Integrate Learning (I-Learn)
Advanced Lesson-Planning Guide
Developed by Robert Rhodes, EdD

Research

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Research indicates that about 30% of students are linear and sequential in their learning process. Therefore a linear, sequential lesson should work relatively well for 30% of learners and less well so for the other 70%.

What happens to the 70% who learn differently? They drop out; they are expelled from traditional institutions; they may return to school later, as adults, to try again in adult education programs; or they may never try again and remain hidden among the disenfranchised in our many communities in the United States.

If we want to change the results we have been getting (most of our learners fail to meet basic job requirements, to achieve educational admission standards, and to function above poverty level), we would do well to try something different.

This Integrate Learning (I-Learn) Advanced Lesson-Planning Guide suggests a radical approach to working with students. The suggestions made herein require that the instructor become thoroughly prepared to meet students where they are and to flow within a student-oriented and guided process.

The I-Learn Advanced model does not ignore standards; rather it applies a different way of approaching standards and thus the education of students.

As teachers, we have no choice as to whether we *will* implement standards, but we do have choice as to *how* we implement them. What follows is a way to satisfy those checking on the standards while keeping, even enhancing, the interest of your students.

Let us begin by comparing how three basic questions are answered in developing lesson plans for **linear** and **holistic** learners.

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Linear learners go through the learning process one step at a time. They need to understand the basics before going on to more advanced concepts. They take an organized, sequential approach to learning. They are somewhat like the person to works a jigsaw puzzle by first finding the pieces with the flat edged that must by the outside frame of the picture. Then this person separates by color and/or texture. Then this person completes the picture by finding the pieces of the right color and texture that fit into each other. This person may not ever look at the picture of the box of the jigsaw puzzle. They often work from the outside edge that they have made toward the inside of the picture.

Holistic learners start by trying to understand the larger picture, the context. They need to understand what is being learned and why and how it fits into other things they know. They are not concerned that they may not have prerequisites to learn some things, they want to get to it right away. They make large intuitive leaps and fill in the missing areas later. For holistic learners, everything is related somehow to everything else. They bring together knowledge from any number of fields to be able to internalize new information. These work the jigsaw puzzle by first studying the picture on the box. Then they look at pieces and begin to put them where the colors and textures would relate to the picture on the box. They try to get the lines, colors, textures and shapes going in the right direction, and then look for how the pieces could link with each other. They usually form the picture from several places inside the picture and work out to the edges.

Linear Approach (School/Institutional Model)	Integrated (Holistic) Approach
QUESTION 1 - Where do students *have* to go? (State and National Goals, Objectives, and Standards)	**Question 1** – Where do students *want* to go? (Mutually devised goals that meet state and national standards)
In the linear format, the teacher determines where students are going, based on textbooks and required standards. There is little student input, therefore little student interest. Model: Formal institution. Students sit down (in straight rows) and the teacher "teaches." The students may or may not learn, but the focus is on teaching.	Integrated learners are mostly turned off by teacher-centered classrooms, linear lessons, sequential approaches, and following someone else's lead. Integrated learners want to assume some of the responsibility for their own education. In the Integrated Learning format, the lesson and direction is derived from a combination of teacher input and student input, usually originating from a discussion (teacher-student, student-student, class-teacher) or a "teachable moment" that comes up. The direction and content of the lesson are not known ahead of time. They are developed as the lesson progresses. The lesson moves along because of continued student interest and student questions. The teacher no longer provides the answers. Rather the teacher asks questions and helps students find and utilize resources. Sometimes the teacher knows where the students are going and sometimes the teacher may be less sure. The process is organic, going in the direction(s) of student interest and excitement. Students learn best when they are excited about the learning process. Model: This is a more informal learning process, more like the way we all learn things we want or like to do. i.e. riding a bike, skiing, cooking, video games. We find something

	we want to do and we watch others. Then we get someone to help us learn. Then we try it and refine it. We learn because we want to rather than because someone else wants us to. In this process both the teacher and the student should know the required skills for advancement to the next level. The teacher can then assist the student, or remind him, in attaining those skills at his own pace.
QUESTION 2 - How are *they* going to get there?	QUESTION – How are *we* going to get there together?
In the linear process the teacher determines the process, the activities, the materials, the textbooks and workbooks. In a good linear lesson plan, the teacher has anticipated pretty much every possibility and is ready for it with activities, resources, and projects. The teacher is the source of virtually all information and activity. Activities and resources are selected to support the teacher's teaching style. They are often selected according to their ability to be easily measured and assessed. Instructions are linear, linguistic and processed through stages. Competition is considered healthy and the best is usually rewarded publicly. Model: Unit and lesson plans are derived from state standards and/or published textbook teacher's manuals. They are designed for the "average" student in order to "teach" what is required to accomplish the task that has been determined by legislators, state departments of	In the Integrated Learning model, the lessons are generated by discussion between student(s) and teacher, sometimes between students. The teacher's task is to help maintain interest and excitement and to help direct students toward resources. The teacher also is intimately aware of the required standards, so s/he can occasionally bend the direction of projects in a way to increase the quantity or depth of the standards covered. The process is not quite "student driven," but is largely that. The teacher's role is more of a "coach" than a source of knowledge or direction. S/he encourages students toward success rather than leading them there. The hope is that students will surpass the teacher. Activities are selected to appeal to what students want to learn, and standards are taught in relation to those preferences. Activities do not necessarily follow a sequential pattern. Rather, students may work on different parts of a problem, concept, or project and gain an awareness of the whole as

education and textbook curriculum developers. Emphasis in this process is for the student to follow directions and do what the curriculum and the teacher require.	the process reveals itself. Student performance can vary according to strengths and teamwork/collaboration is encouraged rather than competition. Model: The teacher is aware of the state required standards. The student is aware of required abilities to pass to the next level. The curriculum comes from student discussions, awareness, and perceived problems. The student determines what they want to do and the teacher, sort of like a coach, tries to help the student accomplish their goals. The student works and learns because they want to and they are working toward skills and accomplishments that they, themselves determine. The teacher facilitates that learning and tweaks the tasks to try to include other, perhaps neglected or forgotten, state standards. Emphasis in this process is for the student to clearly define the task, problemsolve, and accomplish the goals.
QUESTION 3 - How will you know *they* got there?	QUESTION 3 – How do we know *we* got there?
In the linear, sequential process the teacher administers exams, tests, and quizzes to determine the level of understanding for the specific objectives covered. Students who show above a certain percentage of achievement on linguistic, knowledge-based tests will be regarded as being high achievers and rewarded	In the Integrated Learning Model, linear tests (usually pencil and paper) can be a part of the evaluation process, but much more important will be the results of the projects. Students can demonstrate what they have learned and the depth of that learning, written, orally or kinesthetically. Often in this model the teacher simply asks the students to

accordingly. Student progress will be shown numerically and capable of being charted and graphed. Areas of weakness will be discreetly identified, and deficient students will often receive remediation on specific, isolated areas. Model: Students are evaluated mostly using standardized and teacher-developed written tests.	prepare a presentation of some sort that demonstrates what they have learned in the project. With a set of rubrics, the teacher can then easily determine what was learned and to what depth in order to be able to chart progress against required standards. Model: Students are evaluated on how well they accomplish what they have set out to do. They are evaluated on completion of the task, quality of the product, perseverance in overcoming obstacles, eliciting assistance from others, providing leadership, and much more.

LESSON PLANNING SUGGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING INTEGRATED LEARNERS

1) The first task is for the teacher to become thoroughly familiar with the standards that are required for the grade level being taught. That means reading them, studying them, thinking about possibilities concerning the standards, and developing a grid of the standards covered for each student. Remember that there is often some redundancy in standards since subject area committees in isolation develop them. Therefore, some of the standards from math may be duplicated in science, and so forth. Please cross-reference those on your graph so that you will show that you have covered the area rather than having to do it twice.

2) The next task is to determine student interests. This can be done individually or in groups. Usually classroom or individual discussion leads to possibilities. Often areas that can be used for a project turn up in discussions about other projects. Look anywhere. Casual discussion on the playground can lead to projects that will capture student attention and lead to great learning opportunities.

3) Focus the project, preferably toward some of the standards that have not yet been covered. However, remember that students will work harder, longer, and more intensely on things they are interested in than on things they are not interested in. I would sacrifice covering a few standards to increase student interest. The Integrated Learning model presumes that many students learn in an integrated manner, combining rather than separating issues or areas. You will go back part way through the project and review the standards covered. You may, at that time, be able to add an element or press in a little different direction to cover more standards.

4) Ask questions. Let the students wander a bit as they formalize a project. Let them find resources that they need. Try not to be the main resource yourself. Resources can be other students, other adults in and outside school, encyclopedias, the Internet, books, tapes, movies and much more. In this process your job becomes one of assisting students to determine possible resources and allowing them to utilize those resources. You are a coach, providing direction and encouragement, but requiring the students to do the work. Sometimes this is done for individual students, but more often you will have students working in groups or teams. You are more concerned that students learn rather than how or from whom. You are preparing students to be able to learn when you are not there.

5) Review the standards lists several times during the project. You need to know the standards. The students don't. If it is possible to add a component to cover additional standards without decreasing the enthusiasm and momentum of the students, by all means do so.

Recognize that any one project cannot cover all the standards required for the year. Some will have to wait for another project.

6) See what standards have not been covered well or at all. When preparing for another project, try to steer interest in that direction. If a significant part of the year has gone by with some are of standards not being covered, you may want to discuss that with the students and see if there is some project that they might like that would be in the area missed. Most classes are relatively well rounded in terms of interests, so it is likely that some students will want to take the lead to work on some project in any given standards area.

7) Evaluations are done in several areas. What standards have been covered and how well? (Use the grid) Have students maintained interest and perseverance toward their goal, their project? Did the project produce a quality product with all students (in the group) participating? Was the product displayed (publicly)? Did socialization increase? Did leaders emerge? Did everyone participate? Was it fun? (If the teacher is having fun, the students might. If the teacher is not having fun, the students won't) Did you, as the teacher, learn some things also? (Teaching is more fun when we are learning. We want to model that learning is a life-long activity.) Additionally, evaluations are not only done at the end of a project. They need to be done continuously throughout the project, asking pretty much the same questions. That way, continuous adjustments can be made during the project to increase interest and learning.

Rubrics

Student Interest

1. Students want to get to the project. They can't wait!
2. Students will get to the project with little encouragement.
3. Students need coaxing to get to the project.
4. Students say "Do we have to?" and "Boring!"

Teacher Interest

1. This is an area of interest to me. I am anxious to see what develops.
2. I might be interested in this.
3. I am doing this because the kids want to.
4. I am doing this because I have to.

Standards

1. This project covers a several standards, some well, others somewhat.
2. This project covers some of the standards somewhat.
3. This project is not really related to the standards.
4. Standards?

Cooperation/leadership

1. Students cooperate with each other to develop the project.
2. Some students take the lead in the project, others follow.
3. I have to provide the leadership for this project.
4. Students are just doing what they are told.

Cooperation

1. Students work well with others. Assume a clear role and related responsibilities. Motivate others to do their best.
2. Students work with others. Share some responsibilities and decisions with others.
3. Students work with others, but have difficulty sharing responsibilities and decisions with others.

Perseverance

1. The students want to develop a quality product to display.
2. The students are shy about displaying their product.
3. The student product is only mediocre.
4. The students couldn't complete a product.

Fun

1. This project was fun for students and teacher.
2. This project was fun for students, not for teacher.
3. This project was fun for the teacher, not so much for students.
4. Nobody had fun.

Learning

1. Everyone learned a lot.
2. Students learned a lot, the teacher learned some.
3. The teacher learned some, students not much.
4. Nobody learned much.

Perspective

1. The processes for this project will make the next project easier.
2. The processes for this project will not likely affect the next project.
3. The processes for this project were negative and will likely make the next project more difficult.

Thinking Skills

1. Completion of the lesson requires students to synthesize information from a variety of sources or think creatively about how to apply information to a local situation
2. Completion of the lesson requires students to think a little about what they are doing, but does not focus on higher-order thinking skills.

3. Completion of the lesson requires students to regurgitate or copy information from one place to another; no higher order thinking skills required

Interactivity

1. Most of the activities are interactive, enriching and expanding the student's imagination.
2. Some interactive activities are present.
3. No interactive activities are present in this project.
4. Interactive? What's that?