Features of Effective Instruction

Participant Notes

GRADES K–3

LITERACY

ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMIES

KINDERGARTEN

Features of Effective Instruction

Kindergarten

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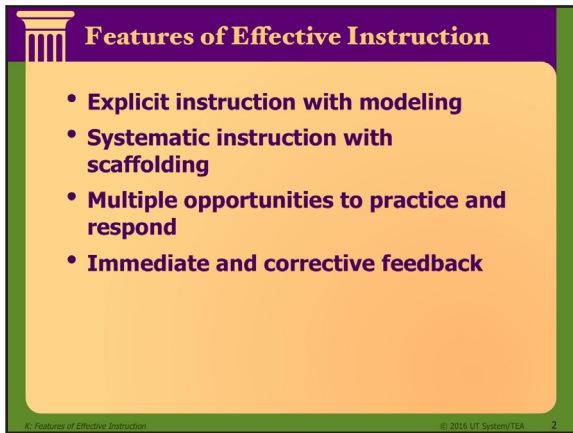

Features of Effective Instruction

- Explicit instruction with modeling
- Systematic instruction with scaffolding
- Multiple opportunities to practice and respond
- Immediate and corrective feedback

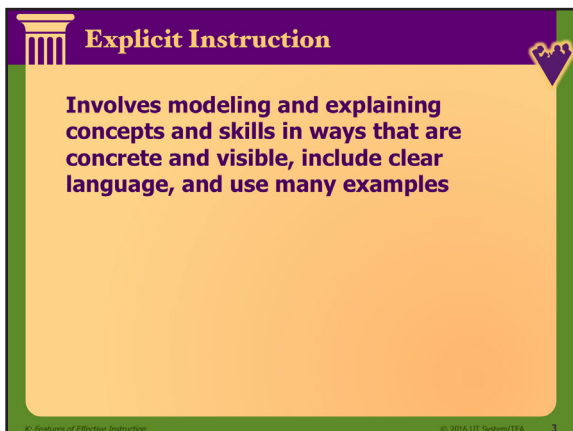K: Features of Effective Instruction   © 2016 UT System/TEA   2

Explicit Instruction

Involves modeling and explaining concepts and skills in ways that are concrete and visible, include clear language, and use many examples

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Explicit Instruction (cont.)

Consists of the following:
- **Predictable, clear, and consistent instructions**
- **Known expectations**
- **Familiar routines**

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Explicit Instruction With Modeling

- **Thoughtfully and deliberately model how to solve reading challenges.**
- **Make your thinking visible.**

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Modeling: I Do

The teacher does the following:
- **Demonstrates the task aloud**
- **Follows a step-by-step procedure**
- **Uses language specific to the skill**
- **Speaks clearly while modeling**
- **Checks for understanding during modeling**

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Guided Practice: We Do

- **Students practice what the teacher modeled.**
- **The teacher provides feedback.**
- **Peers provide feedback.**

Checking for Understanding

- **Discuss the list on Handout 1 with your table group.**
- **Add other ideas to this list.**

Independent Practice: You Do

Students practice the skill independently:
- **In centers**
- **With partners**
- **With accountability**

What to Look for

- Clear instructional focus
- Teacher modeling
- Consistent language
- Active participation
- Student talk and engagement
- Multiple examples
- Concrete examples
- Multiple grouping formats
- Manipulatives
- Visual aids and cues

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Systematic Instruction With Scaffolding

- Select appropriate objectives and tasks:
  - Regulate task complexity.
  - Anticipate potential difficulties.
- Carefully sequence instruction:
  - Move from easier to more difficult skills.
  - Begin with higher-utility skills.
  - Begin with what students already know.

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Hallmarks of Systematic Instruction With Scaffolding

- Systematic instruction:
  - Knowledge and skills presented in a logical order
  - Higher-utility skills presented before more difficult, less frequently used skills
- Scaffolding:
  - Complex tasks broken down into simpler, smaller steps
  - Support extended and gradually removed as students become proficient

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Multiple Opportunities to Practice and Respond

It may be true that "practice makes perfect." However, in education we know that practice makes permanent. Therefore, practice must be perfect.

Practice

The ability to name letters and sounds and read words at the end of kindergarten predicts future reading performance.

YET...

Recent studies conclude that kindergarten students at risk for reading difficulties read connected text for less than two minutes per day and receive less than seven seconds per day of individual oral reading instruction.

Ways to Practice and Respond

Maximize student engagement

- Practice in a variety of ways and at various times.
- Practice related skills.
- Actively engage students.
- Use distributed practice.

Increase opportunities to respond

- Provide more items to practice.
- Prompt choral responses.
- Use "think-pair-share."
- Have students work in pairs.
- Prompt physical responses.
- Use quick writes.

Immediate and Corrective Feedback

Two types of feedback:

- **Evaluative feedback = Judgmental**
- **Formative feedback = Descriptive**

Evaluative Feedback

- **Giving rewards and punishments**
- **Expressing approval and disapproval**

Formative Feedback

- **Telling students they are right or wrong and describing why**
- **Telling students what they have and have not achieved**
- **Specifying or implying a better way**
- **Helping students develop ways to improve**

Positive Feedback

- Varied forms of feedback:
  - Verbal
  - Nonverbal
  - Written
- Varied ways to share feedback:
  - Whole group
  - Small groups
  - Pairs
  - Individuals

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Growth Mindset

Fixed Mindset (What not to say)	Growth Mindset (What to say)
• "Not everybody is good at reading. Just do your best."	• "When you learn how to read new words, it grows your reading brain!"
• "That's OK. Reading may not be your strength."	• "If you tell yourself 'I'm not a good reader,' just add the word *yet* to the end of the sentence."
• "Don't worry. You'll get it if you just try harder."	• "The point isn't to get it all right away. The point is to grow your understanding step by step. What can you try next?"
• "Good try!"	

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Feedback Transforms Learning

Feedback helps students:

- Take responsibility for their learning
- Believe that they can learn
- Understand what they need to do differently to achieve
- Realize that the hard work of using strategies improves their learning

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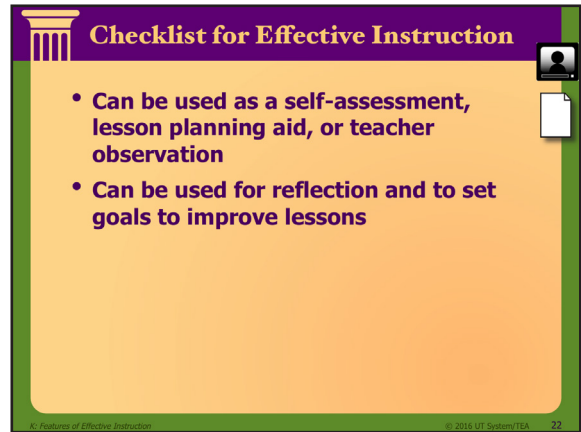## Checklist for Effective Instruction

- **Can be used as a self-assessment, lesson planning aid, or teacher observation**
- **Can be used for reflection and to set goals to improve lessons**

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Features of Effective Instruction

Handouts

GRADES K–3

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Activities to Check Understanding

3-2-1 Blastoff!

Students state three things they learned, two questions they have, and one thing they will use.

Choral Responses with Signals

At a signal from the teacher, students respond. This reduces some students blurting out answers while others are still thinking.

Dueling Charts

This is a quick way to energize students while assessing their concerns or knowledge. Pose a question or topic. Then have students stand, throw a soft ball as they say their comment, and sit. Scribes, two to a chart, write the responses quickly.

Exit Tickets

Have students complete and turn in a quick accountability activity as they leave a station or room.

Look, Lean, Whisper

Have students look at their partners, lean toward their partners, and whisper the answer.

Overhead Accountability

When presenting new materials, have students discuss a question or provide examples with a partner. Roam the room, listening and writing appropriate responses with the person's name. Use a document camera to share the responses as a review, recognizing the contributions of those you highlighted.

Partner Feedback

Whenever possible, allow students to work with a partner when learning or practicing new skills. Teach the partners how to provide feedback to each other. Pair the partners carefully with one partner having slightly stronger skills than the other. Change partners regularly.

Pinch Papers

On a sheet of paper, students write numbers, yes and no, letters, words, or whatever you want them to respond to. All students "pinch" the correct answer. Learning looks are allowed. See the Vocabulary section of the Academies for examples.

Pocket Children

The teacher has one card for each target student in his or her pocket. On the card are skills the student must practice (e.g., words to read, letter sounds, math facts). Throughout the day, the teacher works with the student to practice the skills.

Popsicle Sticks and Mystery Cups

Students' names are put on popsicle sticks. There is a cup within a cup. Most sticks are placed in the inside smaller cup; others, those that you want to be sure to call on, are placed in the larger cup.

Quick-Writes

Students write for a minute or so about what they have learned, noticed, etc.

Rapid-Fire Rehearsal

Students have a few minutes to "memorize" important terms. They practice reciting the items with the whole group and with a partner.

SLANT

This is a behavior management and metacognitive strategy. When given a signal, students **s**it up, **l**ean forward, **a**ctivate their thinking (What did they just learn? What comments, questions, or concerns do they have?), **n**ame key information (share aloud), and **t**rack the talker.

Snowball Fight

Students write one thing they learned. Then they ball up the sheet of paper and, all standing in a circle, throw them around. Each student retrieves one ball of paper and shares it with the group.

Team Responses

Place students on teams and give each student either a number or a letter designation. Pose a question and have them derive an answer together. Everyone in the group should feel confident answering it. Then randomly call out a letter or number and each person who has that number answers.

Think-Aloud

This is a way to model metacognitive strategies, or to make your thinking visible. Examples of when to use a think-aloud include when solving comprehension problems, thinking through operations in mathematics, or making a decision.

Think, Turn, Talk

This is helpful for students who need more thinking time or are insecure in providing answers. Allow students a few seconds to think silently and then have them turn to their partners and talk about the prompt. Teachers can listen in and then call on students who have the correct answer, focusing on struggling students who rarely participate.

Thumbs-Up, Thumbs-Down

Make a statement or ask a question and have students respond with either a thumbs-up or thumbs-down. Call on students to share their reasoning.

Whip Around or Pass

Students rapidly respond with no intervening comments. When students have no response or someone else said theirs, they say, "pass."

Whiteboard

For short responses (e.g., a word or phrase), have students write their responses on whiteboards. When you signal, have them hold up their whiteboards for you to quickly evaluate their responses.

Adapted from Archer & Hughes, 2011; Ellis, 1991; O'Connor, 2014.

Checklist for Effective Instruction

Grouping for Instruction

❑ Group students based on instructional purpose (e.g., one-on-one, pairs, small groups) and needs (e.g., use small same-ability groups for struggling learners).
Use flexible grouping to allow students to be members of more than one group.

Explicit and Systematic Instruction

❑ Review previous learning and prerequisite knowledge and skills.
Keep reviews brief, frequent, and spaced over time.

❑ Reteach when necessary.
Try multiple techniques and vary the presentation or format from initial instruction.

❑ Identify the objective and specific elements to be learned.
   • Build specific knowledge and skills identified in state standards.
   • Target needs based on continuous progress monitoring.

❑ Activate and build background knowledge.
   • Build on what students already know and expand their knowledge base.
   • Consider cultural and linguistic diversity.

❑ Reduce the amount of new information presented at one time.
Use a logical sequence (e.g., progress from easier to more complex).

❑ Model or demonstrate procedures.
   • Show how something is done.
   • Think aloud to explain the thinking processes used.

❑ Provide examples and, when appropriate, nonexamples.
Include visual prompts and/or graphic organizers.

❑ Maximize students' engagement.
   • Include a variety of ways for children to participate (e.g., response cards).
   • Pace instruction, stop to repeat key ideas, and allow extra time if needed.

❑ Check for students' understanding.
   • Ask different levels of questions and encourage students to generate questions.
   • Incorporate sufficient wait time.
   • Provide corrective feedback to help students understand.
   • Adjust instruction so that children are challenged and able to develop new skills.

Opportunities to Practice

❑ Provide opportunities for students to practice with teacher support and guidance.
   • Use the appropriate level of materials.
   • Incorporate manipulatives, graphic organizers, and/or hands-on activities.
   • Gradually withdraw support as students become more proficient.

❑ Check for understanding.
- Provide prompts to help students notice, find, and correct errors.
- Help students learn to self-monitor for understanding.
- Clarify misconception and reteach when necessary.
- Include positive, motivating feedback.

❑ Provide many opportunities for independent practice to promote automaticity, generalization to different contexts, and maintenance.
- Initially provide support during independent practice.
- Integrate practice of new knowledge and skills with those previously taught.
- Make connections across the curriculum.
- Frequently monitor students working independently to prevent them from practicing errors.

Feedback

❑ Provide specific, immediate, corrective feedback.

❑ Provide positive, informative feedback in a variety of ways.

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