<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy: (definition)</th>
<th>A multi-component instructional strategy centering on teacher-directed, explicit, systematic teaching based on scripted lesson plans and frequent assessment.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Instruction</td>
<td><strong>Underlying premise (theoretical basis):</strong> Relates to external task demands and external responses in the learning and teaching model. Direct instruction has its origins in three analyses: 1) <em>The analysis of behavior</em> – seeks to understand how the environment influences behavior. 2) <em>The analysis of communication</em> - seeks to understand how to logically define effective teaching sequences so that they prevent misuse of rules, restricted generalization or over-generalization. 3) <em>The analysis of knowledge systems</em> – seeks to logically organize or classify knowledge and how to communicate skills to a learner.</td>
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<td>Practice (outline of the strategy):</td>
<td>Direct Instruction has ten main features: 1) <strong>Explicit, systematic instruction</strong> – Lessons are highly structured and targeted skills are taught in a pre-planned manner. 2) <strong>Scripted lesson plans</strong> – Educators work through a carefully graduated sequence of tasks with carefully timed comments. The educator knows exactly what to say and what to ask to enable learners to reveal their understanding and/or the help they need. 3) <strong>Emphasis on pace</strong> – Lessons move at a brisk pace, with 15 learning opportunities per minute being common. 4) <strong>High level of success</strong> – The over-arching aim of every lesson is mastery. Lessons should be completed with 90% or better engagement and success rates. 5) <strong>Frequent opportunities to practice targeted skills</strong> - Make sure all learners are active participants and have maximum opportunities to practice all content. 6) <strong>Frequent curriculum-based assessment</strong> – Short mastery tests are used periodically to ensure that all learners have mastered</td>
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7) **Ability grouping** – Learners are taught in small groups of about eight to twelve so that the educator can more easily monitor progress and provide individual help.

8) **Mediated scaffolding** – Gradually, the direct instruction educator moves from an educator-guided to a more learner-guided approach.

9) **Embedded in other instructional strategies** – A school that uses direct instruction does not use it all day. Rather, it would most likely be used at the beginning of some class periods, to review previous concepts and to give instruction that builds on previous learning.

10) **Strategic Integration** – Concepts, rules and cognitive strategies are not taught in isolation from each other. Instead, instruction involves strategic integration within and across subjects.

### The Evidence (pros and cons of the strategy):

Positive results associated with direct instruction:

1) Research studies have consistently shown that direct instruction has a positive effect across a range of learners and across various subject areas.

2) A review found that direct instruction had positive effects with learners with low incidence disabilities.

### Associated Risks (potential problems in implementation):

One risk:

1) It is not implemented appropriately. Not every school can afford to purchase the commercially available packages and thus would not be able to implement the scripted lesson plans.

### Setting (student and environment strategy is best suited):

General education or special education setting

Mild/Moderate or Moderate/Severe

K-12

### Conclusion (value of the method):

Direct instruction is one of the most highly rated strategies for teaching learners with special education needs (as well as other learners).

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Further Reading (additional resources to learn more about the strategy):


