

## GUIDED INSTRUCTION

**GUIDED INSTRUCTION** is almost always done with small, purposeful groups, which are composed based on students' performance on formative assessments. The groups consist of students who share a common instructional need that the teacher addresses. The key lies in the planning.

- A dialogue occurs between students and the teacher as they begin to apply the skill or strategy.
- The teacher uses cues and prompts to scaffold understanding when a student makes an error and does not immediately tell the student the correct answer.
- The teacher plays an active role in guided instruction, not just circulating and assisting individual students.
- Small-group arrangements are evident.
- Grouping changes throughout the semester.

### GUIDED INSTRUCTION

- The time when the cognitive load begins to shift from teacher to student
- The teacher's role changes as he or she follows the lead of the learner, who is attempting to apply the skill or strategy to a new situation
- Margaret Mooney (1988) "to/for, with, and by": teacher begins modeling **to** or **for** learners, then works **with** them as a guide, and eventually is **by** their side as they become more independent
- Guided instruction is knowing when to offer a steady hand, and when to withdraw it. This is truly the art and science of teaching.
- Guiding occurs through cueing, prompting, scaffolding, and questioning
- It is the teacher's opportunity to explore just what each student knows and doesn't know at that moment in time.

### WHAT GUIDED INSTRUCTION IS NOT

- It is not ability grouping
- It is not prescriptive teaching
- It is not the same for every group – each group may be working at a slightly different pace or with variations in content
- It is not every day with every student

### KEY FEATURES OF GUIDED INSTRUCTION

- Guided instruction is the dialogue between teacher and learners that is carefully crafted following the principles of scaffolding. (Scaffolding: the temporary supports, in the form of questions, cues, and prompts, a teacher offers a learner to help the learner bridge toward a skill or concept he/she cannot do or understand independently.)
- Effective scaffolding requires that the teacher possess expert knowledge about the cues themselves and the level of knowledge they likely represent.
- A basic assumption of guided instruction is that the student is responding in a perfectly logical manner, given what he or she knows and doesn't know at that particular moment.
- Scaffolds have a reception, transformation, or production function
- Reception scaffolds direct a learner to a source of information: "Look at the diagram at the bottom of the page to answer."

## GUIDED INSTRUCTION

- Transformation scaffolds require the student to utilize the information in a new form: “Use the bar graph to arrive at your answer. What does it tell you?”
- Production scaffolds require the learner to create something completely new. “Based on the graph, what do you believe they should do next?”
- Guided instruction is based on formative assessment
- Students are grouped and regrouped based on their performance, **not** how the teacher perceives their ability.
- Guided instruction is dependent on good formative assessment information. It is how teacher form groups and decide what to teach to these groups.
- Systematic use of formative assessment data improves student achievement.
- Frequent formative assessments mean that grouping arrangements can change often.
- Classrooms that use formative assessments to flexibly group students use a situational process, meaning that students are taught first and then grouped for reteaching or extension based on the most current formative assessment.
- Guided instruction provides teachers with an excellent opportunity to differentiate instruction.
- Teachers can differentiate content, process, and product.
- Content: vary the content (change in texts, math problems, etc.), rate of learning, or provide for interest groups.
- Process: types of prompts, differentiate questions asked, level of support provided, increase or decrease of visual support, more use of oral language (discussion)
- Products: create choice through a menu of items; categorize by type (oral language, written language, performance, project)

### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE GUIDED INSTRUCTION

- Guided Reading: Students are purposely grouped according to their instructional needs and taught to apply reading processes they are learning to novel situations. The teacher uses this time to analyze how effectively students are using those reading processes, to help individually when they get stuck, and to form hypotheses about what students know and don't know. This technique is often used in high school to address literary devices, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and critical literacy.
- Guided Writing: Teachers work with small groups of students, based on their assessed performance as students apply what they have learned from focus lessons and collaborative learning with varying degrees of support from the teacher. Teachers often use sentence or paragraph frames. Even college composition experts, Graff and Birkenstein (2006) recommend the use of frames (called *templates*), saying “creativity and originality lie not in the avoidance of established forms, but in the imaginative use of them.”
- Student Think-Alouds: The goal of a think-aloud is for students to uncover their own thinking processes as they learn and understand a concept. As he/she performs a task, the student pauses to explain thinking, including decisions about what to do next. Ideally suited to guided instruction, student think-alouds are the opportunity for the teacher to listen to the thinking processes of the students as they engage in new learning. Assess with a simple checklist.
- Misconception Analysis: 1) Teachers must know and anticipate misconceptions students possess about the concepts being taught. 2) Educators must teach for factual knowledge in a systematic way. 3) Students must be taught to be metacognitively aware of their learning. These three recommendations

## GUIDED INSTRUCTION

make a difference in history, science, and math instruction. Anecdotal notes are best for assessment with misconception analysis

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION/GRADUAL RELEASE MODEL

- It is not linear: focus lesson, guided instruction, collaborative learning, and independent learning.
- The explicit instruction/gradual release model can be a solution to the logistics of differentiation. It is in the guided instruction, collaborative and independent learning phases of the framework that differentiation takes place.
- There is a need to teach students how to collaborate and work independently before these can be a regular part of explicit instruction/gradual release.
- Implementation is an iterative vs. recursive process. (Recursive: same algorithm each time with same sequence for process. Iterative: same algorithm each time with input for step being based on the previous step.)

*Thus, the first two days of unit in biology might begin with a focus lesson on properties of cells, followed by a collaborative learning activity as students work together to determine whether an egg meet the criteria of a single cell. After student explain their reasoning, the teacher follows with another focus lesson on the single unfertilized cell at the center of the egg, surrounded by proteins that nourish and protect the cell, with students comparing their reasoning with the new information. The following day begins with guided instruction as the teacher meets with small groups of students to apply their new understanding to a reading on the fertilized ovum and its development as an embryo. Meanwhile, other students are engaged in collaborative learning, analyzing a diagram of an animal cell together and entering the information into their science journals. [Better Learning Through Structured Teaching by Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, 2008. Page 112.]*