualized teaching practices that increase opportunities for children with unique strengths or needs: to be supported, to participate, and to thrive within planned classroom activities and routines.





SLIDE 3: OBJECTIVES

Objectives for the presentation:

- What is unique about the roof?
- Who benefits from highly individualized teaching?
- How do we do it?

Highlight five main points:

- **Young children vary widely** in their development, skills, and abilities.
- **Teachers respond to children's individual abilities** and adjust their level of support in-the-moment by carefully observing children's behaviors.
- **A small, individualized change** to a planned classroom activity can allow a child to participate more fully and maximize learning.
- **Multiple learning opportunities embedded** throughout the day can give a child added practice to make progress on learning objectives.
- **Teachers use more intensive teaching practices as needed**, increasing and decreasing levels of support in response to the child's learning.





Length of video: Approximately 5 minutes and 9 seconds

SLIDE 4: VIDEO: HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN OVERVIEW

Introduce the video.

In this video, teachers and early learning experts talk about the fundamentals of individualized support for children in Head Start programs. They discuss the different types of children who benefit from this level of support and the ways teachers adjust their instruction to address the varying needs of children.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to discuss a time when they individualized an activity to support a child's specific learning characteristics.

NOTE 

Encourage participants to share examples involving a broad range of children, not just children who are not making progress on their learning goals, but also dual language learners and children who are advanced in their development.

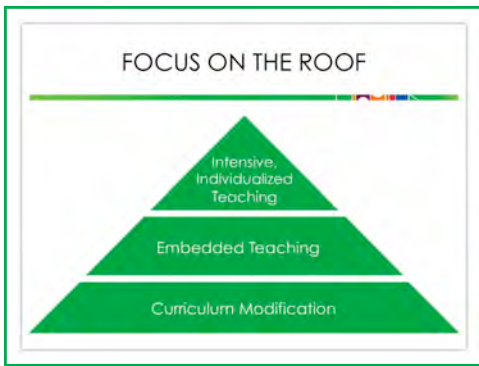


SLIDE 5: WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT THE ROOF?

When we plan instruction for children, we typically begin by focusing on the quality of the environment, paying close attention to engaging and instructional interactions. Teachers also observe each child's interests and temperament, the people they value, and the cultural and linguistic background that is unique to individual children and their families. Sometimes a teacher notices that a particular child needs more support than the regular curriculum offers.

The roof section of the House offers intensive individualization approaches and specific teaching strategies. These strategies support children who are not making progress on their learning goals as well as children who need more of a learning challenge. The practices described in the roof are designed to help teachers provide more individualized teaching.





SLIDE 6: FOCUS ON THE ROOF

The roof portion of the House has three tiers of highly individualized teaching. **Curriculum Modification, Embedded Teaching, and Intensive Individualized Teaching.** In the roof, the levels of support intensify from the bottom to the top tier.

Curriculum Modifications are ideas for making small changes or additions to classroom activities that have a big impact on a child's engagement and learning. These are particularly useful when a child needs a minimal amount of additional challenge or support.


Embedded Teaching refers to strategies inserted into planned classroom activities to provide additional, focused teaching. The goal of embedded teaching is to increase opportunities for a child to practice a learning objective within the ongoing classroom activities and routines. Children who are advanced in development and children who are learning English also benefit from targeted learning opportunities embedded within planned classroom activities.

Intensive, Individualized Teaching refers to explicit teaching strategies that help a child who needs extra help to make progress. These specific strategies are structured, child-focused, and directed toward a specific skill or need.

NOTE

The top tier of the roof, **Intensive, Individualized Teaching**, describes educational practices appropriate to the needs of just a small number of children in your program. These children will usually need additional support for a short time. As a child's learning and engagement increases, the intensity of support they require will decrease.

WHO BENEFITS? FOCUS ON THE CHILD



- Not making enough progress
- Advanced development
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Challenging behavior
- Dual language learner (DLL)


SLIDE 7: WHO BENEFITS? FOCUS ON THE CHILD

Children who may benefit from a more highly individualized approach include:

- A child who is not making progress on a certain learning objective.
- A child who is highly advanced in one or more areas of their development.
- A child who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- A child who continues to demonstrate high rates of challenging behavior, despite the use of proactive strategies found in high-quality early learning environments.
- A child who is a dual language learner may also benefit temporarily from specific and intensive teaching strategies to help with English language development.



**HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING—
HOW DO WE DO IT?**



- Observe to understand a child's needs, interests, and current strengths
- Modify to support participation
- Plan multiple learning opportunities
- Adjust the level of support in the moment

SLIDE 8: HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING— HOW DO WE DO IT?

It depends on the child!

Types and levels of support for a particular child change constantly and depend on the activity, learning objective, and the child's progress. Whether teachers are already familiar with the teaching practices of the room or not, the strategies are practical and easy to implement in the context of everyday classroom activities.

Purposeful planning and flexible instruction are key to a teacher's ability to respond to a child's changing needs.

To provide an appropriate level of individualization:

- Observe to understand a child's developmental needs, interests, and current strengths.
- Modify an activity to help support a child's participation.
- Plan multiple learning opportunities.
- Adjust the level of support in the moment.

HOW IS THE CHILD DOING?

Needs support	An advanced learner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add visual supports • Break down objective into smaller parts • Provide more learning opportunities throughout the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for higher-level thinking • Provide opportunities for social leadership • Provide supplemental materials

SLIDE 9: HOW IS THE CHILD DOING?

The first step to highly individualized teaching is to understand a child's specific needs. A teacher can start by reviewing a child's learning plan and then choose objectives based on the child's current performance. A teacher may decide, after observing the child, to provide more intensive teaching opportunities, or to offer higher-level academic or social challenges.

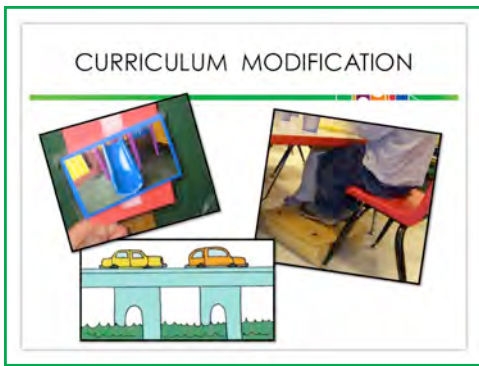
If a child needs more support, a teacher may:

- Provide visual cues or reminders.
- Break down a learning goal into smaller parts.
- Offer more frequent learning opportunities.

If a child is an advanced learner, a teacher may:

- Provide opportunities for higher-level thinking.
- Offer opportunities for social leadership.
- Introduce supplemental materials.





SLIDE 10: CURRICULUM MODIFICATION

Small changes to classroom activities or materials, called curriculum modifications, are used in very intentional ways. Curriculum modifications promote participation and engagement in children who are ready to take advantage of opportunities.

This slide gives examples of three different curriculum modifications:

- **The first modification** is a picture of an outdoor slide. This picture, along with several other pictures, were shown to a child who had trouble choosing from multiple choices, and instead, roamed the playground disengaged. When her teacher showed her pictures of the activities, she was able to choose what to play on as her outside “play plan.” Her teacher supported her engagement and participation by narrowing down her choices.
- **The second modification** shows a wooden block placed under a child’s feet, to help stabilize him in his chair during table activities. The child tended to wiggle and slide off the chair during activities, and seemed disengaged. After his teacher placed a wooden block underneath his feet, he was no longer concerned with trying to balance on his chair and, therefore, was more able to participate in the learning activity.
- **The third modification** is an illustration of a bridge, placed on the wall in a classroom’s block area. A child who benefited from this modification had advanced building skills and needed more challenge to remain engaged. The teacher supplied activity ideas for more advanced builders and provided additional materials to enrich what was available.





SLIDE 11: EMBEDDED TEACHING

Sometimes a child may need more opportunities to practice a particular learning objective than what is typically provided during the day. A child who is learning more than one language, a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), and a child who is just not making enough progress on a learning goal— they all may benefit from receiving more learning opportunities.

Let's meet Mia, a 4-year-old girl attending a Head Start program. Mia has been working on “recognizing her name in print,” but has not made enough progress on this goal during the opportunities provided for the whole class.

Mia's teacher made a goal for herself and her staff that they give Mia at least 10 planned opportunities throughout the day to recognize her name in print. Here are three examples of those 10 opportunities:

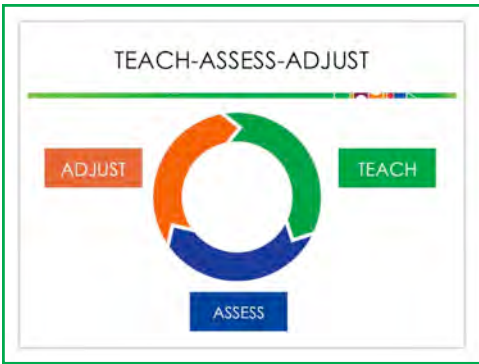
- During arrival time, Mia is asked to find her name printed on her cubby.
- During circle time, Mia is asked to find her name at her circle spot.
- During small group time, Mia is asked to find her name at the table.



DISCUSSION

Discuss with participants: How would these planned opportunities look in your classroom? (e.g., “Mia, find your name.” “Mia, where are you sitting today?” “Mia, where is your chair?” “Mia, where is your name?”)





SLIDE 12: TEACH-ASSESS-ADJUST

One of the ways teachers provide highly individualized teaching is to constantly adjust the level of support they give a child, based on a child’s responses. Moment by moment, teachers observe and assess how well a child is learning a new skill. They watch carefully for the child’s response and adjust their level of support as needed. One term for this is teach-assess-adjust.



LEARNING ACTIVITY: TEACH-ASSESS-ADJUST

The purpose of this learning activity is to provide the opportunity to create highly individualized support options for three different children. The three vignettes each provide two different options for individualized teaching and learning. Participants are asked to come up with a third way the teacher could provide individualized support.

Divide participants into small groups.

HANDOUT

Distribute and review the *Teach-Assess-Adjust* learning activity. There are three different handouts: one for Amir, one for Isabella, and one for Steven. Each handout includes the directions for the activity.

DISCUSSION

Encourage participants to share their ideas about a third example of teacher support.

Possible examples for the third idea:

For Amir—categorize by shape, arrange the leaves from smallest to biggest, provide information about why leaves fall from trees, etc.

For Isabella—provide books and words in Spanish, ask Isabella’s family for information about her interests, welcome her family to the classroom with information in Spanish, etc.

For Steven—include items of high interest to Steven in activities, allow Steven to trace letters and shapes for the writing portion of an activity instead of asking him to form shapes and letters on his own, ask Steven’s family what they do together at home, etc.





SLIDE 13: REVIEW

Review and highlight the main points of the presentation.

Young children vary widely in their development, skills, and abilities. Teachers respond to children's individual abilities and adjust their level of support "in the moment" by carefully observing children's behaviors.

- **A small, individualized change** to a planned classroom activity can allow a child to participate more fully and maximize learning.
- **Multiple learning opportunities** embedded throughout the day can give a child added practice to make progress on learning objectives.
- **Teachers use more intensive teaching practices as needed**, increasing and decreasing levels of support in response to the child's learning.

HANDOUT

Distribute handouts if not distributed during presentation.

Based on participant roles:

- Distribute and review *Tips for Teachers*.
- Distribute and review *Tools for Teachers*.
- Distribute the *Helpful Resources* list and review key resources.



SLIDE 14: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources.