

Implementation Strategies

Northside Elementary School, Monroe School District
Monroe, WI

Grade(s): K – 5

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: Enrichment/Gifted and Talented

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 0.5 hours per week, 9 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables)

Sarah Compton, Teacher

We have used ALEKS as a way to challenge our students performing significantly above grade level. ALEKS allows them to independently progress through higher-level curriculum, while I teach lessons to the rest of the students. I have seen fifth grade students begin to achieve middle school math standards; ALEKS has laid the foundation for future subject acceleration for these students. I believe my students appreciate being given the opportunity to work at their own pace, rather than being forced to work through curriculum that is too easy for them.

Scenario

What challenges did the class or school face in math prior to using ALEKS?

Our challenge was finding how to enrich gifted math students when staff is unavailable to work with them.

How many days per week is class time dedicated to ALEKS?

1 day per week.

What is the average length of a class period when ALEKS is used?

30 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

Once students are identified as gifted in math, we purchase an ALEKS subscription for them. They work on it weekly in the computer lab.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

We start with the fifth grade course to make sure there are no gaps, and then continue advancing.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

One day a week, or more if the student chooses to work at home, students go to the computer lab to work on ALEKS. Other days, the students complete coursework through our Virtual School for class credit.

How did you modify your regular teaching approach as a result of ALEKS?

I didn't change anything specifically, except the gifted students now have another option for enrichment.

How often are students required or encouraged to work on ALEKS at home?

Students are given the option of working at home, as long as they do not complete assessments there.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents are involved in the decision-making process when we purchase ALEKS subscriptions. From there, parents are updated on student progress through short notes in their assignment notebook.

Grading

Is ALEKS assigned to your students as all or part of their homework responsibilities? If so, what part of the total homework load is it?

No.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

ALEKS is not included as part of our grading system. The students using it have already mastered the fifth grade curriculum, so they receive the highest grades on their report cards already.

Do you require students to make regular amounts of progress in ALEKS?

No.

Learning Outcomes

Since using ALEKS, please describe the learning outcomes or progress you have seen.

I have seen fifth grade students begin to achieve middle school math standards; ALEKS has laid the foundation for future subject acceleration for these students. I believe my students appreciate being given the opportunity to work at their own pace, rather than being forced to work through curriculum that is too easy for them.

Best Practices

Are there any best practices you would like to share with other teachers implementing ALEKS?

The differentiation options with ALEKS are endless. Whether you need to enrich or provide remediation, ALEKS is the perfect option. It provides individualized, independent instruction that meets all needs. The variety of reports can show student strengths and weaknesses, which can guide your instruction in small groups.