

## Active Pedagogy: Using Effective Instructional Practices Schoolwide

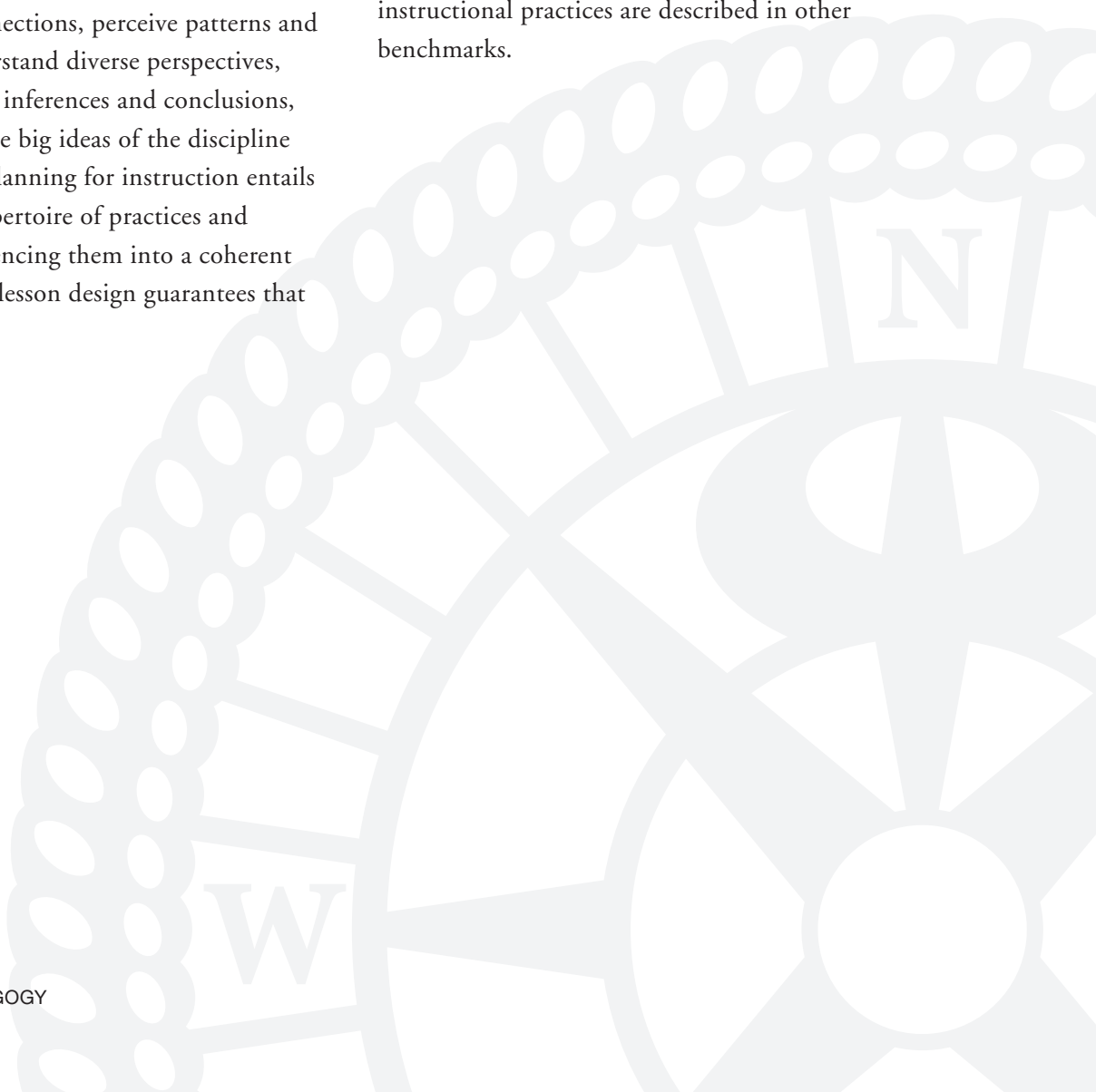
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### Overview

Teaching and learning are active and engaging in Expeditionary Learning classrooms. Effective instructional practices promote equity and high expectations: they make the content of expeditions come alive, ensure that all students think and participate, and allow the teacher to know all students and their thinking well. Good practices foster character by inspiring each student to develop craftsmanship, perseverance, collaborative skills, and responsibility for learning. They promote critical thinking by asking that students make connections, perceive patterns and relationships, understand diverse perspectives, supply evidence for inferences and conclusions, and generalize to the big ideas of the discipline studied. Effective planning for instruction entails choosing from a repertoire of practices and protocols and sequencing them into a coherent lesson. Thoughtful lesson design guarantees that

lessons are paced well, all students engage in productive work throughout the class period, teachers have time to confer with students, classroom management is smooth, and teachers are aware of each student's level of understanding and participation. Knowledge of each student's level of understanding and participation leads teachers to differentiate instruction.

These categories of instructional practice may be used in all subject areas; more discipline-specific instructional practices are described in other benchmarks.



## BENCHMARK 1:

### USING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES SCHOOLWIDE

#### A. Lesson Design

1. Instructional practices are selected and sequenced strategically within and across lessons.
2. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with a complex or provocative problem and build skills, vocabulary, and concepts on a “need to know” basis.
3. Teachers sometimes start a lesson or an investigation with an experience, and invite students to make sense of it.
4. Teachers activate and build upon students’ prior knowledge.
5. Students use manipulatives as tools for thinking and representing.
6. Each lesson incorporates strategies to build curiosity and has a sense of urgency and purpose.
7. Every student has a role and/or a responsibility for producing something that shows his or her thinking.
8. During independent work times, teachers actively engage and guide students (e.g., confer with students, pull small invitational groups, etc.).
9. Teachers structure lessons so that teachers talk less and students talk more; the students do the thinking and the work.

#### B. Practices

Teachers use one or more practices from the following categories on a daily basis; these practices describe teaching at all grade levels.

##### 1. Protocols

- a. Teachers use protocols (e.g., Socratic seminars, learning logs, and jigsaws) to ensure that all students think critically and participate fully.
- b. Teachers use protocols to look at student work (e.g., Collaborative Assessment Conference).
- c. Teachers use protocols to facilitate classroom meetings and crews, and to model and encourage behavior that allows for productive individual and group work.

##### 2. Workshops

- a. Teachers use the workshop format to model or demonstrate a concept, skill or strategy; require students to practice and apply what was modeled; and discuss and debrief what has been learned.

##### 3. Mini-lessons

- a. Sometimes teachers introduce and explicitly teach concepts, skills, and strategies in a mini-lesson format.
- b. Teachers often develop mini-lessons in response to student work and misconceptions.
- c. Mini-lessons are taught to the whole class or small groups depending on student needs.

##### 4. Modeling

- a. Teachers use practices such as demonstrations, role-plays, and fishbowls to set criteria and model expectations for high quality group process, products, writing, reading, and problem-solving.
- b. Teachers use practices such as think-alouds to model comprehension strategies and skills.

##### 5. Representing Thinking

- a. Teachers use anchor charts and other forms of documentation to synthesize and make public student understanding.
- b. Students represent their thinking using formats such as graphic organizers, recording forms, journals, quick-writes, and summaries of their learning.

##### 6. Questioning and Following Student Thinking

- a. Teachers ask open-ended questions and pursue student thinking by asking follow-up questions.
- b. Teachers regularly confer with students individually and in small groups to monitor each student’s level of understanding, to identify classwide issues, and to differentiate instruction.

##### 7. Using Exemplars And Models

- a. Teachers use exemplars and models to help students understand quality, format, and group work.
- b. Teachers use a range of exemplars and models to generate criteria and to construct rubrics.

##### 8. Multiple Drafts, Revision, and Critique

- a. Students produce multiple drafts for all products and assess each draft against generated criteria and rubrics to improve successive drafts.
- b. Teachers develop focused questions to guide revision.
- c. Students use critique protocols to receive and provide feedback and to revise their work.

##### 9. Reflecting and Debriefing

- a. Teachers and students reflect on and debrief lessons and experiences to improve retention of information, generalization, and transfer of learning.
- b. Teachers help students use reflection and debriefing to set goals for future learning.