



## **When Universal Instruction Isn't Explicit Enough**

Based on *Effective Universal Instruction: An Actionable Guide for Teachers*

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### **Purpose**

To support teachers in strengthening Tier 1 instruction by designing lessons that are intentional, explicit, and responsive—so more students can access grade-level learning through universal instruction.

### **Key Understanding**

Strong universal instruction does not rely on students picking up skills incidentally. Instead, effective Tier 1 instruction is carefully designed to include clear modeling, guided practice, frequent checks for understanding, and cumulative review.

When instruction is explicit and intentional, more students are able to access content, engage meaningfully, and demonstrate understanding without the need for additional intervention.

### **Teacher Reflection Questions**

- Do my lessons include clear modeling before students are expected to practice independently?
- How often do I check for understanding during instruction—not just at the end?
- Am I providing sufficient guided practice before moving students to independent work?
- Do my lessons intentionally revisit and connect previously taught skills or concepts?
- Which students benefit most when instruction is slowed down and made more explicit?

### **What to Look for in Students**

- Improved accuracy during guided practice
- Increased student participation and engagement
- More consistent responses when checks for understanding are embedded
- Reduced confusion when new content is introduced
- Greater independence after sufficient guided practice

These patterns indicate that instruction is supporting learning through clarity and intentional design.

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