

Explicit Instruction

Lesson Outline

A typical lesson in literacy and numeracy should always include the following:

Warm Up

The warm up is essential for students to revise information, skills and concepts they have previously learned. By revising these daily in literacy and numeracy, students are able to move knowledge from short-term to long-term memory, as well as build automaticity. This means when they need to apply their knowledge to solve problems or attempt new concepts, students don't have to spend time trying to remember basic facts or spelling rules and can deepen their understanding of a concept.

These parts are essential in a warm up to build student success.

30/40/30 – Differentiation for support, benchmark and extension groups

Recite/Recall/Apply

Recite: Students read or identify information

Recall: Students can remember information without reading it

Apply: Students can use information to problem solve

CFU – Check for understanding: teachers are consistently checking for understanding throughout warm ups, ensuring students have mastered concepts.

Learning Objective and Success Criteria

It is important for the students to understand what it is we are teaching, why they need to learn each skill and concept and how they can demonstrate their understanding.

It includes:

Concept - WHAT they are learning

Skill - How they will demonstrate understanding of the skill

Context – what they will be using the skill for

The learning objective must be clear, relevant, linked to assessment/curriculum and repeated.

I do

The 'I do' is where the teacher 'self talks' the skill or concept, broken down into simple, easy to remember steps. Repeated modelling of the skill or concept is required to ensure students see its application through problem solving.

We do

This is the opportunity for teachers to guide the students through the steps, as a whole class, in small groups or individually. It allows practise of the steps with the support of the teacher, and involves lots of checking for understanding to ensure students are ready for independent practise. Student self talk is used to promote problem solving and assist students moving knowledge from short-term to long-term memory.

You do

Individual tasks are set for students (matched directly to the success criteria) so that they can practise solving problems independently. Teachers will only move to this step once 80% of the class have mastered the skill, and provide one-on-one or small group support to students still needing assistance. Without 80% mastery, teachers will repeat the 'I do, we do' until students gain full understanding of a skill or concept. During the 'you do', teachers ensure they give immediate feedback to students to support mastery. Student self talk is important as it demonstrates student understanding of a concept and will support the students to move their knowledge from short-term to long-term memory.

Differentiation is important at this stage of the lesson, so that students are completing work at their level and can demonstrate success at their level.

Plough Back

A plough back allows teachers to revise the skill or concept taught, while checking for understanding once again. This part of the lesson can look different for each skill or concept. It can include 'exit passes', whole class marking, individual questioning, student self talk or a quiz. Once a skill or concept has been taught, it is moved into the next warm up to ensure students are frequently using and practising each skill.

Explicit Teaching Break Down

The following elements of Explicit Instruction must be considered before, during and after each lesson.

1. Focus instruction on critical content

Teach skills, strategies and vocabulary terms, concepts and rules that will empower students in the future and match the students' instructional needs.

2. Sequence Skills logically

Consider several curricular variables, such as teaching easier skills before harder skills; teaching high frequency skills then less frequent, ensuring mastery of

prerequisites to a skill before teaching the skill itself; separating skills and strategies that are similar and thus may be confusing to students.

3. Break down complex skills and strategies into smaller instructional units.

Teach in small steps. Segmenting complex skills into smaller instructional units of new materials addresses concerns about cognitive overloading, processing demands and the capacity of students' working memory. Once mastered, units are synthesised (practised as a whole).

4. Design organised and focused lessons

Make sure lessons are organised and focused in order to make optimal use of instructional time. Organised lessons are on topic, well sequenced and contain no irrelevant digressions.

5. Begin lessons with a clear statement of the lesson's goals and your expectations

Tell the students what they are going to learn today and why it is important (Learning Intention & Success Criteria). Students achieve much higher if they understand the instructional goals and outcomes expected, as well as how the information of skills presented will help them.

6. Review prior knowledge and skills before beginning the lesson

Provide a review of relevant information. Verify that students have the prerequisite skills and knowledge to learn the new skill or concept about to be taught. This element provides opportunity to link the new knowledge with related skills and knowledge.

7. Provide step by step demonstrations

Model the skill and clarify the decision-making processes needed to complete the task or procedure by thinking aloud as you perform the skill. Clearly demonstrate the target skill or strategy in order to show the students a model of proficiency.

8. Use clear and concise language

Use consistent and unambiguous wording and terminology. The complexity of your speech (vocabulary, sentence structure) should depend on students' receptive vocabulary to reduce possible confusion.

9. Provide an adequate range of examples and non-examples

In order to establish the boundaries of when and when not to apply a skill, strategy, concept or rule, provide a wide range of examples and non-examples. A wide range of examples illustrating situations when the skill will or should be used or applied is necessary so that students do not under use it. Conversely, presenting a wide range of non-examples reduces the possibility of students using the skill inappropriately.

10. Provide guided and supported practice

In order to promote initial success and build confidence, regulate the difficulty of practice opportunities during the lesson and provide students with guidance in

skill performance. When students demonstrate success, you can gradually increase the task difficulty as you decrease the level of guidance.

11. Request frequent responses

Plan for high levels of student to student and student to teacher interaction via the use of questioning. Allowing the students to respond frequently (oral, written or actions) helps them focus on the lesson content, provides opportunities for student elaboration, assists you in checking for understanding and keeps students active and attentive.

12. Monitor student performance closely

Carefully watch and listen to students' responses so that you can verify mastery as well as make timely adjustments in instruction if students are making errors. Close monitoring also allows you to provide feedback to students about how well they are doing.

13. Provide immediate, affirmative and corrective feedback

Follow up students' responses as quickly as you can. Immediate feedback to students about the accuracy of their responses will help ensure high rates of success and reduces the likelihood of practising errors.

14. Deliver the lesson at a brisk pace

Deliver instruction at an appropriate pace to optimise instructional time. Use a rate of presentation that is brisk but includes a reasonable amount of time for students' thinking/processing, especially when they are learning new material. The desired pace is neither so slow that students get bored nor so quick that they can't keep up.

15. Help students organise knowledge

Because many students have difficulty seeing how some skills and concepts fit together, it is important to use teaching techniques that make these connections more apparent or explicit. Well-organized and connected information makes it easier for students to retrieve information and facilitate its integration with new material.

16. Provide distributed and cumulative practice.

Distributed (vs. massed) practice refers to multiple opportunities to practise a skill over time.

Cumulative practice is a method for providing distributed practice by including practice opportunities that address both previously and newly acquired skills.