

Implementation Strategies

Mount Anthony Union Middle School, Mount Anthony Union High School District 14
Bennington, VT

Grade(s): 6 – 8

Scenario: Computers in Classroom, Home Access

Purpose: Improve State Test Scores, At-Risk Students, Core Curriculum, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 15%

Time Spent in ALEKS: Varies

ALEKS Course: Middle School Math Course 2

Christine Keklak, Teacher

I am using the ALEKS program with a group of 21 students taking a remedial math class. These are students that needed extra support, practice, and confidence in math in order to be successful. Since I started using ALEKS, they have become more independent in their learning and have gained confidence. They really like using the program because it helps them learn for themselves. I like the program because it shows me standards that I need to review or ones that students have mastered right away. I would definitely recommend ALEKS.

Scenario

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

These students were not meeting state standards, but could with extra incentive. The challenges ranged from math facts to lack of confidence.

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?

This year, I used it to see what the program was about and to familiarize myself with how it works and didn't use it as much for assignments, but rather for practice. Next year I will start with the QuickTables and the Initial Assessment and then build lessons around the missing pieces of the pie.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

Not this time, however, I would next time. I would definitely do the QuickTables portion first. The order of topics would depend on whether students had prior knowledge and would vary from year to year based on the level of each student.

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

I use ALEKS for QuickTables and the Initial Assessment. Students have to complete a certain percentage in the learning mode or in their pie and they are given time in class with assistance to work on that. Also, students can work on ALEKS at home. I will also teach a lesson and then they have to complete the assignment related to the topic for homework.

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

Honestly, I didn't modify it much because I was not implementing the program fully.

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

Every week. I have made it a portion of their final grade.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

This year, only 21 students' parents were involved. Many of them really like it.

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?

ALEKS is about 25 percent of their homework. Many students in our school do not have access to computers and Internet at home (or they have dial-up). This is an issue our school is working on.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

ALEKS will count as one ninth of the students' final average for the year.

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

I did not require a specific amount of progress this year; however, I will next year.

Learning Outcomes

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

The fact that students who hated math and were generally afraid to start a problem on their own are now working independently and trying to learn as a personal challenge is great progress to me. Our school has tried three different math programs out on the market. Of the three, all of the students that have liked ALEKS the best. They love seeing their pie grow each time they are successful. They have passed up math computer games to gain pieces of their pie.