

Figure 7 **Designing Respectful Activities**

DON'Ts	DOs
Give some students more work and others less.	Give students different work that matches their readiness, interests, and learning profiles.
Dictate what some students do and allow others to make choices.	Provide choice to all students whenever possible—humans respond well to choice.
Make some versions of an activity fun and engaging while other versions are dull and boring.	Put yourself in the shoes of the students to whom you will assign varied work, and try to design each task so that it is highly interesting, engaging, and appropriately challenging.
“Dumb down” some versions of a task for struggling learners.	Make sure all versions of the work lead to the same know, understand, and do goals. Be especially careful that all versions of the work require students to work with the big ideas of the unit. All students should be expected to work at the highest level possible.
Expect advanced students to work and learn on their own.	Provide appropriate scaffolding for all students, regardless of their readiness level. In other words, if you are asking advanced students to stretch, they will need support, just as struggling learners need support to work on tasks that are a bit too difficult for them.
Differentiate by asking advanced students to be tutors for those who struggle.	Provide all students with opportunities to help and support others. Be sure that advanced students also get opportunities to stretch.
Assume you know everything there is to know about a student's interests, learning profile, and readiness.	Engage in an ongoing dialogue with students about their perceived needs. Use your best judgment, but supplement the information you have with information that only the student (and/or his parents) can offer.
Automatically put English as a second language (ESL) or special education students in the “struggling” group or automatically put identified gifted students in the “advanced” group.	Remember that strong interest in a topic or a high degree of match between teaching and learning style can propel a student who normally struggles to a higher level of readiness. Conversely, lack of interest, match with learning style, or prior experience can mean an advanced student belongs in a lower readiness group for a specific learning experience.

other teachers (including specialists); formal and informal assessments of student knowledge, understanding, and skill; and student self-assessments. Sometimes students will question the accuracy of our

decisions about which version of an activity they are assigned. In many cases, reminding students that sometimes they get to choose an activity and sometimes you do will alleviate concerns, especially if a respectful