

UnboundEd

Addressing Unfinished Instruction in Mathematics

Addressing unfinished instruction inside grade-level work involves providing just-in-time support to students. These supports allow access to grade-level content by strategically inserting necessary prerequisite standards (coherent content) connected to grade-level standards (context). This instructional strategy, which UnboundEd calls Coherent Content in Context, creates on-ramps to grade-level learning. To address unfinished instruction, follow our four-step process during instructional planning.

Overview of the Four-Step Process

Step 1 **Do the Work**

Do the work of the lesson.

Step 2 **Prioritize Prerequisites**

Prioritize the prerequisite standards.

Step 3 **Assess**

Formatively assess for unfinished instruction.

Step 4 **Support Students**

Make informed decisions about student support.

Step 1 Do the Work

Where do I start?

- Summarize the grade-level expectation by analyzing the standard(s), learning target(s), and any formative assessments included within the lesson.
- Do the work of the lesson by completing all associated tasks, activities, and exercises.
- Annotate how each activity in the lesson supports what students need to know and do by the end of the lesson.

Questions to consider:

- What aspect of rigor is indicated by the language of the standard?
- What do students need to know by the end of the lesson?
- How do the activities in the lesson support what students need to know and do by the end of the lesson?

Step 2 Prioritize Prerequisites

How do I prioritize prerequisite standards?

- Identify prerequisite standards that are essential to accessing the grade-level standard(s) within the lesson.
- Select one or two prerequisite standards that will likely be the most useful on-ramps to grade-level learning in this lesson.
- Note the prioritized prerequisite standards connection to the grade-level learning in the lesson.

Questions to consider:

- What is the critical connection between the selected prerequisite standards and the grade-level learning in the lesson?

Step 3 Assess

How do I formatively assess for unfinished instruction?

- Identify tasks outside the lesson that align with the prioritized prerequisites.
- Select a task that best reveals what students know about the prerequisite skills and knowledge.
- Determine when students will complete this assessment task in the learning process before the lesson delivery day so there is time to consider and complete assessment-informed supports (step 4).
- Use the task to determine if students need instruction in the identified prerequisites.

Questions to consider:

- Is the task you selected strategic and efficient?
- How will students work on this task to reveal what they know and can do?
- When should students complete this task so that there is ample time to analyze the work and design curricular supports?

Step 4 Support Students

How do I make informed decisions about the support my students need to access the grade-level content?

- Select an additional task or activity that targets the assessed prerequisite skill(s) and knowledge.
- Determine where to integrate the support task:
 - **Unit level** if most students need support with the prerequisite skill or if the depth of the missing prerequisite requires an entire lesson.

- **Lesson level** if a smaller group of students needs support or if the skill can be addressed quickly (e.g., with a mini-lesson or warm-up).
- **Task level** if the prerequisite skill can be a step inserted into the grade-level task.

Questions to consider:

- How will you integrate the support in a task or a lesson?
- What aspect of rigor does this curricular support attend to, and does this match the aspect of rigor of the grade-level and prerequisite standards?