

Implementation Strategies

St. Johns Middle School, St. Johns Unified School District
St. Johns, AZ

Grade(s): 4 – 8

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: Intervention, Supplement, At-Risk Students

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 20%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1.75 hours per week

ALEKS Course: Mathematics – LV 4 (with QuickTables), Mathematics – LV 5 (with QuickTables), Arithmetic (with QuickTables), Foundations of High School Math

Tambra Herbert, Math Interventionist

This is the first year we have used ALEKS and I really love the program. I haven't used all the aspects of the program, but love the ones I have. We use QuickTables, various course products, and assessments. I love the Time and Topic report because it is so helpful to be able to see what kids have been accomplishing or not accomplishing. I have kids on ALEKS for 30 minutes every day. All but a couple of students have finished their first pie and are working on their second. We have a smaller computer lab and take a few struggling kids from classes to work throughout the day. I have also had a couple of Special Education students work through the year. I am excited to use ALEKS next year and hopefully reach even more kids.

Scenario

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

The basic challenges before were language barriers, time on task, individual placements, and motivation to do better.

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

4 days per week.

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

25 minutes.

Implementation

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

No, students get to choose.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

Students come to the lab area at the time the teachers have set up with me.

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

They are encouraged, but most don't. I have had a couple who have. Some don't have Internet access at home.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I share reports with students and encourage them to take them home and show their parents. I send home certificates with students when finishing a pie piece or their whole pie.

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?

Right now it is used only as intervention and not part of classroom grading.

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

I plan to next year, even more so. I watch students and try to keep them working on ALEKS instead of talking. If they work well during the four days, they get to do other math games on Fridays. It is a motivator. Now with the Time and Topic report it is much easier to track.

Learning Outcomes

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

I have been very pleased with the achievements made by students. They are excited to see their pies grow, especially when they finish their pies. They get more excited as they get closer to finishing their pie. I also see struggling students grasp concepts they haven't learned in the past. I work with a couple of Special Education students who have improved in several skill areas when others thought they couldn't. QuickTables is also excellent for working on math facts. I can't wait to see the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) scores to see how much they improved.

Best Practices

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

To mix things up, if students work on ALEKS for the four assigned days, they are allowed to play approved math games on Friday.