

Implementation Strategies

Nanuet Senior High School, Nanuet Union Free School District
Nanuet, NY

Grade(s): 9 – 12

Scenario: Laptop Carts

Purpose: Special Education

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 40%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1.5 hours per week, 25–30 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 3 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables)

Nancy Logan, Special Education Coordinator

I started using ALEKS with my Life Skills class of mixed disabilities and mixed grade levels. The students love working in the program and seeing their progress. I regularly print out worksheets for homework as well. Students and parents find the reports clear and easy to understand. I've been teaching Life Skills for 22 years and this is the first year that all students have shown progress.

Scenario

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

All students are on different levels and they all work at a different pace.

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?

42 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

I added ALEKS to the current textbook and workbook curriculum.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

There is no specific order.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Students work individually with support from teachers and teaching assistants.

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

The class is even more individualized than it was. Students compete to complete the levels, where in the past, they hated math because it was so difficult for them.

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

Students are required to work in ALEKS at home once a week, and encouraged to work two more times a week.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents love the reports that the program generates. They can clearly see what their child has mastered and what they need to do. They also see the progress their child is making.

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?

Students have quizzes every month at home and homework worksheets once a week.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

ALEKS homework is graded. The classwork and progress is not given a grade.

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

There is no required amount of progress. Students are 6–7 years behind grade–level and used to avoid math. I can honestly say that this is the first time they have consistently liked math and haven't tried to avoid it. They always ask, "is today an ALEKS day?"

Learning Outcomes

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

The students have increased their mastery in numerous topics. I've been teaching Life Skills for 22 years and this is the first year that all students have shown progress. They love watching the pie chart fill up and they can understand the reports that are printed.

Best Practices

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

Be patient and let the students learn at their own pace. They will get hooked and want to do better. It's especially great with high school special education students as the content may be at a lower level but the presentation is not.