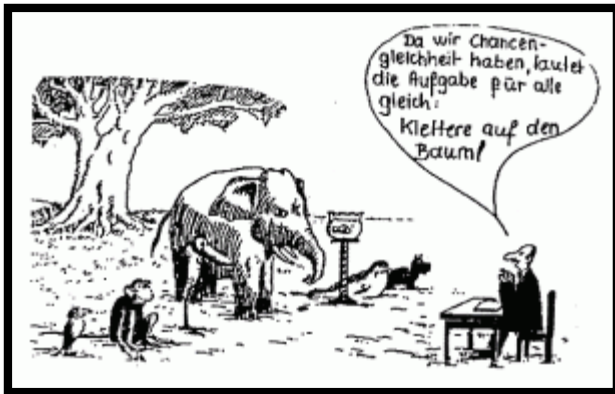Differentiation

All four skills essentially differentiate by:
 - outcome
 - support
 - task

Key for teachers is:
 - manageability (!)
 - ensuring optimum progress for each student
 - creating a positive classroom atmosphere

Listening and Reading
Outcome
1. Include a series / sequence of tasks for the same material
2. Encourage a different colour pen for each time of listening / reading (so you can see progress through)
3. Encourage learners to set their own targets in L and R tasks
4. For differentiation by outcome tasks, especially with listening, it's good to have 'low stress' tasks, i.e. ephemeral answers or whole class gesture / mini-whiteboard responses so that you can increase the challenge of the material but make it not so important which score they get.

Support
1. Pair / group the students – harness peer learning support
2. In listening tasks (ones you make up yourself) start hard and progress to easy so that finally you give the answer on a plate and everyone gets it, but some have been able to get the answer earlier from the more challenging material. They can signal by making a gesture when they have got it, but keep listening to the end.
3. Students self-select the amount of support they use to complete a task e.g.for a dialogue speaking task, it might look like this:

Easy: practise with the book open and reading the sample dialogue out loud. Repeating this for the duration of the activity
Middle: Read through the sample dialogue together once or twice if needed, then close the book but keep a finger on the page for easy access. They then try to do the sample dialogue but without looking at it for the majority of the dialogue.
Hard: Read through the sample dialogue. Close the book. Do the sample dialogue from memory, checking if need be. Then adapt the sample dialogue as much as possible.

Once they have done this, they are encouraged to assess how they got on and see if they can try the next option up.

4. Pre-teach vocabulary first (this is a one-size fits all whole class strategy but still has

value when increasing the challenge of a task for the whole class)

Task
1. Include support material (or not!) to create different tasks
e.g.
the transcript **or**
the first letter of each answer **or**
the possible answers jumbled at the bottom **or**
a glossary of key words **or**
a multiple choice support sheet **or**
a dictionary (+/- maximum no. of words that can be looked up)
NB: if we put the extra support at the bottom of the sheet, it can easily be turned over so students can have flexibility over the challenge of the task. Equally if we want to decide the challenge we can copy different numbers of each adapted sheet.
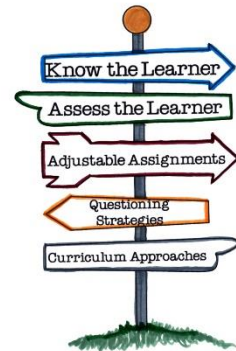
2. Offer choice of tasks for the same text e.g. (Find 5 x negatives, 5 x verbs, 5 x nouns (can be specific to topic being studied e.g. 5 x foods), 5 x cognates (easiest of all), 5 x specific tense, 5 x conjunctions)

3. Students self-select the task from a choice of 'green', 'amber', 'red' (or more) difficulty levels
For example, a gap fill reading task could have:
1. no help
2. As for 1) but with first letter of each word
3. box of possible words (+/- distractors)
4. 3 x options per gap

4. Questions in English or TL

5. Vary the number of distractors that you have in your material

6. Individual pre-tasks – e.g. student does some card sorting and other vocab learning tasks first to get more confident with the language before they join in with further tasks. This often works particularly well with learners who are slow to settle at the start of lessons if we want to start with whole class oral work.

7. Have an extension task