Indicators in ACTION™

Instructional Planning Workbook

Building Strong Instructional Teams
Aligning Instruction
Differentiating Instruction
Preparing for Instruction

Academic Development Institute

Academic Development Institute
121 N. Kickapoo Street
Lincoln, Illinois 62656
217-732-6462

www.adi.org

Information   Tools   Training

Positive results for students will come from changes in the knowledge, skill, and behavior of their teachers and parents. State policies and programs must provide the opportunity, support, incentive, and expectation for adults close to the lives of children to make wise decisions.

Table of Contents

Part 1: Building Strong Instructional Team

Part II: Aligning Instruction

Part III: Differentiating Instruction

Part IV: Preparing for Instruction

Appendix

Success Indicators

School Leadership and Decision Making: Establishing a team structure with specific duties and time for instructional planning.

- A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan & school governance policy.
- Teachers are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject-area instructional teams.
- Instructional teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop & refine units of instruction & review student learning data.
- All teams prepare agendas for their meetings.
- All teams maintain official minutes of their meetings.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in aligning instruction with standards and benchmarks.

- Instructional teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.
- Units of instruction include standards-based objectives & criteria for mastery.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in assessing and monitoring student mastery.

- Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards based objectives.
- Unit pre-/post-tests results are reviewed by the instructional team.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in differentiating and aligning learning activities

- Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.
- Materials for standards-aligned learning activities are well-organized, labeled, & stored for convenient use by teachers.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Assessing student learning frequently with standards-based assessments.

- Instructional teams use student-learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Instructional teams use student-learning data to plan instruction.
- Instructional teams use student-learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement & plan instruction accordingly.
- Instructional teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum & instructional plans & to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help &students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of early mastery of objectives).

Classroom Instruction: Expecting and monitoring sound instruction in a variety of modes—Preparation

- All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, & assessment.
- All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.
- All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods and maintain a record of the results.
- All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests & other methods of assessment.

Instructional Planning Module Objectives

Module Objectives:

As a result of this module, participants/instructional teams will know and be able to:

- Recognize indicators of successful instructional planning practice
- Implement practices that focus instructional teaming discussions and actions on curricular alignment, student learning, and improved instructional practice
- Follow steps to ensure that instructional units and instructional delivery are aligned with standards-based curricular objectives
- Collect and examine student learning data to personalize instruction, achieve greater curricular alignment, and improve instructional strategies
- Plan units of instruction using a variety of instructional modes

Success Indicators for

Part 1: Building Strong Instructional Teams

School Leadership and Decision Making: Establishing a team structure with specific duties and time for instructional planning.

- A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan & school governance policy.
- Teachers are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject-area instructional teams.
- Instructional teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop & refine units of instruction & review student learning data.
- All teams prepare agendas for their meetings.
- All teams maintain official minutes of their meetings.
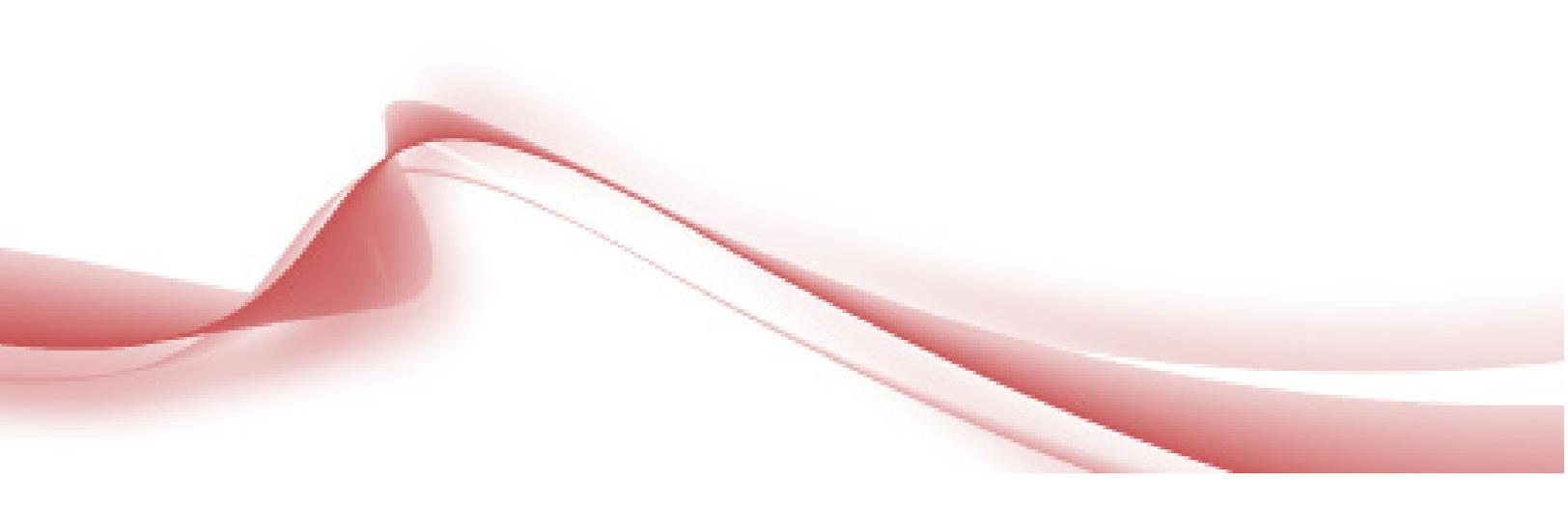
Building Strong Instructional Teams

Continuous school improvement to achieve student success requires a coordinated team approach (shared leadership) and access to the information (data) upon which good decisions can be made. The decisions of teams and of individual teachers are guided by student learning data and data about instructional practices. Teachers, working in teams, align learning objectives with standards and determine grade-level unit assessments. Schools today operate within the strictures of state learning standards, and these standards provide a skeleton for the curriculum. As teachers, in teams and individually, add flesh to this skeleton, they complete the scope of what students have the opportunity to learn in the school. The curriculum is continually examined and carefully aligned with standards, assessments, and instructional strategies. Materials are developed and shared by teams of teachers to enrich the curriculum.

Instructional Teams (grade-level or subject area) of teachers operate most effectively when they meet for two purposes: 1) to conduct business, review student progress, and coordinate their efforts, and 2) to co-develop aligned units of instruction and materials related to them. The business meetings may be more frequent and for smaller blocks of time (twice a month for an hour each, for example). But the instructional planning meetings require blocks of time for concentrated work (4 to 6 hours, once a month, for example, plus days before the school year begins).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When Can We Meet?

- Instructional Teams need common daily planning time. If, in the beginning of restructuring, this cannot be accomplished, schedule as much time as possible for common collaborative planning. Team meeting time can be found and carved out of workshop days, time between student dismissal and teacher fulfillment of the contractual obligation, common lunch times, common preps when elementary students are pulled for special teachers, and common preps for middle and high school teachers as part of regularly scheduled prep time. But the goal should be to meet for two purposes: 1) to conduct business, review student progress, and coordinate their efforts, and 2) to co-develop aligned units of instruction and materials related to them. The business meetings can be short (an hour is ideal) and more frequent. But instructional planning requires blocks of time—4 to 6 hours each meeting.

2. Where Should We Meet?

- Where you meet depends on the purpose of the meeting. If possible, make the meeting place convenient, quiet, and somewhat secluded. It might be the library, the guidance office, the principal's office, or someone's classroom. Don't meet in the lounge or teachers' room unless you have to, because you will be interrupted.

3. How Often Should We Meet?

- Team meeting time needs to be scheduled at the start of the year. Twice a month is a bare minimum for business meetings; weekly meetings are better. A few large blocks of time interspersed with regular meetings help get work done.

4. How Do We Meet? What Should We Do?

- Notify everyone where to meet.

- Let the secretary or the principal know where you are and ask everyone to leave you undisturbed unless absolutely necessary.

- Be punctual.
  - The telephone call can wait and so can the copy machine.
  - If the meeting is after school or during a prep period, give yourselves a few minutes to grab a drink or use the restroom.
  - If you must be late, tell your teammates or send word to them.
  - Excuse yourself if stopped by others on the way to the meeting.

- Meet for a scheduled time and end on time.
  - Unless a team has a released-time day, team meetings of 45 minutes to an hour or the length of a prep period are usually enough.

- Use an agenda and follow it. (Template provided)
- Enlist a team leader.
- Meet with a timekeeper.
  - Have someone mind the time and keep discussions on schedule.
- Meet with a note-taker.
  - The note-taker will record the Instructional Team minutes, with copies kept by the team and also by the principal.
- Meet with a focus (a well defined purpose) and enlist someone to keep the team on task (focus keeper)
  - A central focus of Instructional Team meetings is the preparation and refinement of units of instruction.
  - A second focus is analysis of student learning data, including results of unit tests.

Instructional Team Meeting Agenda Template

School Name: _____

Team Name: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Meeting Date: _____

Time Meeting Begins: _____

Time Meeting Adjourns: _____

Team Leader: _____

Approval of Minutes from previous Meeting:

Topics to discuss:

    Team Effectiveness:

    Student Learning Data:

    Instruction:

    Curriculum:

    Student Behavior:

    Parents:

Other Business:

Adjournment:

Date, time, and location of next meeting: _____

Instructional Team Meeting Minutes Template

School Name: _____

Team Name: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Meeting Date: _____

Time Meeting Begins: _____

Time Meeting Adjourns: _____

Team Leader: _____

Members Present: _____

_____

_____

_____

Approval of minutes from previous meeting:

Notes and actions taken on topics discussed

    Team Effectiveness:

    Student Learning Data:

    Instruction:Curriculum:

    Student Behavior:

Parents:

Other Business:

Adjournment:

Date, time, and location of next meeting: _____

Success Indicators for

Part II: Aligning Instruction

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in aligning instruction with standards and benchmarks.

- Instructional teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.
- Units of instruction include standards-based objectives & criteria for mastery.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in assessing and monitoring student mastery.

- Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards based objectives.
- Unit pre-/post-tests results are reviewed by the instructional team.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in differentiating and aligning learning activities

- Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Assessing student learning frequently with standards-based assessments.

- Instructional teams use student-learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.

Seven Steps for Developing a Unit Plan

Developing a unit plan can seem like an overwhelming task. But, we've outlined seven steps that you and your instructional team can follow to manage the process and to make sure that all your bases are covered. At the end, you will have a standards-aligned Unit Plan that includes SMART objectives, criteria to determine mastery of objectives, and assessments to measure mastery.

In this workbook, we provided you with a Unit Plan Template. This template provides a way to organize and align the components of the Unit Plan. It will be helpful as you follow along with this content.

Before we go into detail with each step, they are listed here for your review.

1. Identify the Units of Instruction that will be covered in a year.

2. Determine the concepts, principles, and skills that a unit will cover.

3. Identify the standards and benchmarks that apply to the grade level and unit topic.

4. Develop all objectives that clearly align to the selected standards and benchmarks.

5. Determine the best objective descriptors.

6. Consider the most appropriate criteria for mastery.

7. Develop pre/post test items that are clear, specific, and would provide evidence of mastery consistent with the established criteria.

Step 1: Identify the Units of Instruction

Identifying the Units of Instruction for the year is a helpful way to organize all that has to be accomplished. It's a good, easy first step.

We've provided you with a "Defining Units of Instruction" template in your workbook to guide your team in listing all of the Units that will be covered for your subject and grade level.

Step 2: Determine the concepts, principles, and skills that a unit will cover

Once the team has identified the units, list the concepts, principles, and skills that the unit will cover. Your district or state may have already done this work in the form of curriculum guides. If so, use them as your foundation.

Step 3: Identify the standards and benchmarks that apply to the grade level and unit topic

The standards and benchmarks are established by the state or district and communicate what mastery of a particular concept or skill includes. They are the "skeleton" of the curriculum and will inform the development of objectives.

A Standard is a broad description of what students in a particular grade level should, at a minimum, know and be able to do.

A Benchmark is a more specific description of what students in multiple grade levels should, at a minimum, know and be able to do.

Use of the "Aligning Units to Standards" template helps Instructional Teams match Units of Instruction with the appropriate district or state standards and benchmarks.

Step 4: Develop all objectives that clearly align to the selected standards and benchmarks.

This step is so important it has there is an entire Success Indicator dedicated to it. Using the benchmarks will help ensure that the objectives are standards-aligned. They will also assist instructional teams in:

• Determining what the "target" for learning within a grade level is

• Selecting the verb that defines exactly what students should be able to do at that grade level

• Determining the level of student action they expect

• Once these three points are defined, Instructional Teams are ready to formulate them into a TARGET objective.

A target objective is specific and:

• Aimed at a benchmark and appropriate to the grade level

- Specific enough that it can be taught and mastered within a week
- Expressed as, "The student will be able to…(insert observable or measurable student action)"
- Descriptive of the student's performance behavior—what the student shows he/she knows or can do

Here's one example of a well-written target objective:

The student will be able to name the four primary directions on a navigational compass. (This is an objective at the level of general knowledge).

Step 5: Determine the best objective descriptors

The objective descriptor is for recordkeeping. It allows a teacher/team to give identification of an aligned instructional objective in minimal words.

Target Objective: The student will be able to name the four primary directions on a navigational compass.

Objective Descriptor: name directions on compass

Step 6: Consider the most appropriate criteria for mastery

The objective states what the student will be able to do.

The criteria for mastery gives the conditions under which the objective will be met and the level of accuracy that is expected.

Target Objective: *The student will be able to name the four primary directions on a navigational compass.*

Criteria for mastery: *Given a blank compass face, the student will write the name of the four primary directions on the correct locations.*

If the student solves 8 out of 10 (80%) the teacher may decide that the student has mastered the objective but made a couple of calculation errors.

Other objectives may not leave room for error. For instance, if the objective is for students to write their name, the teacher may expect 100% accuracy.

Step 7: Develop pre/post test items that are clear, specific, and would provide evidence of mastery consistent with the established criteria.

There is one final step in the process: The development of pre- and post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives. The pre-test and the post-test are the same test; the difference is in the timing of their administration.

The pre-test is a quick assessment at the beginning of the unit or period of instruction to gauge each student's readiness for an objective and inform the need for "leveled objectives" and/or assignments. The pre-test should not be graded.

The post-test is a way to get a quick read on students' mastery after the completion of the unit or after completion of the period of instruction allotted for the objective. When instruction is aligned, teachers will have several other ways to determine mastery as well.

Between the pre-test and the post-test, students will complete a variety of learning activities and possibly other assessments. The results of the post-test may be graded, or included as part of larger graded tests.

To develop a pre and post-test item, let's return to our target objective and criteria for mastery:

Target Objective: *The student will be able to label the four primary directions on a navigational compass.*

Criteria for Mastery: *Given a blank compass face, the student will write the name of the four primary directions on the correct locations.*

Pre-Test/Post-Test Item: *Mark the four primary directions on the blank compass face.*

Be sure to note that a pre/post test is Instructional Team created and may include both verbal and written questions and answers as appropriate to the grade level. It is one means for quickly checking each student's readiness for a unit (pre-test) and mastery of unit objectives (post-test).

Breaking the Code

In order to connect the components in aligning instruction to curriculum and standards, a system of codes and descriptors/titles is helpful.

Grade Level
Subject
Unit Sequence
Objective Sequence
Objective Level

3R01-01T

Standard/Benchmark Code: The code designated by the state or district for the standard/benchmark.

Standard/Benchmark Descriptor: Two to four words that describe the entire standard/benchmark.

Unit Code: Grade level, Subject, Sequence Number of Unit (example: 3R01 for third grade reading, first unit)

Unit Title: A phrase that describes the overall theme of the unit.

Objective Code: Unit Code plus a hyphen and a sequential number for each objective in the unit followed by a T, P, or E for Target, Prerequisite or Enhanced (example: 3R01-01T for third grade reading, first unit, first target objective). The Prerequisite and Enhanced levels for this objective would carry the same sequence number (3R01-01P for Prerequisite; 3R01-01E for Enhanced).

Objective Descriptor: Two to four words that describe the objective.

Unit Plan EXAMPLE

Grade Level: 3rd **Subject:** Reading **Unit of Instruction Code:** 3R01

Page: 1

Unit of Instruction Title: Effective Communication

Standard/ Benchmark (Code)	Target Objectives (with Objective Code Prefix)	Objective Descriptor	Criteria for Mastery	Pre–Test/ Post Test Items
A3	3R01-01T Construct proper sentences using correct grammar, punctuation, capitalization.	Sentence structure	When given a rubric that provides proper sentence structure, the student develops properly written sentences with 80% mastery.	1. Given a bank of vocabulary words, the student writes two proper sentences.
A3	3R01-02T Determine the appropriate use of imperative and exclamatory sentences.	Oral reading	The student marks the correct punctuation for imperative and exclamatory sentences with 80% mastery.	2. Given a variety of unmarked sentences, the student correctly marks and identifies sentence.

Unit Plan Template

Grade Level: _____ Subject: _____ Unit of Instruction Code: _____ Page: _____

Unit of Instruction Title: _____

Standard/Benchmark (Code)	Target Objectives (with Objective Code Prefix)	Objective Descriptor	Criteria for Mastery	Pre-Test/ Post Test Items

19

Units of Instruction

The unit plan is developed by the Instructional Team to define a **unit of instruction** and outline the standards and target objectives (typically grade level) addressed in the unit of instruction. A unit of instruction is typically about four weeks of work within a subject area.

The Instructional Team:

1. Determines the concepts, principles, and skills that will be covered within the unit.
2. Identifies the standards/benchmarks that apply to the grade level and unit topic. Should be explicit within those grade level benchmarks.
3. Develops all objectives that clearly align to the selected standards/benchmarks.
4. Names the objective codes in sequential order.
5. Determines the best objective descriptors.
6. Considers the most appropriate elements for mastery. Discusses this thoroughly, making sure all elements are clear. Name them.
7. Develops pr-/post-test items that are clear and specific and would provide evidence of mastery consistent with the criteria established.

Note: A pre-/post-test is teacher (Instructional Team) created and may include both verbal and written questions and answers as appropriate to the grade level. It is one means for quickly checking each student's readiness for a unit (pre) and mastery of unit objectives (post).

Defining Units of Instruction Template

School: _____

Subject: _____ Grade Level: _____

Length of Class Period for this Subject: _____ Days per Week: _____

1. What is the length of time of a unit of instruction for your subject and grade level (typically four to six weeks)?_____

2. How many do you cover in a school year (typically 6, 8, or 9)? _____

3. What are the titles of your units?

   Unit 1: _____

   Unit 2: _____

   Unit 3: _____

   Unit 4: _____

   Unit 5: _____

   Unit 6: _____

   Unit 7: _____

   Unit 8: _____

   Unit 9: _____

   Unit 10: _____

Aligned Instruction

Alignment is a process of matching up the written curriculum (the one that appears in curriculum guides for a school or district) with the tested curriculum (the one that appears in the tests) and the supported curriculum (the one that appears in textbooks and other resources) to make the taught curriculum (the one the teacher actually delivers) more effective. The alignment process serves two related purposes: It serves as a check on guide/text/test congruence, and it provides teachers with an organizational structure for their own planning (Glatthorn, 1995).

"Alignment is an explicit match between the taught and the tested curriculum" (Schmoker, 2001, p. 53). With the development of state learning standards and state standards-based assessments, aligning the curriculum (what is taught) to the assessment is accomplished by aligning the curriculum with the standards on which the assessments are based.

"One of the chief failings of school systems is the bewildering array of options teachers have for teaching, and the haphazardness this creates. Teachers pick and choose from among these options to teach an increasingly idiosyncratic versus common set of learning objectives and skills – even though common standards are essential to clear communication, coherence, and alignment among instructional effort, resources, and programs" (Rosenholtz, 1991, pp. 17–18). Again, this fretting about a common set of learning objectives, expressed in 1991, has been ameliorated by the development of state learning standards and assessments. But that is only one step toward solving the problem of "haphazardness." The next big step is for teachers to align their "taught curriculum" with standards.

Cotton (2000) has identified alignment as one of the schooling practices that matters most. In her list of the kinds of monitoring of student progress that should be taking place in schools, there are 8 practices listed:

1. Collecting and reviewing student performance data to ensure early identification and support for students with learning difficulties.
2. Establishing and using procedures for collecting, summarizing, and reporting student achievement information.
3. Reviewing test results, grade reports, and other materials to identify problems and taking action based on the findings.
4. Reviewing assessment instruments and methods for their suitability to the students being evaluated, and making changes as needed.
5. Making summaries of student performance available to all staff for their use in planning; making periodic reports to parents and community members.
6. Using assessment methods beyond standardized achievement tests (e.g., performance assessments, portfolios) to enrich their understanding of students' progress.
7. Aligning classroom assessments of student performance with the written curriculum and actual instruction.
8. Routinely checking students' understanding by conducting recitations, checking students' work during seat work periods, assigning and checking homework, administering quizzes, and reviewing student performance data. (Cotton, 2000, pp. 12–13).

Cotton, K. (2000). *The schooling practices that matter most*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Glatthorn, A. (1995). *Developing a quality curriculum*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Schmoker, M. (2001). *The results handbook: Practical strategies from dramatically improved schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1991). *Teacher's workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Aligning Units to Standards

Which standards/benchmarks will you address for mastery in each unit?

	Standard Code		Brief Descriptor of Standard/Benchmark
Unit 1			
Unit 2			
Unit 3			
Unit 4			
Unit 5			
Unit 6			
Unit 7			

Learning Plan Grid: Filling the Toolbox

The unit plan aligns the curriculum to standards and benchmarks. The next step is to align the curriculum to instruction. This is where the real fun begins—teachers sharing their most successful instructional strategies for meeting each objective in the unit of instruction. Learning plan grids level each objective into three tiers—target, enhanced, and prerequisite. The learning plan grid also differentiates learning activities among various modes of instruction.

When teachers have taken the time to pre-plan for differentiated instruction in their classrooms, they have a tool-box of instructional choices ready to go. The teacher's ability to work with varied groups or individuals within the classroom setting is made possible through differentiated instruction. Learning opportunities are enriched and strengthened. Classroom time is maximized. Students, taught to share the responsibility, become practiced in making decisions. They are better prepared for classroom work and life.

Things to consider when developing a Learning Plan Grid and Activity Instructions:

Once a team has a well-developed unit plan that identifies clear target level (grade level) objectives and assessments that measure a student's ability or skill level in that objective, the learning plan grid becomes a teacher's best "toolbox" of learning opportunities. The toolbox is filled with aligned learning activities the teacher can access to differentiate instruction for each student, based on classroom assessment of the student's prior learning and readiness for the objective.

Success Indicators for

Part III: Differentiating Instruction

Classroom Instruction: Expecting and monitoring sound instruction in a variety of modes—Preparation

- All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods and maintain a record of the results.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Assessing student learning frequently with standards-based assessments.

- Instructional teams use student-learning data to plan instruction.
- Instructional teams use student-learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement & plan instruction accordingly.
- Instructional teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of early mastery of objectives).

Student Profile

Gathering student learning data by an individual teacher helps to clarify the purpose of achievement through the scope of the whole child. Recording that data in a framework that encourages reflection and conversation within an Instructional Team builds a pathway for decision-making. A *Student Profile* is a suggested framework for an Instructional Team to begin a record of each of their students that concretely provides an on-going glimpse of the child's classroom achievement and supports their conversation of assessment data, behavior, and parents. That profile, or record, might include a concise comment from the child's previous teacher. An introductory letter sent by the new teacher at the beginning of the school year could request insightful and simple information by the parents and child. Ongoing data gleaned from classroom assessments, portfolios, and the student's effort at differentiated classroom activities found in the profile gives a quick, but broad, overview of a student's motivation and achievement. This record succinctly communicates a student's efficacy to those most closely connected and responsible for his/her achievement at a specific time (grade level/subject) in a lifetime pursuit of learning.

Note: It is a good idea to complete a summary form at each parent-teacher-student conference. These forms are maintained and passed from teacher to teacher, year to year, so that the teacher has a record of previous parent-teacher-student conferences. This "data" may be added to that described above.

A *Student Profile* can provide a variety of information (data) to the teacher that is reviewed on an on-going basis, and supplemented. While academic achievement is at the forefront of a school's concern, we also recognize the value of "knowing the whole person." The S*tudent Profile* can perform as that more complete description of the student.

Student Profile Template

Student's Name _____ **Teacher's Name** _____ **Grade** _____

Parents/Guardians _____

Address _____ **Phone Number** _____ **Subject:** _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Interests/Abilities	Classroom Diagnostic Data	Instructional Strategies/Monitoring
Previous Teacher	Unit Post-test Results	Student's Strengths:
What is the most important thing I need to know about this child?	1) 2) 3)	
Child	4)	Student's Difficulties:
What do I need to know about you?	5) 6) 7)	
Interests	8) 9) 10)	SLP activities Quarterly Ratings Independent ___ ___ ___ ___ Cooperative ___ ___ ___ ___ Activity ___ ___ ___ ___ Homework Very Good (VG), Good (G), Poor (P)
Parent(s)	Student Work Portfolio	Classroom Support
What do I need to know about your child?	Review dates: Rating: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ Complete (C) Incomplete (I)	IEP Highlights Co-Teacher Other
Clubs, Extracurricular		

Please attach additional pages to this as needed.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

The unit pre-test gives the teacher a basis for individualizing work time assignments. Then the teacher adjusts the assignments in response to the student's demonstrated mastery of objectives in the assigned learning activities.

The class progress chart helps the teacher keep track of how everyone is progressing in meeting the objectives of the unit. Scanning the chart also helps the teacher know where to re-teach, alter whole-class instruction, or focus instruction at the teacher center. At the end of a unit of instruction (or the end of a grading period), the student learning report is sent home to parents to report the student's progress toward learning objectives.

Class Progress Chart Template

Teacher: _____

Grade Level: _____ **Unit of Instruction Code:** _____

Subject: _____

Unit of Instrucion: _____

Reporting Period: _____ **Pre-Test Date:** _____ **Post-Test Date:** _____

TARGET OBJECTIVES (code and descriptor)

Student's Name

◢ **Pre-Test Mastered** ▭ **Mastered in Activity** ◥ **Post-Test Mastered** ☒ **Pre- and Post-Test Mastered**

Success Indicators for

Part IV: Preparing for Instruction

Classroom Instruction: Expecting and monitoring sound instruction in a variety of modes—Preparation

- All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, & assessment.
- All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.
- All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests & other methods of assessment.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in differentiating and aligning learning activities

- Materials for standards-aligned learning activities are well-organized, labeled, & stored for convenient use by teachers.

Introduction to Whole-Class Instruction and Work Time

A teacher doesn't introduce new material by assigning differentiated and leveled learning activities. The teacher begins by directly teaching the new material through whole-class instruction. Whole-class instruction is also an instructional mode. It is the keystone instructional mode, from which the differentiated learning activities flow through the other modes.

Classroom time, then, consists of two categories:

- Whole-class instruction, and
- Work time

Work time is when students are engaged in learning through the instructional modes other than whole-class instruction. Work time allows for various modes of instruction to be in play simultaneously.

Work time allows the teacher to give targeted assistance to individual students and groups of students.

Work Time

Time: Time allotted will vary according to teacher's plan, subject matter, grade level.

Purposes: (1) to give students time to practice and master concepts and skills (2) to encourage self-directed learning (3) to provide individualized learning activities (4) to make the best use of time and (5) to allow the teacher flexibility to work with individuals or small groups.

Methods: Will vary for each student, according to the specific activities assigned to the student, and will be derived from the learning plan grids and activity instructions.

Let's look at how a teacher's schedule for the week can plot whole-class time and work time. The example is for an elementary school teacher with several subjects to cover. But the concept of whole-class time vs. work time applies equally well in middle school and high school classrooms.

Weekly Class Schedule Example

Week of: _____   **Teacher's Name:** _____

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30					
8:30-9:00	Reading WC	Reading WC	Reading WC	Reading WC	Reading WC
9:00-9:30	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
9:30-10:00	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
10:00-10:30	Spelling/Writing WC	Spelling/Writing WC	Spelling/Writing WC	Spelling/Writing WC	Spelling/Writing WC
10:30-11:00	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
11:00-11:30	Math WC	Math WC	Math WC	Math WC	Math WC
11:30-12:00	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
12:00-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30-1:15	PE	Music	PE	Art	PE
1:15-1:30	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:30-2:00	Social Studies WC	Social Studies WC	Social Studies WC	Social Studies WC	Social Studies WC
2:00-2:30	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
2:30-3:00	Science WC	Science WC	Science WC	Science WC	Science WC
3:00-3:30	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time	Work Time
3:30-4:00					

Indicate in each cell: Whole Class (Subjects); Work Time (Subjects); Lunch; Recess; Specialist Teachers (e.g. Art, Music)

Weekly Class Schedule Template

Week of: _____   **Teacher's Name:** _____

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30					
8:30-9:00					
9:00-9:30					
9:30-10:00					
10:00-10:30					
10:30-11:00					
11:00-11:30					
11:30-12:00					
12:00-12:30					
12:30-1:00					
1:00-1:30					
1:30-2:00					
2:00-2:30					
2:30-3:00					
3:00-3:30					
3:30-4:00					

Indicate in each cell: Whole Class (Subjects); Work Time (Subjects); Lunch; Recess; Specialist Teachers (e.g. Art, Music)

Whole Class Instruction

In building the foundation for effective instruction, we have covered the following steps:

1. The Unit Plan developed by the Instructional Team chunks the year into units with themes, aligns standards-based benchmarks with each unit, develops objectives for student mastery aligned with the benchmarks, establishes criteria for determining mastery of the objective, and includes items for pre-tests as one means for targeting learning activities for each student.

2. The Learning Plan Grid outlines leveled objectives and differentiated learning activities.

3. The Weekly Class Schedule divides class time between whole-class instruction and work time.

4. Work time is when students engage with the differentiated learning activities as assigned them by a teacher who is attentive to each student's readiness for an objective, based on assessment of prior learning.

5. A lesson delivered through whole-class instruction may address one or more objectives. Work time follows the whole-class instruction, allowing each student a variety of ways to master the objectives introduced in the whole-class lesson.

The following page shows a template for planning whole-class instruction for a week in one subject.

Whole Class Instruction Weekly Outline

Week of: _____   Teacher: _____   Subject: _____

Target Objective Code(s): _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Central Purpose of Lesson:					
Behavior Check: To set the psychological climate in the classroom; cue students to focus in; reinforce attentive behaviors.					
Review: To provide students with clear evaluations of their progress in attaining learning goals; detect areas that need further teaching or practice; connect prior learning with new learning.					
Think: To introduce new lesson; continue activating prior knowledge; stimulate student cognition relative to the topic through cues, advance organizers, question sprinkling.					
Know: To directly teach the new skills or concepts through lecture, demonstration, modeling.					
Show: To find out what students have learned and rehearse their learning through verbal drills, recitations, discussion, quiz games.					

How Can a Teacher Personalize Instruction for Every Student?

Great question. First, let's consider why a teacher should personalize (adapt, individualize, target) instruction for every student. The obvious reason is that no two students are alike. Whole-class instruction is an essential teaching mode for introducing new lessons, tying the new lesson to previous learning, forming necessary bonds of interaction between the teacher and students and among the students themselves, inspiring interest in topics, and modeling metacognitive skills. But whole-class instruction is not a good vehicle for bringing each student into a proper relationship with the content. Some students will master new material quickly and become bored if not allowed to move forward. Other students will take more time with new material, and need that time to master content that is a building block to what comes next. Grouping students also has its limits; each student will vary from subject to subject, topic to topic, task to task, in his or her readiness for learning. Even groups can become rigid and stifling. For all these reasons, the teacher must be nimble and attentive, constantly adapting instruction to each student's current level of mastery.

The pre-test, a quick assessment (written or oral) of each student's readiness for a new unit of instruction, provides the teacher with a beginning point to target instruction for each student. Questioning during whole-class and teacher-directed small-group instruction provides further feedback to the teacher. Each student's completion of assigned tasks during Work Time and on homework provides the teacher with information necessary for altering course and bringing content and activity in line with the student's prior mastery and readiness for new learning.

Because the Instructional Team has already leveled and differentiated learning activities for each objective in a the unit plan, the teacher begins with a reservoir of learning activities, aligned with standards-based objectives. The Instructional Team also prepares materials necessary for these activities, marks them with a code to align them with objectives, and stores them for easy access by all teachers.

Now the fun begins (or continues, since all of this is fun). The teacher knows his or her students, receives a flow of information about each student's progress (from pre-tests, questioning, and completed work), and is expert at personalizing instruction.

After the Unit Pre-Test

Reviewing the results of the Unit Pre-Test, the teacher knows how to adjust the whole-class instruction to emphasize areas where most students lack understanding and to give less weight to explanation of content that most students already grasp. Nothing is omitted, but the emphasis can be shifted in whole-class instruction based upon a review of the results of the Unit Pre-Test.

The Unit Pre-Test also provides a basis for individualizing Work Time activities, at least in the beginning of the unit. Students may also be grouped into flexible groups for both teacher-directed and student-directed group activities based on results of the Unit Pre-Test.

Planning Work Time Activities

Work Time is perfect for personalized instruction–each student or each flexible group of students can be working on different activities (leveled and differentiated) to best match their prior learning and readiness. How does the teacher differentiate assignments in an orderly way? The Student Learning Plan provides both a means for orderly differentiation of activity during Work Time and a means for building student self-responsibility for their learning. Activities assigned students on a Student Learning Plan come right off the Learning Plan Grid and Activity Instructions prepared by the Instructional Team.

All the careful preparation that goes into construction of units of instruction pays off most handsomely when the teacher individualizes instruction for each student with a Student Learning Plan. A master Student Learning Plan is prepared for the week (or, two weeks for high school and upper grades), with all possible instructional options included. The teacher then individualizes the master SLP for each student by selecting the specific learning activities appropriate to that student on that student's own SLP. The teacher levels the activities according to the student's demonstrated prior mastery (Unit Pre-Test and completed assignments) of the objectives. The teacher differentiates learning activities by assigning the right mix of independent work, various groups, centers (or work stations in high schools), and homework to match the student's motivational characteristics. The SLP provides the teacher a variety of learning activities for each target objective, and a means for individualizing instruction when appropriate.

The Teacher During Work Time

Work Time finds students carrying out the learning tasks assigned to them on their Student Learning Plan while the teacher interactively weaves through the classsroom, individual student desks, in-and-out of small group

instruction and back through the business of independent learning. Monitoring the achievement of assigned tasks determines how each student works toward mastery of the aligned objective. It is opportunity to intervene as needed, check the completion of work, reinforce and extend "the student's learning through feedback and immediate instruction at the time when attention is needed and is most effective" (Wang, 1992). Attention to individual learning needs is at its peak when the teacher recognizes the success or difficulty each student displays in a prescribed task and modifies the Student Learning Plan "on the spot." Early curriculum planning has provided the teacher with variety and alternative options for learning. Monitoring those instructional tasks contributes to a teacher's formative assessment of each student, and keeps the learning targeted.

Using Groups During Work Time

The Student Group is a good time for cooperative learning strategies (see Appendix). The Teacher Group is an opportunity to directly teach leveled objectives to students with similar readiness. A row of computers or cluster of computers at tables may provide an area of the classroom for computer-based instruction. While students are working on their assigned activities in each of these areas, other students may be doing independent work at their desks. Students can move from area to area during a class session, engaging in a series of activities targeted to their need. So how does each student know what to do, which activities the teacher has planned just for him or her? Student Learning Plans are a perfect organizational tool for personalizing instruction and encourging self-directed learning in students.

Student Learning Plans (SLPs)

The unit pre-test gives the teacher a basis for individualizing the first Student Learning Plan of the unit. Then the teacher adjusts the Student Learning Plan, and each subsequent Student Learning Plan, in response to the student's demonstrated mastery of objectives in the assigned learning activities. The class progress chart helps the teacher keep track of how everyone is progressing in meeting the objectives of the unit. Scanning the chart also helps the teacher know where to re-teach, alter whole-class instruction, or focus instruction at the Teacher Group. When a Student Learning Plan is completed, it is sent home for review by parents and then returned to the student's file. At the end of a unit of instruction (or the end of a grading period), the Student Learning Report is sent home to parents to report the student's progress toward learning objectives.

It is a good idea for the teacher to keep a copy of each different SLP used for the week, with the names of the students who were given that SLP attached. These are called student monitoring SLPs, help the teacher keep track of who is doing what, and provide a backup in case an SLP is misplaced. When the teacher changes the student's SLP during the week, the change can be noted on the student monitoring SLP. Of course, the student's copy of the SLP is a record of activities completed as well as assigned, and when finally placed in the student's file provides perfect documentation of what the student has done.

See the template for a Student Learning Plan on the following page. SLPs for kindergarten and early grades can be created using symbols and colors instead of words to direct the students to centers and activities. Activity packets can be similarly coded and colored.

Wang, M. C. (1992). *Adaptive education strategies: Building on diversity.* Baltimore: Brookes Publishing Co.

Student Learning Plan Template

Student's Name: _____

Pre-Test Date: _____ **Post-Test Date:** _____

Standards/Benchmarks Codes: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Subject: _____

Objective Codes: _____ **Week(s) of:** _____

Sequence	Independent Activities (Check) Activity Number and Title	Centers (Check)(Number AC)	Homework (Circle) Activity Number and Title	Teacher Check Initial/Date
1	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	AC ___ CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	
2	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	AC ___ CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	
3	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	AC ___ CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	
4	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	AC ___ CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	
5	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	AC ___ CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) ___ 3) ___ 2) ___ 4)	

Centers: AC _____ = Activity Center and number of activity to complete; CC = Cooperative Center; EC = Exploratory Center

Activity Number and Title correspond with Activity Instructions.

Student: Draw line through completed activity. Teacher Check indicates that sequence was completed by student.

Teacher Comments: _____

Parent Comments: _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix

Reflection Activity

Notes

Reflection Activity

Use this template to reflect on how the Classroom Management indicators are currently implemented in your classroom. Refer back to it, as you plan for their improved implementation in your classroom.

Instructional Planning	What Do You Do Now?	How Can It Be Improved?	What Is Your First Step?
School Leadership and Decision Making: Establishing a team structure with specific dutires and time for instructional planning.			
A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan & school governance policy.			
Teachers are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject-area instructional teams.			
Instructional teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop & refine units of instruction & review student learning data.			
All teams prepare agendas for their meetings.			
All teams maintain official minutes of their meetings.			

Instructional Planning	What Do You Do Now?	How Can It Be Improved?	What Is Your First Step?
Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in aligning instruction with standards and benchmarks.			
Instructional teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.			
Units of instruction include standards-based objectives & criteria for mastery.			
Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in assessing and monitoring student mastery.			
Units of instruction include pre-post tests to assess student mastery of standards based objectives.			
Unit pre-/post-tests results are reviewed by the instructional team.			
Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Engaging teachers in differentiating and aligning learning activities			

Instructional Planning	What Do You Do Now?	How Can It Be Improved?	What Is Your First Step?
Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.			
Materials for standards-aligned learning activities are well-organized, labeled, & stored for convenient use by teachers.			
Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Planning: Assessing student learning frequently with standards-based assessments.			
Instructional teams use student-learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.			
Instructional teams use student-learning data to plan instruction.			
Instructional teams use student-learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement & plan instruction accordingly.			

Instructional Planning	What Do You Do Now?	How Can It Be Improved?	What Is Your First Step?
Instructional teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum & instructional plans & to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help &students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of early mastery of objectives).			
Classroom Instruction: Expecting and monitoring sound instruction in a variety of modes—Preparation			
All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, & assessment.			
All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.			
All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods and maintain a record of the results.			
All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests & other methods of assessment.			

Notes

For more information, please visit www.indistar.org/Action

www.indistar.org/Action