Planning Guide for Explicit Instruction

Explicit Instruction: Development and Practice Tasks

The following is a process that may be followed when planning a cycle of explicit instruction lessons:

Note: Complete steps 1–8 before instruction begins; complete steps 9–10 after the first lesson.

1. Select a reading concept, skill, or strategy for emphasis, generally across a series of lessons.

For group instruction, the process, skill, or strategy should be one that many students need to develop to a high level or one that many students are not using skillfully, so that the series of lessons serves as a scaffold to help them perform a process or task that they would be unable to do at an advanced level or without assistance.

Concepts, skills, and strategies from any of the Reading First “five components of a comprehensive reading program” are candidates for explicit instruction.

Comprehension. Possible processes and strategies include:

- Determining explicit main idea
- Determining implicit main idea
- Identifying author’s purpose
- Making and confirming predictions about what will happen next
- Using prior knowledge as an aid to comprehension
- Identifying and using the logic or order in text presentation (text structures)
- Using summaries
- Using visual representations
- Using multiple sources of information in forming ideas about a topic
- Explaining uses and applications for the information provided in the text

Fluency. Possible applications include:

- Rate
- Intonation and phrasing (prosody)

Vocabulary. Possible applications include:

- Using context to determine word meaning
- Using external sources to determine word meaning
- Using structural analysis (using word parts to determine word meaning)

Phonics. Possible applications include:
• Phonetic analysis—decoding at the phoneme level using onsets and rimes using analogies

**Phonemic Awareness.** Possible applications include:

- Blending
- Segmenting
- Deletion
- Addition
- Substitution

Write the concept, process, skill, or strategy you’ve selected for instruction:

How do you know students need work on this concept, process, skill, or strategy?

2. **Select materials for your modeling and for initial student practice.**

If you are focusing on concepts, processes, skills, or strategies that require the reading of connected text—e.g., comprehension strategies, such as summarizing or using multiple sources of information, building vocabulary from context, or developing fluency—select text passages that serve multiple purposes. Look for passages that allow you to model and discuss the process, skill, or strategy you are teaching and that also address concepts that fit into curriculum content you teach in science, social studies, mathematics, or interrelated units across the disciplines. As you select passages for demonstrations with nonfiction prose, look especially for those passages that represent quality writing in terms of how the topic and main message are announced and how the writer has focused or organized the message.
If you are focusing on skills or strategies at the word level, select the clearest, most accessible (in terms of student understanding and level of development) exemplars for use in modeling your use of the skill or strategy and for students’ initial practices. If appropriate, select words that fit into the curriculum content you teach in science, social studies, mathematics, or interrelated units across the disciplines. Write those words below. Select one or more words from the list to be used in the initial modeling.

**Words identified for use in instruction:**

3. Decide what you will say in your introductory explanation of the concept, process, skill, or strategy. At a minimum, describe what you will say about the concept or strategy and how it is useful.
4. Prepare and rehearse your initial modeling. (What am I going to do? You are trying to provide an explicit representation—by talking aloud and illustrating your moves—of how you do an invisible cognitive task.)

5. Decide what you will say to students to set them up for their initial practices.

6. Identify what students will be doing and saying during their initial practices if they are successfully applying the target concept, process, skill, or strategy.

7. How will you collect data to determine student progress and the success of your instruction?

8. What student actions, statements, or products will you be looking for after the lesson as evidence that students have transferred the application of the targeted concept or strategy to real reading situations? (examples)
Rehearse and share Items 3–8 with your collaborative partner. After working with students, you may find it useful to share your reflections about the next two questions (9 and 10) to support your planning of future lessons.

9. After observing students and reflecting on the lesson, what do you need to include in your next explanation and modeling of the concept, process, skill, or strategy?

10. Is there something you need to think about as you design the next set of student practices? As you select materials?

Repeat items 3–10 as needed.

An explicit instruction sequence on a complex concept, process, skill or strategy may take several weeks.

Reflections and questions in relation to teacher moves or student moves of the explicit instruction model