

CORE FUNCTION	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Classroom Instruction	Expect and monitor sound instruction in a variety of modes	<b>All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests and other methods of assessment. (116)</b>

### Evidence Review:

Learning activities, the assignments given to each student targeted to that student’s level of mastery, should be carefully aligned with the objectives included in the unit plan to provide a variety of ways for a student to achieve mastery as evidenced in *both* the successful completion of the learning activities and correct responses on the unit post-test. An Instructional Team’s unit plans include a description of each leveled and differentiated learning activity, the standards-based objectives associated with it, and criteria for mastery. These activities become arrows in the teacher’s quiver of instructional options for each student.

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. Unit plans level each objective into three tiers – target, enhanced, and prerequisite. The unit plans also differentiate learning activities among various modes of instruction – whole-class instruction, independent work, small-group and center-based activities, and homework. The activity instructions provide the detail that enables any teacher to use the learning activity, and also become a means of explaining the activity to students.

### Examples of Objectives in a Unit Plan

- 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.)
- Criteria for Mastery: Given a blank compass face, the student will write the name of the four primary directions in the correct locations.
- Pre-test/Post-test Item: Mark the four primary directions on the blank compass face.
- Prerequisite Objective: The student will be able to identify the four primary directions on a navigational compass by matching the points to a list of North, South, East, West. (This is an objective at the level of general knowledge.)
- Enhanced Objective: The student will be able to write a short paragraph explaining the positions of the four primary directions on a navigational compass. (This is an objective at the comprehension level.)



**Source:** Sam Redding, *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement*.

### **Evidence Review:**

Work Time is the classroom time when the teacher is not teaching the whole class, but students are learning in either an independent (individual) mode or in various small-group configurations. During Work Time, the teacher has an opportunity to individualize instruction by drawing from the learning plan grids for the unit to create Student Learning Plans to guide each student's activities. The following pages show examples of Student Learning Plans for students who are able to read and follow directions. Simpler forms using symbols and colors work well with kindergarten and first-grade students. The Student Learning Plan is the teacher's vehicle for individualizing instruction and establishing a classroom culture that encourages student-directed work and accountability.

**Source:** Sam Redding, *The Mega System. Deciding. Learning. Connecting. A Handbook for Continuous Improvement Within a Community of the School*.

**References and other resources:** National Academy of Science. (1996). *National science education standards*. National Academy Press.

## **For Special Education**

### **Evidence Review**

To begin an exploration of assistive technology and its relationship to education, an understanding of the legal definitions of assistive technology devices and services are certainly necessary. These definitions are:

*Assistive technology device* means any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of students (or individuals) with disabilities.

*Assistive technology services* means any service that directly assists a student (or individual) with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device." The term includes: a) evaluation of needs, b) purchasing, leasing or otherwise providing for acquisition, c) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing, d) coordinating and using other therapies, e) training or technical assistance for the student (or individual) and family, and f) training or technical assistance for professionals, employers or other individuals who provide services (IDEA, 1997).

The use of appropriate assistive technology in the education process increases the potential for persons with disabilities to succeed in independent living and to engage in productive employment, as well as to



enjoy an improved quality of life. With the definitions and required consideration of assistive technology devices and services now included in federal law, U.S. educational systems are struggling to meet their obligations for assistive technology to be appropriately included in planning and implementing the individualized education programs (IEP) of students with disabilities. Knowledge of policy, research and best practice in the field of assistive technology is critical to meeting these obligations, and the need for such knowledge is growing. Teachers must be able to design developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that apply technology-enhanced instructional strategies to support the diverse needs of learners. Teachers must also understand the social, ethical, legal, and human issues surrounding the use of technology in PreK-12 schools and apply those principles in practice. Teachers should apply technology resources, including assistive technologies, to enable and empower learners with diverse backgrounds, characteristics, and abilities in order to facilitate equitable access to technology resources for all students (ISTE, 2000).

Because of laws like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997) which require that schools educate children who have disabilities in general education classrooms whenever possible, and that assistive technology devices and services to be considered, current and upcoming teachers are in need of additional instruction concerning how to best utilize assistive technologies to support students with disabilities in general education classrooms.

**Source:** A Review of Policies, Standards, & Curriculum Integration from 1997 through 2000 Involving Assistive Technology and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act by Elizabeth M. Dalton, M.Ed.

### **For English Language Learners**

Teachers must make appropriate modifications in planning and implementing instruction based on data for English language learners to allow for variations in time allocation, task assignments, and modes of teacher communication and student response. Teachers should use multiple assessments to measure English language learners' progress in achieving academic standards and native language standards, and in attaining English proficiency. Assessment results should be used to inform classroom teaching, monitor student progress, and communicate with ELLs and their families.

Teachers must also create opportunities where ELLs work together with their native English-speaking peers to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills for the purpose of learning grade-level academic content. This group interaction will benefit ELL students with sufficient English proficiency because they will have more language directed at them, and they will be asked to produce more academic English as they interact with their peers. In arranging such group experiences, the teacher must exercise caution to ensure that ELL students participate in groups with which they have sufficient comfort.

Lucas and Freedson-Gonzalez (2008) explain that teachers must be skilled at identifying the language demands of a lesson so that they can make the content accessible for ELLs. For example, students are



often asked to use language persuasively, to compare and contrast ideas, or to draw inferences in various assignments. In order for ELLs to master these required skills, teachers must have the knowledge to explicitly teach the academic language requirements as they teach the content material to ELLs.

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

*Assistive Technology and Inclusion by Terence W. Cavanaugh, Ph.D. College of Education and Human Services, University of North Florida.*

Lucas, T., Villegas, A. M., & Freedson-Gonzalez, M. (2008). Linguistically responsive teacher education: Preparing classroom teachers to teach English Language Learners. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59, 361–373.

*National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities.* <http://www.nichcy.org/disability>

*National Center On Accessible Information Technology in Education.* [www.washington.edu/accessit](http://www.washington.edu/accessit)

The George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education. (2008). *Promoting Excellence: Guiding Principles.*

### **Student Learning Plan (Class Example for Most Students)**

*Note: Be careful not to assign too many students to the Cooperative Center on the same day.*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ *Mrs. Hanger*

Pre-Test Date: 9-3-04 Post-Test Date: 10-2-04 Subject: Reading

Standards/Benchmarks Codes: A3 Objective Codes: 3R1-1 to 3R1-4 Week(s) of: Sept. 11, 2004

Sequence	Independent Activities (Check)	Centers	Homework (Circle)	Teacher Check
	Activity Number and Title	(Check) (Number AC)	Activity Number and Title	Initial/Date
<b>1</b>	___ 1) <i>What is a sentence, and Inter. Sentences</i> p. 17. ___ 2) <i>Sentence structure</i> ___ 3) <i>Declarative and Inter. Sentences</i> p. 24, A&B	AC <u>2</u> CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) p. 3, 6-15 ___ 2) p. 3, 16-20 ___ 3) p. 28, 19-25 Add <i>Label words to make a sentence.</i> ___ 4)	/



	p. 20, C& D ___ 4)			
<b>2</b>	___ 1) Sentence punctuation ___ 3) Letter writing p. 18, B p. 25, C&D <u>X</u> 2) Imperative and Excl. p. 19, 2-10 ___ 4) Booktime	AC <u>2</u> CC <u>X</u> EC ___	___ 1) p. 5, 13-20 ___ 3) Finish letter Punctuation <u>X</u> 2) p. 7, 8-15 ___ 4) Read for 20 minutes Label sentences	
<b>3</b>	___ 1) Vocabulary building ___ 3) Combining sentences worksheet worksheet <u>X</u> 2) Context clues ___ 4) worksheet	AC <u>2</u> CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) p. 39, 1-6 ___ 3) p. 23, 6-12 Context Create sentences clues/combining <u>X</u> 2) p. 39, 7-11 ___ 4) Main Idea	
<b>4</b>	___ 1) Combining words ___ 3) Parts of a story worksheet p. 21 A <u>X</u> 2) Vocabulary list of ___ 4) the week	AC <u>2</u> CC ___ EC ___	___ 1) Where you would ___ 3) p. 55, 1-2 like to visit ___ 2) ___ 4)	
<b>5</b>	___ 1) Time-order words ___ 3) Main idea worksheet worksheet <u>X</u> 2) Detail sentences ___ 4) Booktime p. 21 B	AC <u>2</u> CC ___ EC <u>X</u>	___ 1) Paragraph using ___ 3) p. 72, 1-6 Main Idea time-order words and details <u>X</u> 2) p. 50, Write 4 detail ___ 4) Read for 20 minutes	

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:

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Parent Comments:

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Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_