Exploration of "Best Practices" for Distance Learning Instruction
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Components of Distance Learning Framework We Should Include	How to do This Online *On a computer without being in proximity to your student(s)*
Activate prior knowledge	Use a Google Form to inventory and use to plan lessons - individualizing content as needed through video instruction
Provide exemplars	Place exemplars into a video that you tape and send to your students. Have the students highlight components of the exemplar you are trying to teach (for math, the key words, the question, the aspects of HOW to record and work through the solution). Script the social speech you are teaching that you want to translate into private speech.
Video lessons	Students learn from watching and hearing and doing (multi-sensory). Video the lesson AND script out what students should be doing as they watch the lesson.
Keep lessons within the student's Zone of Proximal Development - provide access to scaffolds	This is where assessment of skills and knowledge prior to a lesson will be so helpful. You can provide additional videos and study sheets to scaffold the content - For instance, if you are teaching poetry, you could be teaching about the connections and comparisons presented in the poem, but also provide students with basic terminology and context within a video or study guide which includes basic poetry terms, concepts and structure for students who need that scaffold. In a program such as Google Classroom, you can allow students to comment and ask questions about what they are learning - this way you know if the material is too challenging or appropriately gauged.
Observe a student's process of doing work.	When educators assign work and wait for its return, we miss out on observing and assessing a student's process. We need to figure out ways using technology to understand HOW a student is working on the work. For instance, a student may be tasked with writing a topic sentence. The submission may show that the topic sentence is accurate, but the student may have spent 4 hours on this writing (not in line with how we want students to write a topic sentence). Thus, how do we gain an accurate understanding of a student's process using the technology we have available?

	Option #1: Have the student work within Google Docs where you as the teacher can monitor the progress of the writing in real time- you can use the version history to see the student in action.
	Option #2: Break down the task into very small mini parts and guide the student through the process - video tape this. Then, ask the student to provide feedback at every step. *This is a good process for reading comprehension tasks where you might read a piece of text on video and demonstrate Think Alouds and Reading Comprehension Strategies that help your student to engage in active reading - you can also anticipate the tricky vocabulary students may encounter and help them to navigate it. The feedback you get from your students will ask them specifically about the actions you want students to take as they read. * I made a video on this exact idea - on YouTube @ Mary Miele/ Evolved Education : https://youtu.be/Uxh3hlF9sBc* Option #3: Have students fill out a questionnaire to learn more about their process. Questions could include: - Start time - End time - Where did you sit while doing the work? - Did you reference your exemplars to guide you as you wrote your sentence? - What is a topic sentence? - Do you have any questions about how to write your topic sentence?
Facilitate social dialogue between students in a class	Even though we are online right now, that does not mean we have to eliminate the social aspect of learning. Teachers can partner students and teach them how to collaborate on a project or investigation using technology. This kind of instruction would require the teacher to teach the protocol for social engagement as well as very clear guidelines for the project - both with regard to the process and the product. Then, students can work on Google Docs together - teachers can see who is contributing and how. Videos can be provided to help students to follow the mini-deadlines within the project. *I created a video on how teachers can do this on the YouTube Channel. https://youtu.be/eY3P08dQ1MU*

Play!	Children learn through play. We can play with children on Zoom, Google Meet. These play types can be included: - Physical play- run, jump, play hide-and-seek, tag - Expressive play - express feelings and ideas through materials such as paints, water colors, crayons, markers, paper, shaving cream, bean bags, playdough - Manipulative play - where children control or master their environment through manipulative play - babies -- drop toys and parents pick them up; children put together a puzzle and take apart objects in their home to understand how they work - Symbolic play - Children mimic what they see in their environment - they pretend to be the characters they see on TV, they can pretend to be in school or at sports or dance (very appropriate during COVID-19 quarantine) - Dramatic play - children act out situations that have happened to them or that they have seen. - Familiarization play - children handle materials and explore experiences in reassuring, enjoyable ways -- this is why seeing teachers each day during quarantine is SO helpful!! - Games - video games, card games, board games, sports - all of it is so helpful to kids. Students can create their own rules to games too! - Surrogate play. For children who are not well or have lagging skills - a parent can play for the child and show the child how to do the play. Videos of play and how to spend time is really helpful for our kids (of all ages)
Communication	We have a unique opportunity during quarantine to promote our students to communicate - this can come in many forms: - Writing - teach students SRSD writing and dig into the process of writing and regulation - Speaking - get kids to interview family members by calling them. Teach students to ask questions which facilitate conversation. - Drawing - Teach students how to draw and the skills for communication in the picture form. - Photography - Teach students how to take photos, edit them and communicate with them - Video editing - Teach students how to take video and edit it for a purpose - Coding - Teach students to code games and programs to share with others - Creating Art - Teach students about the value of art, art history and the way art often illuminates feelings, stories of society, and history Spending time right now on bolstering communication skills is an awesome way to spend this time instructionally.