

Understanding the *Scaffold for Learning*



Benchmark Video and Discussions

The purpose of a recorded benchmark lesson is to trigger awareness in all students. It's also an opportunity to challenge student thinking, connect content, and pose thought-provoking questions. The recording should last only two to three minutes with content that is relevant to the authentic learning unit. After students have had the opportunity to schedule and engage with the benchmark lesson, the teacher should provide a whole-group discussion or activity so students can synthesize the information together.

Instructional Activities: Learning

Instructional Activities: Additional

Instructional Texts/Websites	Instructional Videos	How-to Sheets	Practice
Students who are strong visual learners may lean towards texts or websites. They can be in print or digital texts, with or without images, graphics, etc., that students read to learn academic content.	Students who are strong auditory and visual learners may lean towards watching a video for skill development over following a printed how-to sheet. Videos should be 5 to 15 minutes (depending on student age and academic content) with direct instruction and pausing for students to answer questions, solve problems, or perform some other skill.	Provide your students with direct instruction in skill development. Visual or independent learners may actually prefer a how-to sheet to listening to a teacher's directions. Students follow the directions at their own pace, re-read as necessary, and refer to diagrams or examples you include.	These are meant to allow students to put what they learned to the test. Repetition of skills is important to build fluency. In practice activities, students have to do the work. Students should be writing, creating, calculating, sketching, and more to show you what they know.
			Application
			After learning and practicing, it's time to use this new learning. Have students solve a different problem from the ones used in learning and practice. Have students apply the learning to a real-world situation.
Interactive Websites	Learning Centers	Small-Group Mini-Lessons	Assessment
Interactive web sites give students a wealth of opportunities to engage actively with content. Whole websites can be devoted to particular content, or individual applets (Java/Flash) can address particular subjects. For handheld devices, a wide range of applications are also available.	Design learning centers to guide students as they grapple with core skills and concepts. Individuals, pairs, or groups of students may go to the learning center or retrieve materials to be taken to a table or other space. Learning centers can facilitate effective use of limited or diverse resources.	A small-group mini-lesson should last approximately five to ten minutes, after which students may stay and practice the skill as the teacher moves to facilitate throughout the room.	Let students complete an assessment and check their answers to determine how well they learned the skill or concept. Let students track if they are just getting started, practicing, or have achieved mastery (see the Learning Dashboard as a tool for students to monitor their progress based on assessment activities).
			Reflection
			Encourage students to pause and reflect on what they've learned, how they will use it, and what more they want to learn. Ask students to reflect not only on what they learned but also on how hard or easy it was. Allow for metacognitive reflection — thinking about their own thinking — in addition to content.

Key: Individual (I), Pairs (P), Small Groups (SG), Activities suitable for homework (HW), Insights Video (IV)