New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge › Skill › Opportunity

Turnkey Guidance for Supporting All Students: *Scaffolding Instruction of English Language Arts and Mathematics*

<u>Goal:</u> To support teachers in designing instruction that makes the general education curriculum more accessible to <u>all students</u> without interfering with the rigor of grade-level content.

IMPORTANT: Please note that the purpose of this Turnkey Guidance and the associated PowerPoint presentation is to assist school districts with providing professional development (PD) sessions on the topic of scaffolding instruction. This resource is optional and meant to be customized as appropriate to best meet the skill levels and instructional interests and needs of participants. Length of PD sessions will vary in accordance with any supplemental activities and information used by the presenter to "dive deeper" into the topic of scaffolding.

<u>Objectives:</u>
- Increase the field's awareness of the *Supporting All Students Resource Guides.*
- Deepen understanding of what scaffolding instruction means and how scaffolds can be used to support student learning.
- Identify key considerations in effectively planning and delivering scaffolded instruction.

<u>Materials needed:</u>
Materials can be found on the *Supporting All Students Resource Guides* webpage.

- *Supporting All Students Resource Guides* (have at least one hard copy of each grade-level ELA and math guide in case participants are unable to access digital copies)
- PowerPoint Presentation: *Supporting All Students: Scaffolding Instruction of English Language Arts and Mathematics*
- List of ELA Scaffolds and List of Math Scaffolds
- Scaffold Review Recording Form

<u>Instructions:</u>
- Prior to the presentation, send participants links to the materials. Ask participants to review and familiarize themselves with the materials before attending the presentation. Request that participants bring a laptop or tablet to the presentation as access to the materials on the Supporting All Students webpage will be needed.

- Prior to the presentation, review the PowerPoint and prepare additional or modified talking points for each slide as appropriate to best meet the needs of and support the professional development of participants.
- Ask participants to divide themselves into table groups of 4 members. If presentation is virtual, plan breakout discussion rooms of 4 participants and adjust time allotted for activities.
- Present the PowerPoint slides. Below are recommended stopping points. Stopping points include suggested discussion points, guiding questions, and participant activities. The PowerPoint slides and guidance below are not intended to limit discussion and instruction. Presenters are encouraged to customize the presentation materials as appropriate.

STOP 1: Goals and Objectives
Slide 1: Welcome the participants and introduce yourself and the topic.

Slide 2: Activity – Quiet Reflection
Ask participants to imagine they are a group of fourth graders attending the first day of violin lessons. Take two minutes to think about the effect that an assignment like this would have on students. What would they think about the teacher? How would they feel about themselves? What would happen to their motivation level? Explain that this slide represents an exaggerated example of assigning a task that is beyond students' abilities without providing instructional supports – the very opposite of what it means to scaffold instruction.

Slide 3: Review the goals and objectives of the presentation with participants.

STOP 2: What is Instructional Scaffolding?
Slide 4: Illustrates that scaffolds can be used by all teachers in any classroom setting and across all content areas.

Explain:
All teachers should be scaffolding instruction as appropriate to meet the needs of their students. Any student at any grade level, including high school, can benefit from instructional scaffolding, and scaffolds can be used to support learning during any academic lesson.

Slide 5: Activity – Table Time
Ask participants to respond to and discuss the questions presented on the slide with the others at their tables. Ask one person from each table group to share out responses.

Slide 6: Defines the term *scaffolding.*

Explain:
The practice of scaffolding instruction is influenced by Lev Vygotsky's (Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The basic concept of this learning theory is that there are things learners can do on their own, things they can learn to do with help, and things they cannot do yet. A learner's ZPD is the difference between what s/he can do independently and what s/he can do with help from others. According to Vygotsky's theory, students learn best when challenged to learn content just outside of their current knowledge and skill set; in other words, that "sweet spot" between what they can already do on their own and what they need help with. Scaffolding instruction provides this help by giving students just the right tools and supports they need at just the right time. ***However, it is important that scaffolds are gradually removed as students become more independent and assume more responsibility for their own learning.***

Slide 7: Provides a detailed definition of the term *scaffold*. Review the information on the slide.

<u>Explain:</u>
It is vital that teachers craft lessons that ensure accessibility to a general education curriculum designed around rigorous learning standards for all students, including students who learn differently (e.g., students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLs), and other students who are struggling with the content). *This speaks to what it means to provide equitable educational opportunities.*

Slide 8: States that scaffolds are **not** intended differentiate lessons in such a way that students work on or with different content.

<u>Explain:</u>
Although scaffolding instruction and differentiating instruction can occur alongside each other and often become blended, they are two different teaching practices. Scaffolding adds support to allow students to engage with and learn from challenging content, tasks, and materials. Differentiation involves changing the content, process, and/or product. For example, when scaffolding a writing assignment related to a required book reading, the teacher might provide a graphic organizer for students who are struggling. However, when differentiating a writing assignment, the teacher might have the student read and write about a different book altogether. While both practices are used to meet the needs of students, scaffolding is where teachers should begin.

Scaffolding can support all students, but it is critical for students who are struggling to access and learn the same grade-level content as their peers. ***However, scaffolds do not change rigor.*** *To support student learning, teachers should utilize a variety of research-based instructional and learning strategies and structure a student-centered learning environment that addresses individual learning styles, interests, and abilities of students.*

Slide 9: Lists of possible scaffolds that can be used to support student learning.

<u>Explain:</u>
Be cautious - scaffolds can be used in inappropriate ways. If a student is at a disadvantage when using a scaffold, then the scaffold is being misused.

STOP 3: The Supporting All Students Resource Guides
Slide 10: Provides a visual of the Supporting All Students webpage.

<u>Explain:</u>
The Supporting All Students Resource Guides use the Grades 3-8 ELA and math [EngageNY](#) module lessons to illustrate what a scaffold might look like in action. The use of these module lessons as exemplars is not intended to limit the use of scaffolds in other grade levels or content areas. The scaffolds in the resource guides are designed to be adapted for use in any curricula and across content areas. Teachers are encouraged to customize the scaffolds in any lesson they deem appropriate.

Lessons from the EngageNY modules were used to provide exemplars on how to apply scaffolding because it is a free, open curriculum resource. In New York State, curriculum is determined locally and use of the modules is optional.

Slide 11: Provides a visual of the guides' title pages.

<u>Explain:</u>
The resource guides were developed through a collaborative effort between the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, the Office of Special Education, and experts in the field. Materials and information from a consortium of higher education professionals helped steer development of the guides. The language in the introduction was later revised to reflect the Next Generation Learning Standards following approval of the standards by the Board of Regents. The guides were reviewed by teachers and their feedback and suggestions were incorporated into the final versions of the resource guides.

The purpose of the guides is to provide teachers with examples of scaffolds and strategies to supplement their instruction of ELA and mathematics curricula and can be used to scaffold instruction in other content areas as well.

The scaffolds contained in the guides are grounded in the elements of explicit instruction. Explicit instruction is a structured, systematic approach to teaching which guides students through the learning process by including clear statements regarding the purpose and rationale for learning the new skill/content; explaining and demonstrating the instructional target; and providing supported practice opportunities with embedded, specific feedback to achieve independent mastery. It provides for the gradual release of responsibility for learning by the teacher as students move toward independence through the "I do; We do; You do" framework.

Slide 12: Review the information regarding the EngageNY curriculum modules and the *Aligning Local Curricula Guides* as presented on the slide.

> Explain:
> *Both guides include information on designing instruction that supports all students. The ELA curricula guide contains an **indicator alignment log**. This log is a rubric that teachers can use to assess the quality of their lesson plan. It also provides space for reflection after the lesson's implementation. The math curricula guide provides a hyperlink to the EQuIP Rubric. In addition to helping ensure that the key features of a high-quality mathematics curriculum are maintained, this rubric provides criteria to confirm that adaptations are accessible and equitable for all students.*

Slide 13: Lists all the scaffolds included in the Grades 3-8 ELA resource guides.

> Explain:
> *The scaffolds included in the ELA resource guides for grades 3 through 8 are listed on this slide. The scaffolds are listed according to strand: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and language. The four strands define the main organizational categories for the English Language Arts Learning Standards.*
>
> *Examples of most of the scaffolds are repeated in multiple guides. For example, use of a paragraph frame is demonstrated in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 8 and explicit vocabulary instruction is demonstrated in all the grade-level guides. However, an example of how to use a visual gist organizer only appears in the Grade 5 guide.*

Slide 14: Lists all the scaffolds included in the Grades 3-8 math resource guides.

> Explain:
> *On this slide, the scaffolds included in the math resource guides for grades 3 through 8 are listed. The math scaffolds are listed according to grade levels 3 through 5 or 6 through 8.*
>
> *As in the ELA guides, most of the scaffolds in the math guides are also demonstrated in multiple guides. For example, the RDW Template, Worked Problems, and Frayer Model are demonstrated in all the Grades 3-5 guides. In the Grades 6-8 guides, all the scaffolds listed, except CRA, are demonstrated in each grade-level guide. This repetition of scaffolds allows teachers to more deeply understand how these scaffolds can be used and customized based on both student needs and the lesson material being presented.*

Reminder: *The purpose of the Supporting All Students Resource Guides is to provide teachers with examples of scaffolds and strategies to supplement their instruction. There is no limit to how instruction can be effectively scaffolded to support student learning.*

Slide 15: Activity – Partner Work
Ask participants to follow the directions on the slide.

STOP 4: Lesson Planning: Key Considerations

Slide 16: Provides a visual of seven key considerations for lesson planning.

Explain:

There are seven key considerations listed on this slide that are helpful in designing or planning lessons that intentionally build in scaffolds to support student learning and access to the general education curriculum. These considerations are by no means exhaustive. Teachers need to also weigh such circumstances as administrative support, time, and additional responsibilities for example.

Slide 17: Lists student characteristics to consider when planning instruction.

Explain:

Good lesson planning begins with knowledge of the student. Students bring a lot to the table in terms of their backgrounds and experiences, and diversity should be viewed as strengths. Knowledge of individual students allows teachers to understand what motivates their students, how to foster connections between new learning and what their students already know, what works and does not work for their students, and where their students are in terms of academic skill development.

Teachers should be familiar with individualized education programs (IEPs) and be aware of and provide needed accommodations and modifications to students with disabilities. Use of assistive technology should also be considered. Teachers should be incorporating the instructional strategies being used with English language learners and students receiving academic intervention into their own teaching.

Successful teaching and learning meet each student where they are and then pushes them just beyond that point. Therefore, the zone of proximal development for each student, as well as the collective ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) for the class, is so important.

Slide 18: Lists three content elements to consider when planning instruction.

Explain:

It is important when planning instruction to understand the purpose of the lesson and how it will contribute to long-term learning goals. Focus on the objective of the lesson instead of the process. For example, is the objective of the lesson to write a three-page paper about a historical figure or demonstrate understanding about how that figure influenced current thinking? Determine if the timing of the lesson makes sense. For example, does it build on previous lessons, and is it connected to more advanced skills? Lesson content should be aligned to the Learning Standards as these standards represent the expectations of what students should know and be able to do.

Slide 19: Lists examples of research-based instructional and learning practices.

Explain:
This is a sampling of research-based instructional and learning practices. The final practice listed is scaffolding. Effective instruction utilizes a variety of strategies and methodologies, and teachers should periodically reexamine their pedagogy to determine if adjustments are needed to support student learning. This requires flexibility.

Slide 20: Provides a visual representation of the Universal Design for Learning framework.

Explain:
Planning lessons to maximize learning opportunities for all students involves anticipation and identification of the unintentional barriers that students may have in accessing content. To reduce these barriers, the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework should be incorporated into lesson planning. Designing lessons with UDL's three principles in mind – multiple means of representation, multiple means of expression, and multiple means of engagement – fosters equal learning opportunities for all students. It is a way to plan instruction that does not just fix barriers but removes them. The provision of scaffolds, which are gradually removed as students master skills, is a key component of UDL.

Slide 21: Summarizes the *what, where, when, why, and how* of effective scaffolding.

Explain:
*Know **what** students are struggling and **what** content, tasks, and/or materials need to be scaffolded to best meet the needs of these students;*
*Know **where** in the lesson students are struggling and **where** scaffolding is needed to support students;*
*Know **when** to provide scaffolding and **when** to fade support;*
*Know **why** students are struggling with the material and **why** scaffolding is needed to effectively teach the content; and finally,*
*Know **how** instruction will be scaffolded and **how** scaffolds will impact student learning.*

Slide 22: Poses the question, "How am I assessing student learning?"

Explain:
Providing supports that are "just right" and "just in time" requires ongoing assessment and monitoring of student progress. Data should be used to drive instruction, which should include embedded scaffolds. A variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative, should be used – such as exit tickets; quizzes; teacher-developed, as well as formal tests; rubrics – to determine whether students are making adequate progress and whether the provision of instructional scaffolds needs to be adjusted. In addition to providing vital information to teachers, assessments allow teachers to give students specific feedback about their own performance. While too little support limits student learning, it is equally

important to remember that too much support frequently results in students not challenging themselves.

Slide 23: Lists examples of possible resources regarding scaffolding instruction and learning.

Explain:
*There is a wealth of information out there about teaching and learning. One of the most easily accessible and helpful resources are other educators. **Collaboration with others, including special education, related service providers, ENL teachers, and teaching assistants and teacher aides, is crucial.** Build a repertoire of lessons, strategies, and tools and adjust based off students' needs.*

STOP 5: Wrap-up
Slide 24: Activity – Turn and Talk
Ask participants to follow the directions on the slide and discuss with an elbow partner. Ask for volunteers to share out before presenting the next slide.

Slide 25: Review the takeaways with participants.

Slide 26: Provide time for questions. Provide contact information for the New York State Education Department's Office of Curriculum and Instruction.