

Implementation Strategies

Greensview Elementary School, Upper Arlington City School District
Upper Arlington, OH

Grade(s): K – 5

Scenario: Computer Lab, Computers in Classroom, Home Access

Purpose: Enrichment/Gifted and Talented, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 30 minutes per week

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables), Pre–Algebra

Star Simpson, Teacher

I started using ALEKS with my fifth grade class and placed all students in Mathematics – LV 5 with QuickTables. I initially used the program during class or when we had lab time. Students are also required to use ALEKS as homework for 30–45 minutes per week. The students who diligently log on often spend much more than the minimum required amount of time and have progressed quickly through the fifth grade. I now have one student who has completed the fifth and sixth grade courses and is now in the Pre–Algebra course. I also have three additional students who have moved into the sixth grade course. Additionally, most students really like the program. Those who "get" math compete against one another to see who can complete sections of their pie chart the quickest.

Scenario

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

We did not have quality extensions for students who are advanced.

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

2 days per week.

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

10 minutes.

Implementation

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

I do ask the students to focus on an ALEKS topic that correlates to what we are currently learning in class.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Often ALEKS is used to enrich my students who complete a textbook lesson quickly. It gives them a challenge, while allowing me to continue to focus on my students who need one–on–one assistance on concepts presented in the lesson.

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

I have not modified my regular teaching.

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

Students are encouraged to work from home 30–45 minutes per week.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I have contacted parents through email regularly about student progress. I have also printed off the pie chart report and sent it home for parents to see their student's progress.

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?

Yes; ALEKS is a small fraction of their homework.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I don't use ALEKS as part of the grade, other than for homework completion.

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

No, I haven't thought about it in that way. I do require that students stick with a challenging topic and not hop around and I monitor this through the Teacher's Module. They were quite surprised when they learned I could see what they are doing.

Learning Outcomes

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

Students are required to use ALEKS as homework for 30–45 minutes per week. The students who diligently log on often spend much more than the minimum required amount of time and have progressed quickly through the fifth grade. I now have one student who has completed the fifth and sixth grade courses and is now in the Pre–Algebra course. I also have three additional students who have moved into the sixth grade course. Additionally, most students really like the program. Those who "get" math compete against one another to see who can complete sections of their pie chart the quickest.

Best Practices

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

Carefully monitor student progress and their topic mastery. Students will often hop around to find the easy problems and not push themselves to do what is more challenging.