

Implementation Strategies

Broken Bow Middle School, Broken Bow Public Schools
Broken Bow, NE

Grade(s): 6 – 8

Scenario: Computer Lab

Purpose: RtI, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 15%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1.5 hours per week; 27 hours per term

ALEKS Course: RtI 8, Middle School Math Course 3

Vickie Johnson, Teacher

I have been very pleased with ALEKS over the past two years. This is our first year using the RtI 8 course, and so far I have seen a lot of growth in the students. I feel it targets and allows them to work on their weak areas. There are nothing but good things at this point in time. Thank you for a great product that helps my students to improve.

Scenario

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

They struggled on even very basic operations with whole numbers. They also struggled with retention of math skills.

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?

50 minutes.

Implementation

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

Not really. I just generally allow the students to start with whole numbers, then rational numbers, Algebra, Geometry, data, and functions.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

I have actually split my class into two sections. On one day, Group A has in-class instruction while Group B works on ALEKS, and the next day we flip the two groups. The students are monitored by a Paraeducator on the days they are doing ALEKS. They generally work on the specified sections of the pie that ALEKS allows them to work on.

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

I do not modify a lot since ALEKS is used as a supplement rather than the main part of the course.

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

I encourage them every class period, but few rarely do it outside of school.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

I send home a letter at the beginning of the school year and at the end of each quarter. I encourage the parents to encourage their students to get on at home and to work with them to see what ALEKS is all about.

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. Some students do not have Internet access at home.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I will do a quiz every three weeks which counts as another assessment grade. All assessments are 95 percent of their grade. So it is

about 15 percent of the total grade.

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

No. I encourage them to master 25–30 topics per quarter.

Learning Outcomes

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

This year, most students have shown some improvement. In the past two years, I feel the students have improved their overall percentages by a minimum of 15 percent, with some around the 40 percent range. Most students are pleased with their overall progress in ALEKS.

Best Practices

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

I have a few students that have set a goal for themselves of completing a minimum of two more lessons each day than the previous day. Once they complete the lesson, they immediately go to the review questions for that lesson. Since ALEKS will come back and give them a review again, this process seems to be helping these particular students.