



# TOOLBOX OF IDEAS

## Tic-Tac-Toe Menu

**Tic-tac-toe, also known as Think-tac-toe, is a differentiation tool that offers collection of activities from which students can choose to do to demonstrate their understanding. It is presented in the form of a nine square grid similar to a tic-tac-toe board and students may be expected to complete from one to “three in a row”.**

- **Offering choice is an important way to motivate students and get them interested in a project**
- **Process can be differentiated by modifying the complexity or abstractness of tasks and by engaging students in critical and creative thinking**
- **A Tic-Tac-Toe Menu is a differentiated strategy that provides options for learners to practice skills, try new products, and work with a variety of resources as they learn.**
- **Students can make three choices according to a contract. Having the autonomy to elect what to do or how to do it gives them more responsibility and accountability for their learning because they must manage their time and select the options that will help them reach their full potential**
- **Involvement in this strategy encourages independent learning. Teachers should check in with students periodically and require students to keep a log of their progress**
- **From the teacher’s perspective, the sophistication of menu creation follows a continuum from those that differentiate solely for when students chose to do the tasks to those that provide choices in the what and/or the how (Center for Advanced Student Learning, 2001)**
- **The tasks that are designed for the Tic-Tac-Toe Menu can be products which are the outcome of the unit or the ways that students demonstrate or exhibit their understanding of the content**
- **The activities vary in content, process, and product and can be tailored to address different levels of students’ readiness, interests, and learning styles. The center square may be left open for the student to select an activity of their own. Tic-tac-toe activities may be given to every student in the class, higher ability students for extension activities, or lower students for review and practice**
- **In place of lengthy activities, the tic-tac-toe board may also be used with shorter, open-ended questions posed at varying levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy**
- **Both Bloom’s Taxonomy (Heacox, 2002) and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Lazear, 2000) can be applied to the differentiation of the products in a Tic-Tac-Toe Menu. This provides**

**greater challenge and variety in how students show what they have understood**

- **Possibilities for varying products include: role-plays, multimedia presentations, brochures, plays, songs, graphic organizers, posters, research papers, essays, news broadcasts, videos, RAFT assignments, and games**