

Transcript – Drill or Practice?

Drill refers to repetitive, non-problem-based exercises designed to improve skills or procedures already acquired.

Practice refers to different problem-based tasks or experiences, spread over numerous class periods, each addressing the same basic ideas.

How is this definition reflected in the two activities that we just examined in your grade band? Did you notice that the second set of expressions requires students to apply a strategy to determine a value? They are not problem based, but we do not have evidence that any additional strategies were developed.

Transcript – Benefits and Applications

Some potential benefits of drill are increasing facility with a strategy and providing a focus on a singular method and an exclusion of flexible alternatives. Some applications of drill are when the skill or strategy is already known and when automaticity with the skill or strategy is desired.

Some potential benefits of practice are increased opportunity to develop conceptual ideas and more elaborate and useful connections, opportunity to develop alternative and flexible strategies, and a clear message that mathematics is about figuring things out and making sense.

Some applications of practice are when ample and relevant opportunities are needed to develop understanding and when mathematics in meaningful contexts will strengthen and support mathematical connections.