

# Implementation Strategies

**Villa Duchesne–Oak Hill School, Private**  
St. Louis, MO

**Grade(s):** K – 12

**Scenario:** Computer Lab, One-to-One Laptop Program, Computers in Classroom

**Purpose:** Supplement

**ALEKS Portion of Curriculum:** 35%

**Time Spent in ALEKS:** 2 hours per week, 18 hours per term

**ALEKS Course:** Middle School Math Course 2, Algebra Readiness, Algebra 1

## **Kelly Heintzelman, Teacher**

My overall experience with ALEKS has been positive. The program is very easy to navigate and use. I was organized from the get-go and spent about two weeks training my students how to login, use, and get the most out of ALEKS. My students love ALEKS. They are very independent when working on the program. Overall, my kids have done amazing, and all of them have increased their knowledge. I even have one student who has completed three courses in ALEKS and is challenged by the program. I love that if the children have completed something on ALEKS prior to my instruction, they remind me by saying, "I've done that on ALEKS."

## **Scenario**

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

Learning math facts is a challenge. I included QuickTables in the accounts of students who need the practice. Also, my fifth graders "skipped" a year in math. They are currently in a sixth grade curriculum, so we have some holes to fill. ALEKS does that beautifully.

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

1 day per week.

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

45 minutes.

## **Implementation**

### **How do you implement ALEKS?**

I pre-test before each chapter, and then plan according to concept. Those who have mastered the concept either work on ALEKS or on a project. All of the children work on ALEKS at least once a week. The children are assigned one and a half hours of ALEKS to complete each week at home.

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

I do not.

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

My classroom is controlled chaos. Each child has a monthly calendar. According to the results of the pre-test, the children are either in instruction with me, working on ALEKS, or completing an application project that I have created. The children come to class knowing what the expectations are for the day. If they are on ALEKS during class time, their homework that night is ALEKS. Project students finish the project. Finally, those working with me have a workbook or textbook page.

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

I really did not modify my teaching approach. However, ALEKS gave me another option for independent work.

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

For 1.5 – 2 hours per week.

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

Prior to beginning ALEKS, I sent an email describing the program and asking parents to login to the program on their home computers. After our first quarter, each parent received a printout of their child's progress. This really impacted the parents because they could see what their child knows, what they are learning, and what they are ready to learn.

## 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?**

If students are assigned to work on ALEKS during the day, they are assigned 30 minutes of ALEKS that night.

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

I give a participation grade for ALEKS once a week. I also give a quiz in ALEKS each week which I mark as a quiz grade. All quizzes are review.

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

I do not. However, I encourage the students to work on ALEKS each week. I also show each child their individual progress in ALEKS.

## Learning Outcomes

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

My students love ALEKS. They are very independent when working on the program. Overall, my kids have done amazing, and all of them have increased their knowledge. I even have one student who has completed three courses in ALEKS and is challenged by the program. I love that if the children have completed something on ALEKS prior to my instruction, they remind me by saying, "I've done that on ALEKS."

## Best Practices

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

In the beginning of the year, I require each student to have an ALEKS notebook. I give them a label with their login information which they stick on the inside cover. They use that notebook every time they log into ALEKS. They date each page and write the topic they are working on. If they are working on a quiz, they label that page "Quiz;" this is the same for assessments. I do this because many of my kids write notes when they hit "Explain," and by having a separate ALEKS notebook, they can go back and look through their notes.