Providing Appropriate

Independent Practice

Support Materials

Providing Independent Practice

Initial Practice
↓
Distributed Practice
↓
Cumulative Practice and Cumulative Review
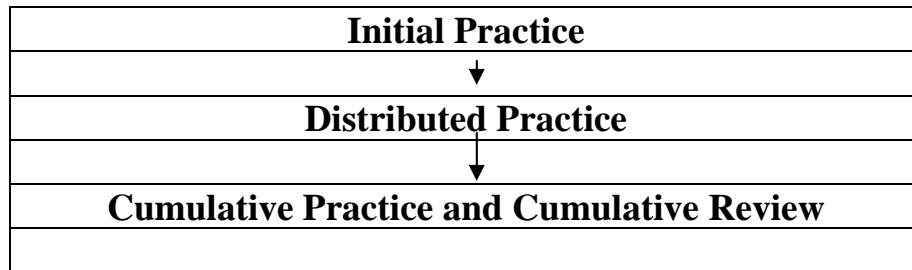
Checklist for Independent Practice
1. Taught the skill to be practiced during group instruction.
2. Established that students are capable of completing the task independently.
3. Established a clear purpose for the assignment (e.g., increasing accuracy, building fluency).
4. Designed or selected a practice task/activity that matches the skill and is consistent with the learning objective.
5. Controlled for other skill demands.
6. Provided clear, concise directions.
7. Provided prompts when needed.
8. Considered the length of time to complete and time available to complete.
9. Clarified and verified students' understanding of the assignment.
10. Established evaluation criteria (participation, completion, accuracy, fluency, other).
11. Provided verbal or written feedback on student performance.
12. Established routines to facilitate independent practice.

Analysis of Initial, Distributed, and Cumulative Practice/Review

Example #1: Ms. Dion's 90 minute core reading program – Vocabulary Strand
Population: 5th Grade Students

Description of Adopted Curriculum: The core reading program provides five, 90-minute lessons on each passage in the text. On the first day, students are provided explicit instruction on critical passage vocabulary terms and complete one independent assignment that involves filling in blanks in sentences using the vocabulary words.

Teacher's Analysis of Practice Activities: While the core program provides initial practice of the vocabulary terms, there is no distributed practice or cumulative review. As a result, the probability of retention is very low.

Teacher's Plan: At the beginning of the second, third, and fourth days of instruction on a passage, Ms. Dion will provide practice on the passage vocabulary using the following response card activity: Students will place vocabulary cards on their desks with words facing up (definitions are on the back). The teacher will tell about one of the words and students will hold up the corresponding response card. On the fifth day of instruction, students will sort all previously taught words into categories announced by Ms. Dion (e.g., nouns/not nouns; words that tell about people/words unrelated to people; descriptive/not descriptive words; positive/negative words). Students will share their responses with their partners followed by a class discussion of suggested words for each category and the reason for the decision. As a result of this plan, Ms. Dion's students will have distributed and cumulative practice on vocabulary terms.

Example #2: Mrs. Epley's General Math Class   **Population:** 7th Grade Students

Description of Adopted Curriculum: The math text provides 15 units. The individual lessons in each unit include 2 to 3 examples of a new skill/strategy for use during explicit instruction, 10 to 25 practice items on the new skill/strategy to be completed independently, and 5 to 10 problem-solving items using the target skill. At the end of each unit, practice exercises provide review of all skills taught in the unit.

Teacher's Analysis of Practice Activities: The students need more guided practice on easy, then difficult, items during the teacher-directed lesson to promote accuracy on independent practice. All practice on a new skill occurs in one lesson with no distributed practice. The only review occurs at the end of the unit with no cumulative review of skills and strategies taught in previous units. There is also no cumulative review of mathematical vocabulary.

Teacher's Plan: Mrs. Epley decides to adopt the following structure for each lesson:
1. **Warm-up activity.** Begin class with a warm-up activity containing 2 items from each of the past three lessons and 3 items from previous units. This warm-up activity allows Mrs. Epley to infuse distributive and cumulative practice into her math program with a minimum of additional preparation.
2. **Vocabulary.** Provide explicit instruction on math vocabulary and have students maintain a vocabulary log. Post vocabulary under unit title on a bulletin board.
3. **Modeling *(I do it.).*** Utilize the examples provided in the text to model the new skill/strategy.
4. **Guided/Scaffolded Practice *(We do it.).*** Guide students in solving easy, then difficult, items selected from the text's practice items.
5. **Unprompted Practice *(You do it.)*.** Have students complete selected practice items ranging in difficulty from easy to complex. After each item has been completed, provide feedback. Continue until students are consistently demonstrating accuracy.
6. **Assign Homework.** Have students complete the remaining practice and application items.
7. **Exit Task.** End class with a quick vocabulary review. Students are directed to look at the vocabulary bulletin board. Tell students the meaning of a word, have them discuss which word the teacher is referring to with their partners, and then have students say the vocabulary term. This review will continue until the bell rings with at least 5 terms reviewed.

Example #3: Mr. Kirsch's Spelling Lessons   **Population:** 2nd graders
Description of Adopted Curriculum: The spelling book introduces a list of 20 words that represent a specific spelling pattern or rule with discrimination items (e.g., Doubling the final consonant rule with examples such as running and non-examples such as listing). In addition, 4 irregular words (not spelled as expected given the sounds) are also in the list. On Monday, a pretest is given and the teacher introduces the spelling pattern or rule using explicit instruction. On Tuesday to Thursday, practice activities focused on the 24 words are provided. The activities vary from week to week, but include: looking the words up in the dictionary, completing a word search or crossword puzzle, writing sentences that contain the spelling words, alphabetizing the spelling words, and filling in the blanks in sentences with the words. On Friday, a posttest is given. At the end of the unit (every 10 weeks), review is provided on the unit spelling words.
Teacher's Analysis of Practice Activities: One major challenge with this curriculum material is that the practice activities do not require spelling from memory but rather involve simple copying of the spelling words. While the students may get better at looking words up in the dictionary, completing word searches or crossword puzzles, alphabetizing words, or using context clues, these activities will not boost spelling of the words. (*Matching the practice task to the desired skill is discussed later in this chapter.*) Another challenge is the lack of viable distributed or cumulative practice/review. Given that there is a ten-week delay before spelling patterns or rules are revisited, students are likely to make many errors.
YOUR PRACTICE PLAN

Example #4: Ms. Doyle's Geography Class   **Population:** 8th graders
Description of Adopted Curriculum: Students are introduced to major countries on each continent using the following activities: (a) reading chapter in text concerning the country, (b) exploring websites, (c) watching related films, (d) listening to lectures provided by the teacher, visitors, and fellow students, (e) responding to information by answering questions, (f) writing country summaries, and (g) completing map activities.
Teacher's Analysis of Practice Activities: Ms. Doyle, an experienced teacher, realizes that: 1. Students are introduced to one country after the next with limited retention of basic country information due to the lack of cumulative review. 2. Students' knowledge of country location remains limited again because of no cumulative review of map knowledge.
YOUR PRACTICE PLAN

Example Practice Activities for

Vocabulary

Word Pairs. The word pairs activity (Stahl & Kapinus, 2001) promotes deep processing and lively classroom discussion. Pairs of previously introduced words are presented on a chart. Students read the word pair and check a category that they deem the best match (though not necessarily a perfect match): same, opposite, go together, or no relationship. Students then share and defend their choices with their partners followed by a class discussion. While this activity affords excellent word review, it requires minimal preparation.

Word Pair	Same	Opposite	Go Together	No Relationship
1) scarce - abundant		√		
2) stoic - reckless		√		
3) dispute - rancor	√		√	
4) catastrophic - tempest			√	
5) anonymity - regulations			√	√
6) melancholy - frenzied		√		

Completion Activity (Curtis & Longo, 1997). In this activity, remind students of the definition of a review word and then give students a sentence stem that they must complete orally or in writing. When responses are written, have students use the brainstorming strategy **Think–Pair–Share**. As students **think** and write down their ideas, move around the room and write down their ideas and names. When students **pair** up with their partners, continue to write down student ideas and names. Then **share** students' responses with the class. How would you complete these sentence stems?

     I was **tenacious** when _____.

     Some things that should not be **conspicuous** include: _____

Yes/No/Why (Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982; Curtis & Longo, 1997). In this practice activity, you prepare questions that contain two or three target words. Students determine if the best answer would be *yes* or *no* and *why*. Then, have students share answers with partners. Finally, lead students in a class discussion. Would you select *yes* or *no* for the following questions? How would you defend your choice?

     Social Studies: Do **territories** that are **possessions** have **autonomy**? Yes/No/Why

     Math: Can a **whole number** be a **fraction**? Yes/No/Why

     Literature: Would an author **foreshadow** a **flashback?** Yes/No/Why

Example Partner Activities

Partner Activity - Spelling Practice.

Description: Following explicit instruction on a spelling pattern or rule, students can study the spelling words with their partners during a number of practice sessions.

Tutor (One of the partners.)	**Tutee** (One of the partners.)
Takes out **list of spelling words.**	
Says the word. Asks tutee to repeat the word. Says the word in a sentence if one is provided on the spelling list.	Listens. Repeats the word.
Asks tutee to write the word.	Writes the word.
Shows the word on the list.	Looks at the word. Checks the spelling of the word.
	If the word is incorrect, crosses out the word and rewrites it.
Note: On the following day, partners reverse roles as the tutor and tutee.	

Partner Reading – Content Area Textbooks

Description: Before reading a section of a content area textbook, students receive instruction on the difficult to pronounce words, the unknown vocabulary terms, and background knowledge for the passage. The teacher then guides students in reading the initial portion of the section, generally one or two pages of the selection. Students read the remainder with their partners.

Partner #1	Partner #2
Partner #1 decides to read the paragraph alone (me) or with his/her partner (we).	
Partner #1 says "me" or "we." If partner #1 says "me," he/she reads a paragraph to partner #2. If partner #1 says "we," he/she reads with partner #2.	If partner #1 says "me," partner #2 follows along and corrects any reading errors. If partner #1 says "we," partner #2 reads WITH his/her partner.
Partner # 1 answers the questions, referring back to the chapter as necessary.	Partner #2 asks Partner #1 the following questions based on the *Paragraph Shrinking Strategy* (Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, & Simmons, 1996; 1997). 1.**Name the who or what.** (The main person, animal, or thing.) 2.**Tell the most important thing about the who or what.** 3. **Say the main idea in 10 words or less.**
Note: On the next paragraph, the partners switch roles.	

Partner Activity - **Partner Vocabulary Study**
Description: When vocabulary terms are introduced, students write the word on one side of an index card and the part of speech and meaning on the other side. The new vocabulary cards are placed in an envelope labeled **Study**. Each student also has an envelope labeled **Mastered**.

Tutor (one of the partners)	**Tutee** (one of the partners)
	Tutee hands tutor his/her two envelopes.
Tutor removes an index card from tutee's **Study** envelope, shows and reads the word to the tutee, and asks the following questions: 1) What is the part of speech? 2) What does the word mean? 3) Say a sentence using the word.	Tutee answers the questions.
If the tutee answers all the questions correctly, the tutor puts a plus + sign on the back of the card. If the tutee misses any of the answers, the tutor puts a minus – sign on the back of the card.	
When the card has three consecutive plusses, it is placed in the **Mastered** envelope.	
This process continues with additional words until the end of the study period, generally 10 to 15 minutes.	
Note: The roles of tutor and tutee are reversed for the next practice period. *Note: Alternate content can be studied using this same procedure. For example, partners could study math facts, information on countries, sight vocabulary, or science terms.* *Note: A review test can be given and all items missed can be returned to the* **Study** *envelope.*	

Partner Activity - **Partner Repeated Reading**

Directions: Repeated Reading, in which students read a short passage a number of times, is a viable procedure for increasing students' oral reading fluency. The following partner procedure is adapted from *Six-Minute Solution* (Adams & Brown, 2007).

Partner #1	Partner #2
Partners take out necessary materials: two copies of a passage at their independent or instructional reading level and two graphs. The passage has the cumulative number of words written in the left margin to facilitate determining the number of words read in one minute.	
Partner #1 reads for one minute. When the teacher says, "Stop," the partner stops reading.	Partner #2 follows along as his/her partner reads, underlining any word errors and circling the last word read.
	Partner #2 provides feedback to his/her partner, saying the number of words read correctly in a minute and going over any word errors.
Partner #1 follows along as his/her partner reads, underlining any word errors and circling the last word read.	Partner #2 reads for one minute. When the teacher says, "Stop," the partner stops reading.
Partner #1 provides feedback to his/her partner, saying the number of words read correctly in a minute and going over any word errors.	
Both partners record the number of correct oral words read on their own graphs.	
Note: This procedure is usually repeated five times using the same passage. Thus, students are able to visually track reading rate growth on their graphs.	

Practice Practice Practice

" Use it or lose it"

1

Anita L. Archer, PhD.

Archer, A., & Hughes, C. (2011). *Explicit Instruction:*
Effective and Efficient Teaching. NY: Guilford Publications.

Chapter 8

2

Purpose and Benefits of Practice

- Reinforces the basic skills needed to learn more advanced skills (**proficiency, fluency, automaticity**)

- Protects against forgetting (**retention, maintenance**)

- Improves transfer (**generalization**)

3

Types of Practice

- **Initial Practice**

- **Distributed Practice**

- **Cumulative Practice/Review**

4

Initial Practice

- Occurs under watchful eye of the teacher

- Provide numerous practice opportunities within the teacher-directed lesson to build accuracy

- Provide immediate feedback after each item.

5

Distributed Practice

- Studying or practicing a skill in short sessions overtime

- Distributing practice overtime (versus massing practice in one session) aids retention

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Cumulative Practice

- Adding related skills to skills previously taught.

- The skills are practiced together.
#1 skill to mastery
#2 skill to mastery
Practice #1 and #2
Practice #1, #2, and #3
Practice #1, #2, #3, and #4

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Cumulative Review

- Provide **intentional review** of previously taught skills/strategies/concepts /vocabulary/knowledge

- Goal is to increase long-term retention

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Independent Practice

It is not: Drill and Kill

It is: Drill and Skill

It is perhaps: Drill and Thrill

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Practice Plans

- Practice Plans are needed if maintenance is to occur

- Analyze curriculum
- Determine what needs additional practice for retention
- Devise plan that is doable

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Example Plan
Middle School Language Arts

Practice Needed

1. **Passage vocabulary**
   Vocabulary is not taught. Students are expected to determine and retain meanings from context and embedded definitions.

Plan

a. Develop PowerPoints to introduce vocabulary
b. Have students maintain a vocabulary log
c. List vocabulary on numbered word wall for quick distributed practice
d. Give vocabulary quizzes
e. Play cumulative review game after each unit.

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Example Plan #1
Middle School Language Arts

Practice Needed

2. **Literary Terms**
   Literary terms are introduced with each unit but not consistently reviewed

Plan

a. Create a reference sheet of literary terms
b. During discussions of passages, students will have reference sheet on desk to encourage use of terms
c. At the end of passage instruction, students will review using reference sheet.

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Example Plan #1
Middle School Language Arts

Practice Needed   **Plan**

3. **Writing**

Seven genre are taught.
Students write one product for
for each genre.

a. Teach three genre:
   argumentative, informative,
   narrative.
b. Provide careful instruction on
   argumentative.
c. Have students write minimum
   of four in LA class.
d. Introduce planning tools and
   rubric to staff.
e. Have students continue practice
   of genre in other classes.
f. Repeat cycle for informative.

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Selecting What to Practice

- **What will be practiced?**
  - What is critical to retain?

  - Was the skill taught during group instruction?

  - Can students perform it independently?

  - What is the purpose of the assignment? (e.g., increasing accuracy, increasing fluency, maintaining the skills)

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Designing, selecting, or adapting assignments

- Match the **task** (*the way students practice the skill*) to the **skill** (*what has been taught*)

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Designing, selecting, or adapting assignments

- Control for other skill demands

John participated in an Arbor Day activity in which students in his fifth-grade class planted trees in a neighborhood park. John planted one third of all the Serbian spruce saplings planted by his class. His class planted a total of 36 saplings. How many saplings did John plant?

John's class planted 36 trees in the park. John planted one-third of them. How many trees did John plant.

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Designing, selecting, or adapting assignments

- Provide clear, concise directions

- Provide prompts or worked examples when necessary

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Selecting format

- **What practice format will be used?**
  - Paper-pencil

  - Infusing distributed practice within group instruction
    - (Example:group vocabulary practice)

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Selecting practice format

- **What practice format will be used?**

- Partner or team activities
  - Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

  - Class wide Peer Tutoring (CWPT)

  - Team Assisted Individualization (TAI)

- Teacher designed partner practice

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Effective Peer/Group Practice Programs

- Teachers explicitly taught new content before practiced in dyads/groups

- Teachers taught and assigned student responsibilities and roles

- Used consistently – part of the classroom culture

- Careful matching procedures for partners/teams

- Close teacher monitoring

- Student accountability

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Introducing the assignment

- **How will the assignment be presented?**
  - **Clarify**
    - read directions with students
    - have students highlight key words
    - model completion of an item
  - **Verify**
    - have students explain directions to partner
    - ask questions to verify understanding
    - monitor completion of activity

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Establish purpose / goal

- Foster **deliberate effort** to improve performance.

- **Persistence** - concentration or sustained attention at a task, even in the presence of internal or external distractions

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Feedback to enhance learning

Feedback is designed to close the gap between current performance and desired goal

a. feedback should focus on the task performance
   in relationship to goal

b. feedback should be specific and clear

c. feedback should be provided in a timely manner

d. focus the feedback on the task not the learner

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Providing feedback

- Self-corrections against a key

- Self-corrections during instructional group

- Self-evaluation against a rubric

- Structured peer feedback using rubric

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Providing feedback

- Teacher feedback on responses during instruction
- Teacher feedback as he/she circulates and monitors
- Teacher feedback to group on assignment
- Teacher feedback to individuals
- Teacher corrections/written feedback

Establish Routines Related to Independent Practice

- Determining what to do

- Obtaining assistance

- What to do when completed (buffer activities)

Rubric - Summary of Article

Content of Summary	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. Topic - Is the topic of the original article stated?	Yes No	Yes No
2. **Main Idea/Opinion -** Is the main idea of the article (or author's position) clearly stated?	Yes No	Yes No
3. **Major Points/Reasons** - Does the summary focus on the major points, reasons, and/ or information from the article?	Yes No	Yes No
4. **Accurate -** Are the major points, reasons, and/or information accurate?	Yes No	Yes No
5. **Own Words -** Is the summary written in your own words?	Yes No	Yes No
6. **Concise -** Is the summary shorter than the original article?	Yes No	Yes No
7. **Combined Ideas -** Are some of the ideas combined into longer, more sophisticated sentences?	Yes No	Yes No
8. **Understanding** - Is the summary easy to understand?	Yes No	Yes No

Example - Summary

Summary - *Just Say No to Uniforms*

In this article, Theresa Jenkins expresses her contention that schools should not require students to wear uniforms. She believes that requiring uniforms could have many negative outcomes including robbing children of their individuality, requiring them to wear clothing that is not matched to their body type, and increasing the wardrobe budget for families to cover the cost of regular clothing and uniforms.

Non- Example - Summary
(Includes opinions other than those of the article's author.)

Summary - *Just Say No to Uniforms*

The author of this article believes that schools should not require school uniforms for a number of reasons. First, wearing school uniforms takes away a child's chance to express their personality through their choice of clothing. I think this is particularly important when you are in middle school and you are trying to make a statement about yourself through the t-shirts, jeans, and jackets that you select. Second, students won't have a chance to practice picking out their own outfits, something that they would have to do everyday before they go to work.

Non- Example - Summary
(Is not written in the student's own words.)

Summary - *Just Say No to Uniforms*

- Requiring school uniforms takes away the opportunity for students to learn how to select their own outfits. Uniforms blur an individual's sense of self, make students self-conscious when the uniforms don't fit correctly, and cost the same if not more than normal clothes. Schools should just say no to uniforms.