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## **Improving Students' Writing Skills Based on the Principles of Differentiation**

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### **Abstract**

In contemporary Kazakhstani society, the need for individuals who can think creatively and critically, solve non-standard problems, and formulate innovative goals is steadily increasing. Writing skills are central to the development of students' intellectual, creative, and reflective capacities, which are essential for effective socialisation and lifelong learning. Although previous research has emphasised the significance of gifted education and differentiated instruction, relatively little attention has been paid to how differentiation can be systematically applied to enhance students' writing skills in mainstream education, particularly in language and literature classrooms.

This study examines the potential of differentiated instruction to improve students' writing skills while supporting the development of gifted and capable learners. The research focuses on instructional strategies, learning tasks, and organisational approaches that foster students' motivation, independence, and creative written expression.

The study was conducted in a mainstream secondary school in Kazakhstan during language and literature lessons and extracurricular activities. Participants included 52 Grade 10 students (aged 15–16) with varying levels of academic ability. Data were collected through classroom observations, analysis of students' written work, project outcomes, student questionnaires, and teacher reflections. A range of differentiated writing tasks—creative, research-based, problem-oriented, and practice-focused—was designed and implemented. Qualitative analysis focused on changes in students' engagement, autonomy, and writing quality over time.

The findings indicate that systematic use of differentiated instruction leads to noticeable improvements in students' writing skills. Enrichment activities, problem-based tasks, project work, and flexible grouping enhanced learners' motivation, depth of thinking, and originality in writing. Gifted students demonstrated increased independence, creativity, and reflective thinking, while other learners also benefited from personalised learning pathways. The study demonstrates that differentiation is not only a

support strategy for gifted learners but also an effective approach to improving overall writing competence.

**Keywords:** differentiated instruction, writing skills development, gifted and talented students, creative writing, learner autonomy