

# Implementation Strategies

Jacksboro High School, Jacksboro Independent School District  
Jacksboro, TX

**Grade(s):** 9 – 12

**Scenario:** Computer Lab

**Purpose:** Exit Exam, Improve State Test Scores

**ALEKS Portion of Curriculum:** 33%

**Time Spent in ALEKS:** 3.75 hours per week

**ALEKS Course:** Algebra 1, High School Geometry

## Elizabeth Reynolds, Teacher

I use the ALEKS program to help the students who failed their Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) math test last year and even before then. They had fallen through the cracks and were at various levels of math knowledge. The ALEKS program tested them and put them at the level they needed to succeed and catch up to where they should have been as juniors in high school. These students were taking the TAKS test this year to graduate, so the test was high stakes for them. They were able to work at their own pace, which freed me up to move around the room to offer help and answer questions as needed.

## Scenario

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

Challenges included unsuccessful students on the state mandated tests, students falling through the cracks when put into an ordinary classroom to work at the same pace as the rest of the class even though they are not at that level, and lack of basic skills needed to comprehend the new material.

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

5 days per week.

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

45 minutes.

## Implementation

### Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

The students pick their lessons and make their way through the various pieces of the pie that they need to master based on the assessment provided on the first day of the program.

### How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

The entire period was devoted to students on the computers, doing their individual lessons with teacher help provided.

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

When we are using the ALEKS program, I am not lecturing or doing classroom projects. They login to the ALEKS program and make their way through the lessons individually. The first semester is done in the classroom setting with me providing notes and examples of various problems required by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the class. After Christmas break, I take the students to the computer lab for two six-week periods to concentrate on the ALEKS program. Then they are tested by the state, and we return to the normal classroom to end the school year.

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

They can login every day at home to work on the program.

### How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

The parents are able to see their student's progress when the student works on ALEKS at home.

## 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?**

It is not assigned as homework.

**How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?**

Weekly progress accounts for 25 percent of their grade; worksheets that test them on their specific studies account for 50 percent; and six weekly tests account for the last 25 percent.

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

Yes, I have a breakdown as to the percentage increase they need to make each week in order to get their daily grade for the week. If they are Special Education students, the percentage increase is larger for their progress, due to required modifications and their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

## Learning Outcomes

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

We are currently waiting for the state test scores to be sent for the Exit Level Testing taken by the students. In the classroom, I have seen students be successful and be able to work problems and answer questions that they might otherwise not have been able to during instruction. I pull up individual reports weekly to see how much progress each student has made, and am able to give them grades for their work. I also pull up students' individual worksheets, which test them on the work they had specifically been doing, to give them test grades for the class. Students are pleased to look at their individual report and to see how many lessons they have added to their count.