



Independent Practice

PL-3, I-1, I-3, I-8

Independent Practice is the part of the lesson cycle where students are given the opportunity to practice the concept presented during the Introduction to New Learning and is a time for students to work towards mastery of the knowledge/skills presented in the lesson before an assessment is given. In the lesson cycle, Independent Practice typically comes after the Guided Practice. It is usually an activity that the students accomplish individually, with a partner, or in small groups while the teacher monitors the work. Activities during this part of the lesson cycle can take many forms but are always aligned with the learning goal and continue to push students towards mastery of the content.

- Plan and prepare practice activities that reflect the instructional purpose of the lesson. Differentiated activities are recommended.
- Make sure materials are ready for use.
- If students are intended to work together, establish grouping arrangements and time for completing the task.
- Give complete and specific instructions. Include examples and models of products and/or work samples if necessary.
- Communicate how their work will be evaluated; share the rubric or scoring guide if applicable.
- Introduce a nonverbal signal that will be used at the end of the Independent Practice to indicate that it is time for everyone to regroup.
- Allow students to get into working groups if applicable.
- Provide practice at appropriate levels of difficulty. Circulate the classroom to ensure that students are completing tasks correctly.
- Provide considerable feedback; redirect, reteach and extend assistance to those who need it.
- Offer alternative activities for students who complete assignments ahead of the others. They may also be asked to help and give feedback to other students/groups.
- Use the non-verbal signal introduced earlier to regroup and debrief.



Additional Tools

Performance Based Assessments

These are tools for measuring mastery that are made up of real world questions or problems which students have to solve. It requires a student create a product that demonstrates his or her knowledge or skills. Performance Based Assessments are applicable in all subject areas. Some examples include (but are not limited to) essays, presentations, writing an essay, recipes, original stories, dances, oral reports, maps and cartoons and promote thoughtful contemplation.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit houstonisd.org/EffectivePractices



ALERTS

Students are more likely to do well in the assessment if the lesson includes ample time for Independent Practice. Manage time wisely and determine (in advance) how long an Independent Practice activity will take. Use an online stopwatch so that students are constantly aware of how much time they have left to complete the work.



QUICK TIPS

Students are more likely to do well in the assessment if the lesson includes ample time for Independent Practice. Manage time wisely and determine (in advance) how long an Independent Practice activity will take. Use an online stopwatch so that students are constantly aware of how much time they have left to complete the work. Be sure to allow sufficient time (about 15-20 minutes) for students to work, share and expand upon presented materials. Generally students learn better when they are given a chance to bounce ideas off of their classmates.