



The DVUSD Way:

High-Level Instructional Strategies for Engagement

Strategy

Practice



Procedures and Routines

- Create connections with students
- Post and teach school-wide and classroom Tier I behavior expectations
- Communicate consistent daily routines
- Teach essential social and academic behaviors
- Use attention signals
- Actively scan the room and adjust proximity to ensure student engagement



Clarity of Learning Targets

- Post and communicate learning targets and connect to previous learning
- Communicate the success criteria
- Consistently reference learning targets
- Ask students to summarize their understanding verbally or in writing throughout the lesson



Vocabulary Instruction

- Provide explicit tiered instruction for general and content-specific words
- Use visuals, student-friendly definitions, word banks, sentence frames, graphic organizers, and models
- Provide opportunities for practice and repetition



Modeling

- Provide step-by-step instructions
- Incorporate effective modeling strategies: think-alouds, role-playing, peer modeling, etc.
- Teach students how to use thinking strategies to plan for and monitor their learning



Guided Practice with Formative Feedback

- Provide multiple opportunities to practice each new skill
- Use formative checks for understanding (exit tickets, observations, checklists, think-pair-share, etc.) to assess student learning, provide feedback, and adjust instruction
- Provide opportunities for students to engage in self-assessment to prompt student reflection and self-correction



Collaborative Learning

- Clearly communicate the learning targets
- Hold students accountable for group contributions and task expectations
- Teach procedures for effective group work; communication, conflict resolution, and time management

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Cognitive Interest Cues

- Hook student curiosity with questions, visuals, and personal connections
- Connect interest cues to the learning outcome
- Activate prior knowledge



Student Goal Setting

- Create opportunities for students to set and monitor clear, specific learning goals
- Graph assessments to hold students accountable and allow reflection on learning
- Provide frequent and targeted progress feedback
- Make connections between effort and progress



High-Level Questions

- Design open-ended thought-provoking questions aligned to the learning target
- Prompt students to offer explanations and make thinking visible
- Provide think time when questioning students
- Teach students to create and ask their own high-level questions
- Encourage students to reinforce and rationalize their peers' thinking and explanations
- Use follow-up questions for incorrect and correct answers



Visualizations and Concrete Examples

- Embed visual representations: diagrams, graphic organizers, manipulatives, work examples, and simulations
- Explain abstract principles with familiar, concrete examples



Tier II Supports

- Focus first on high-quality Tier I instruction
- Use data to assess student learning and create groups
- Focus on grade-level essentials
- Reengage students with interventions or extensions



Cognitive Writing

- Engage students in high-order processing of new learning through writing tasks
- Extend and apply prior learning
- Explicitly teach and model thinking skills
- Develop rubrics, provide feedback, and offer opportunities for revisions