

Explicit Instruction Implementation Checklist

Use this checklist to implement a high-quality instructional model using the principles of explicit instruction. This checklist can be used by teachers/educators, special education staff, school administrators, interventionists/specialists for instructional planning, observation, or reflection.

Criteria	Description
Clear Objectives	
Create clear objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Choose objectives based on student performance relative to goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a goal from an individualized education program (IEP) or standards. • Choose an objective that is the next step toward the goal. <input type="checkbox"/> Write focused objectives that describe the specific learning outcome. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the objective to one singular next step toward the goal. • Describe a learning outcome in behavioral terms that assess mastery of the objective.
Teacher Modeling	
Create effective explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Design the explanation so that it is correct, clear, and concise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct: Accurate and complete • Clear: Immediately comprehensible using the simplest possible student- and discipline-appropriate vocabulary and syntax with no awkward language • Concise: Only needed details, no needless words, and no information that is interesting but nonessential or not immediately useful <input type="checkbox"/> Use instructional language that emphasizes key student behaviors or actions. <input type="checkbox"/> Use words and instructional phrases repeatedly to reinforce concepts. <input type="checkbox"/> Include words and phrases that are part of students' spoken vocabulary.
Model performance of a skill or strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Show all the steps or provide unique examples. <input type="checkbox"/> Verbalize your thinking. <input type="checkbox"/> Have students observe.
Return to modeling and include additional examples (i.e., use multiple models)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide multiple examples to help students understand concepts. <input type="checkbox"/> Use a number of models and examples based on the complexity of the target skill, students' ease in learning new skills, students' background knowledge, and (to some extent) the amount of time the model requires. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate the skill or strategy, transition to check student understanding, and then return to modeling—ensure student understanding throughout this process.

Criteria	Description
Student Practice	
Provide guided practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead students in steps toward the learning outcome. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedural task: Execute each step separately. • Knowledge task: Address each unit (e.g., vocabulary) one at a time. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide appropriate prompts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a variety of prompt types linked to the task and likely student need. • Change the level of prompting in response to students' progress. <input type="checkbox"/> Observe and provide immediate feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch students carefully. • Interpret the meaning of errors. • Provide feedback that aligns with the type of error.
Provide independent practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review expectations and resources for meeting the learning outcome. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow students to work without support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit teacher guidance. • Monitor throughout independent practice. • Give mini-reminders and record points of confusion. <input type="checkbox"/> Observe and provide immediate and delayed feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for understanding throughout. If low accuracy, move back to guided practice; if high accuracy, finish the cycle. • Provide feedback after completion of the task.

Criteria	Description
Supporting Practices	
Use supporting practices to maximize student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use effective methods to elicit frequent responses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain or check accuracy of processing. • Ensure that responses match the learning outcome, student’s abilities, and desired response format. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide immediate specific feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate: Delivered as soon as possible • Specific: Tied directly to students’ actions <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a brisk pace. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move on when students are ready. • Use the other supporting practices.
Use effective materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that any materials found online support the designed lesson. In other words, do not design the lesson around the materials. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match instructions and information on materials to the instructions given during modeling. • Ensure that materials are easy to follow. • Delete distracting and unnecessary information. • Neatly organize the materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Use best practices when creating original materials. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not make materials overly complex. • Do not include unnecessary elements that do not support the lesson. • Do not distract from the focus of the lesson. • Ensure that materials are neat in appearance. • Avoid materials that are too time intensive to create.

This resource was designed to accompany the “Explicit Instruction” pathway. It is recommended that training is completed prior to using this tool. [Contact your regional MTSS specialist](#) to enroll in a synchronous course, or enroll for an [asynchronous course](#).