



## **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Researchers at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) have identified nine highly effective instructional strategies with high effect sizes that are most likely to improve student achievement across all content areas and across all grade levels. These strategies are explained in the book *Classroom Instruction That Works* by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollock. Listed in order of highest to lowest effect size, the strategies are:

### **1. Identifying Similarities and Differences**

The ability to break a concept into its similar and dissimilar characteristics allows students to understand (and often solve) complex problems by analyzing them in a more simple way.

### **2. Summarizing and Note Taking**

These skills promote greater comprehension by asking students to analyze a subject to expose what's essential and then put it in their own words. According to research, this requires substituting, deleting, keeping some things, and having an awareness of the basic structure of the information presented. Research shows that taking more notes is better than fewer notes, though verbatim note taking is ineffective because it does not allow time to process the information. Teachers should encourage and give time for review and revision of notes. Notes can be the best study guides for tests.

### **3. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition**

Effort and recognition speak to the attitudes and beliefs of students, and teachers must show the connection between effort and achievement. Research shows that although not all students realize the importance of effort, they can learn to change their beliefs to emphasize effort. According to research, recognition is most effective if it is contingent on the achievement of a certain standard. Also, symbolic recognition works better than tangible rewards.

### **4. Providing Homework and Practice**

Homework provides students with the opportunity to extend their learning outside the classroom. However, research shows that the amount of homework assigned should vary by grade level and that parent involvement should be minimal. Teachers should explain the purpose of homework to both the student and the parent or guardian, and teachers should try to give feedback on all homework assigned. Research shows that students should adapt skills while they're learning them. Speed and accuracy are key indicators of the effectiveness of practice.

### **5. Using Both Linguistic and Nonlinguistic Representations**

According to research, knowledge is stored in two forms: linguistic and visual (nonlinguistic). The more students use both forms in the classroom, the more opportunity they have to achieve. Recently, use of nonlinguistic representation has proven to not only stimulate but also to increase brain activity.

### **6. Incorporating Cooperative Learning**

Research shows that organizing students into cooperative groups yields a positive effect on overall learning. When applying cooperative learning strategies, keep groups small and don't overuse this strategy—be systematic and consistent in your approach.

### **7. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback**

Setting objectives can provide students with a direction for their learning. Goals should not be too specific; they should be easily adaptable to students' own objectives. Research shows that feedback generally produces positive results. Teachers can never give too much; however, they should manage the form that feedback takes.

### **8. Generating and Testing Hypotheses**

Research shows that a deductive approach (using a general rule to make a prediction) to this strategy works best. Whether a hypothesis is induced or deduced, students should clearly explain their hypotheses and conclusions.

### **9. Using Cues, Questions, and Advance Organizers**

Cues, questions, and advance organizers help students use what they already know about a topic to enhance further learning. Research shows that these tools should be highly analytical, should focus on what is important, and are most effective when presented before a learning experience.

**THE TULSA MODEL**  
**Instructional Strategies**  
**Rubric for Assessment**

	Stage 1	Stage 2 (Incorporates Stage 1)	Stage 3 (Incorporates Stages 1 and 2)
<u>Instructional Strategies</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers truly believe that all students can learn and then act on that belief. Personal best becomes the expectation for all members of the learning community.</li> <li>2. Procedures guide behavior. Students have access to written procedure books or displays. Teachers articulate procedures before activities begin. Periodically teacher and students process effectiveness of procedures at the end of activities.</li> <li>3. Teachers use and students respond to a variety of signals for attentive listening (e.g., Thumbs UP, Chimes, Give Me 5).</li> <li>4. Teachers provide adequate time for students to complete tasks.</li> <li>5. Teachers and students use wait time.</li> <li>6. Teacher has begun to develop inclusion and trustworthiness.</li> <li>7. Teacher plans for purposeful movement that enhances learning. (e.g., Brain Gym activities)</li> <li>8. Teacher interacts with students or groups to check for understanding and to re-direct, re-teach, and re-energize when needed.</li> <li>9. Teachers regularly use a variety of instructional strategies with individuals and groups of students including at least 3 from the Marzano <i>Classroom Instruction that Works</i>.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TPS Community Guidelines and LIFESKILLS form the basis for classroom management, not rewards/punishments.</li> <li>2. Teachers have developed cooperative structures such as think-pair-share, etc... to check for understanding.</li> <li>3. Students are beginning to learn the different roles associated with collaborative groups.</li> <li>4. Students have learned about the multiple intelligences and know their own strengths and areas to develop.</li> <li>5. Students take part in at least one collaborative activity each day or class period.</li> <li>6. Teachers regularly use a variety of instructional strategies including at least 5 that support individual learning styles of all students from the Marzano <i>Classroom Instruction that Works</i>.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies, including those from Marzano's <i>Classroom Instruction that Works</i>, in order to differentiate instruction.</li> <li>2. Teachers and students set clear performance criteria.</li> <li>3. Reflection is an integral part of each assignment and/or class period.</li> </ol>

# Lesson Plans

Planning for instruction is a critical part of a teacher's job! Careful preparation for teaching yields positive results in the classroom. **The District does not mandate that a specific form be used for lesson plans.** Teachers are to work with their building principals to develop and use lesson plans that meet the needs of their teaching assignments and their schools. The expectation is that teachers will plan carefully for instruction using the resources available to them such as the **Aligned Teaching Units (ATU's)**<sup>™</sup>, **TargetStrategies**<sup>™</sup>, and **TargetFundamentals**<sup>™</sup> to enhance instruction and learning.

**ATU's**<sup>™</sup> are guides which include a detailed, customized alignment of Oklahoma PASS objectives with the district adopted instructional materials in Reading and Mathematics outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the district's instructional materials.

**TargetStrategies**<sup>™</sup> are custom designed lessons that correlate to Oklahoma PASS objectives offering highly focused instructional models that teachers can use to elevate his/her instruction for a greater impact on student learning.

**TargetFundamentals**<sup>™</sup> are reproducible prerequisite activities that provide students with the practice needed in order to develop mastery of fundamental concepts and skills.

Teachers should include in their plans the **applicable** components that are listed below:

- identification of the benchmark(s) to be taught
- research-based instructional strategies to be used
- level of Bloom's Taxonomy the teacher plans to use
- multiple intelligences to be targeted
- appropriate movement activities
- how information or technology literacy will be incorporated
- leadership and/or social action opportunities that the lesson provides
- TPS Community Guidelines and/or LIFESKILLS that the teacher will reinforce within the teaching.

Every one of these factors may not be present within each individual lesson, but it is expected that the teacher consider these lesson components when planning for instruction.

## SCHOOL MODELS OF INSTRUCTION FOR ELEMENTARY READING

TPS elementary schools offer one of the two models for reading instruction shown here.

<b>BASAL MODEL</b> The basic core instructional program for elementary reading is the Scott Foresman basal reading series. Using that program as the core for reading and language arts, teachers follow the Aligned Teaching Units to insure that all of the tested PASS objectives are mastered. In addition to the basal, supplemental materials for reading and <i>Fill the Gaps</i> resources provide additional tools.  Students are given periodic assessments to aid progress monitoring throughout the year. In the spring, the state criterion-referenced test is used at designated grade levels.	<b>COMBINED MODEL</b> Elementary schools may opt to utilize the combined model for reading instruction. Within this model, one (reading) group at each grade level, composed of struggling readers, uses the SRA Reading Mastery or Reading Mastery + reading program. This program offers a sharp focus on the emerging skills of phonemic awareness and phonics. This approach provides a 'fast cycle' option to help close the gap for struggling readers who are below level.
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Tulsa Public Schools offers a resource to teachers, called the **Aligned Teaching Units (ATUs)** for required reading and math courses for specific grade levels.

- ATUs correlate to the progress-monitoring tests administered throughout the school year to students in reading and math.
- The ATUs also provide indicators for instructional resource options that align with the tested PASS objectives found in both the progress-monitoring tests as well as the criterion-referenced tests required by the State of Oklahoma for all public school students at designated grade levels.

At the elementary level, the following elements set the standards for the school's *balanced literacy program*:

1. A 90-minute *uninterrupted* block of time will be devoted to reading instruction on a daily basis.
2. Daily reading and writing experiences are provided for ALL students.
3. A 3-tiered model for reading instruction offers the following support to students:
  - a. 90 minutes of instruction for all students, PLUS
  - b. 30 minutes of additional instructional time for *supplemental services* offered to students who need extra time, extra practice, or reteaching in reading,
  - c. Another 30-minute *intervention* period for intense skill development for students who are significantly below level in reading.

Other priorities for the comprehensive reading plan are as follows:

- Provide a balanced reading program for all students using the district approved reading/language arts programs.
- Use disaggregated data to guide reading instruction.
- Foster development of higher order thinking skills through daily instruction and activities.
- Participate in regular professional development activities and collaborative planning between teachers and the school's library media specialist to strengthen reading education practices.
- Involve parents in the reading achievement of their students.
- Partner with TPS libraries and the Tulsa City-County Library System to support students and families.
- Work with the library media specialist to integrate reading and information literacy activities and facilitate use of the Organized Investigator research model.
- Use a variety of identified assessments to diagnose needs and prescribe specific instruction to monitor progress in student reading achievement.
- Develop a site plan for improvement in reading.
- Integrate reading and writing activities across the curriculum.
- Attend periodic reflective sessions with instructional staff to monitor and adjust the reading program.
- Standardize reading goals, plans, resources, and strategies across the district.

**GRADING SYSTEMS**  
TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD POLICY – Regulation 2401-R

Definitions and interpretation of letter grades and symbols:

**Letter Grades**

- A - Superior quality of work
- B - Good quality of work
- C - Satisfactory quality of work
- D - Below quality of work
- F - Unsatisfactory work
- U - Unsatisfactory work (elementary reports)

Letter grades for required academic subjects (English, mathematics, science, social studies) will be checked (√) if the student is working below grade level for the course.

**Symbols**

- Inc - Incomplete
- I - Is improving
- S - Satisfactory progress--this symbol is most often used in nongraded programs
- N - Needs improvement--this symbol is most often used in nongraded programs
- NA - Not applying (used at Carver Middle School)
- G - Superior quality of work (used at Carver Middle School)

To encourage and recognize enrollment and achievement in academically challenging subjects, weighted grade points will be assigned to Pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement taught in high schools:

<u>Regular Courses</u>	<u>Weighted Courses</u>
A - 4 points	A - 5 points
B - 3 points	B - 4 points
C - 2 points	C - 3 points
D - 1 point	D - 1 point
F - 0 point	F - 0 point

Letter grades (A,B,C,D,F,U) will be used in the District to rate student progress. In addition to letter grades, symbols (Inc, I,S,N,NA, G) will also be used to indicate progress by students. These letter grades and/or symbols will be communicated to parents/guardians through the use of a specially-designed report card. It should be noted the report card is only one form of communicating student progress to parents/guardians. Because of the limited scope of the report card, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive profile of the student's capacity, individual needs, or growth. Consequently, it is recommended that teacher/parent conferences be a definite part of reporting to parents/guardians.

Grades will be based strictly on well-defined criteria (written, if requested) and teachers will maintain records (grade books, progress charts, etc.) containing sufficient documentation to verify or justify the grades given.