

Implementation Strategies

Paulo Freire Freedom School, El Pueblo Integral
Tucson, AZ

Grade(s): 6 – 8

Scenario: Computers in Classroom, Laptop Carts, Home Access

Purpose: Intervention, After-School, Supplement

ALEKS Portion of Curriculum: 10%

Time Spent in ALEKS: 1 hour per week, 10 hours per term

ALEKS Course: Middle School Math Course 2

Kight Pruszynski, Teacher

Students are so motivated to work on ALEKS. It is tailored to their level and needs, and the pie graph is a great visual motivator. The data has been tremendously useful for me to group students based on their needs and to provide targeted instruction. The students have been engaged during class, allowing me to work with smaller groups. Those students who learn quickly are able to accelerate in their learning. Those who are distracted in whole groups are able to focus on ALEKS because instruction is presented to them on a one-on-one basis. They get very excited about their growth.

Scenario

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

Tracking data on where students were at on learning objectives, and providing targeted instruction to small groups.

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?

10–20 minutes.

Implementation

How do you implement ALEKS?

ALEKS helps me to track data, differentiate students, and provide targeted instruction to small groups. It supplements the curriculum, and it gives me useful information for intervention groupings/topics.

Do you cover ALEKS concepts in a particular order?

Somewhat of a spiral model, with a heavy emphasis on the foundations (number sense, operations, fractions, decimals, etc.).

How do you structure your class period with ALEKS?

On many days, students work on ALEKS, while I call small to medium sized groups and teach them skills that the students on ALEKS have already mastered or aren't yet ready to learn.

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

I work more with small groups on targeted instruction.

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

It is by student choice. Twenty minutes for two or three days per week would be nice, but it is optional.

How do you cultivate parental involvement and support for ALEKS?

Parents are given access information, and it is mentioned briefly in some emails and in progress reports that are sent home. However, I leave their involvement up to them.

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 the homework load, but I assign very little homework.

How do you incorporate ALEKS into your grading system?

I look at how much time students spend using ALEKS and how much progress they are making. It's about 20 percent of the grade.

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

No, I speak with students individually if I feel that they haven't been working hard.

Learning Outcomes

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

Those students who learn quickly are able to accelerate in their learning. Those who are distracted in whole groups are able to focus on ALEKS because instruction is presented to them on a one-on-one basis. They get very excited about their growth.

Best Practices

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

Take the time to get to know the rich data resources available on ALEKS! Use the data for specific skill groupings. Don't have all the students on ALEKS at the same time. It's a great opportunity to work with small groups while others are working in the program. Make sure to monitor students during assessments, or have some way of making sure that they aren't asking others or using the Internet for answers.