



## *Kansas Effective Practices Instructional Toolkit*

Implementing Research and Resources Into Action  
Research Lesson 1: Daily Challenges

### **Differentiated Instructional Strategies**

#### **Flexible Skills/Grouping:**

Students are matched to skills work by virtue of readiness, not with the assumption that all need the same spelling task, computation drill, writing assignment, etc. Movement among groups is common, based on readiness on a given skill and growth in that skill.

- Exempts students from basic skills work in areas where they demonstrate a high level of performance (100% is not required).
- Can allow a chance for independent work at the student's own pace.

#### **Compacting:**

A 3-step process that (1) assesses what a student knows about material to be studied and what the student still needs to master, (2) plans for learning what is not known and excuses the student from what is known, and (3) plans for freed-up time to spend in enriched or accelerated study.

- Eliminates boredom from unnecessary drill and practice.
- Satisfies student's desire to learn more about a topic than school often allows.
- Encourages independence.

#### **Most Difficult First:**

Students can demonstrate mastery of a concept by completing the five most difficult problems with 85% accuracy. Students who can demonstrate mastery do not need to practice anymore.

- Honors student's mastery of a concept.
- Eliminates unnecessary drill and practice.
- Reduces homework load of students who can demonstrate mastery.

#### **Orbital Study/Independent investigations:**

These studies generally take three to six weeks. They orbit, or revolve, around some facet of the curriculum. Students select their own topics for orbital, and they work with guidance and coaching from the teacher to develop more expertise on the topic and the process of becoming an independent investigator.

- Allows students to develop expertise on a topic and work with complex ideas.
- Builds on student interest and enables students to use their preferred learning style.
- Teachers and students establish criteria for success

#### **Independent Projects/Group Investigations:**

A process through which student and teacher identify problems or topics of interest to the student. Both student and teacher plan a method of investigating the problem or topic and identifying the type of product the student will develop. The product should address the problem and demonstrate the student's ability to apply skills and knowledge to the problem or topic.

- Builds on student interest and encourages independence.
- Teacher provides guidance and structure to supplement student capacity to plan.
- Uses preset timelines to zap procrastination and logs to document the process involved.
- Teachers and students establish criteria for success.

#### **Problem-Based Learning:**

The student is placed in the active role of solving problems as a professional would.

- Utilizes varied learning strengths, allows use of a range of resources, and provides a good opportunity for balancing student choice with teacher coaching.

**Agendas:**

A personalized list of tasks that a particular student must complete in a specified time.

- Teacher moves among individual students, coaching and monitoring their understanding and progress.

**Learning Centers/Interest Centers:**

Centers are flexible enough to address variable learning needs. Interest centers are designed to motivate student exploration of a topic. Learning centers are a collection of activities designed to teach, reinforce, or extend a skill/concept.

- Materials and activities address a wide range of reading levels, learning profiles, and student interests.
- Activities vary from simple to complex, concrete to abstract, structured to open-ended.

**Choice Boards/Tic-Tac-Toe/RAFT:**

Students make a work selection from a certain row or column. Teachers can target work toward student needs while giving students choice.

- Well suited to dealing with readiness, interests, and learning style preferences among students.

**Portfolios:**

A collection of student work that can be a powerful way of reflecting on student growth over time.

- Portfolios are motivating because of emphasis on student choice and focus on readiness, interests, and learning profile.

**Assessment:**

Assessment is ongoing and diagnostic. It provides the teacher with day-to-day data on students' readiness, interests, and their learning profile. Assessment has more to do with helping students grow than with cataloging their mistakes.

- Assessment is used to formally record student growth.
- Varied means of assessment is used so that all students can fully display their skill and understanding.