**GUIDED PRACTICE**

What it is and is not . . .

Guided practice is an activity that provides students the opportunity to grasp and development concepts or skills and requires teachers to monitor student progress. Guided practice is not simply assigning a worksheet, problems, or questions to be completed in class.

Teachers should use guided practice . . .

* following and as an additional check for understanding.
* prior to closure.
* to determine the level of mastery.
* to provide individual remediation.

Guided practice can look like and sound like . . .

* An activity in which each student is individually accountable to demonstrate understanding. For example:

1. A set of questions or problems that require students to work through the new learning. This can be accomplished individually or by using cooperative learning strategies. Remember . . . it’s group work and not cooperative learning unless there is individually accountability! No group grades.

**Ideas** for pairs/teams: Pairs Check, Flashcard Game, Roundrobin or Roundtable (Rally, if pairs), Sages Share, Fan and Pick, Find Someone Who, Numbered Heads Together, Showdown, Team-Pair-Solo, and Team Word Web.

2. Students creating a mind map related to the learning objective.

* **The teacher is continuously moving around the room and monitoring students working individually, in pairs, or as teams.** This is critical for assessment of learning and related decisions concerning the need to reteach. Without monitoring, the activity becomes independent practice and the teacher may not realize that students are encoding incorrect information and/or skills! According to Fredric Jones, author of Positive Classroom Instruction, effective monitoring by the teacher during guided practice can improve classroom discipline and decrease failure experiences for students. While monitoring students, teachers need only to “praise, prompt, and leave!”

Note: **Brain research** is telling us that we have a window of approximately **6-8 hours to correct inaccurate information/skills** before it becomes permanently encoded. What are the implications of this for teachers? A check for understanding and guided practice must be implemented PRIOR to sending students home with independent practice. If this does not occur, teachers will have a very difficult time decoding the incorrect skill/knowledge of their students!

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