

FIGURE 5.8:
**SUPPORTING HIGH-ABILITY
IN ALL CLASSROOMS**

- Encourage English Language Learners and young high-ability learners with only beginning literacy skills to conduct research, pursue projects, and share complex ideas with the support of a mentor, an older student, or through verbal recordings rather than be limited to written responses.
- Regularly employ preassessments to document exempting high-ability students from work they have already mastered. Implement replacement tasks instead of redundant work.
- Encourage student autonomy by posting a list of generalizable products and authentic learning experiences from which students can select when pursuing replacement tasks.
- Work with high-ability students to generate criteria that promote complexity and depth so students can document their approximations to personal excellence when pursuing replacement tasks.
- Daily, require high-ability students to self-assess learning behaviors, effort, and results when working on replacement tasks or projects. Review these self-reflections and debrief with students when feasible.
- Ensure that high-ability students maintain records of progress and reflect on personal changes as learners rather than gauge their results through comparisons with grade-level peers.
- In a mixed-readiness class, periodically place high-ability students in similar-readiness flexible groups to promote applications beyond grade level.
- Form interest-based groups across grade levels to ensure intellectual peers for high-ability students and nurture more in-depth information and problem solving. These students should regularly work together when teachers place others in small groups for re-teaching or to practice and apply grade-level skills previously mastered by high-ability learners.
- As flexible groups, implement text clubs or literature circles with a diverse range of materials that allow all students opportunities to appropriately select text at, below, and beyond grade-level.
- Jigsaw using more complex materials for advanced students during cooperative learning.
- Implement Socratic Seminars in which students take leadership roles in preparing and conducting the seminars.
- When practicing grade-level learning standards, allow high-ability students to use higher-level materials for applications. For example, all students can be practicing mathematical operations using a range of materials instead of only the grade-level textbook.
- Implement cluster-grouping classrooms so high-ability students have consistent access to an intellectual-peer group as well as an age-peer group. The key to success in cluster grouping is a teacher who has esteem for high-ability students and is quite accomplished at differentiating instruction.