

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: Supporting Struggling Students with Rigorous Instruction

Presenters: Robyn R. Jackson

Hours: 45

Course Overview

In this dynamic course, educators learn how to support struggling students without sacrificing rigor. Presenter Dr. Robyn R. Jackson begins by helping educators understand why students struggle. From there, participants will learn specific strategies for supporting students. These include acceleration strategies designed to prevent students from struggling in the first place, progressive intervention strategies that directly address sources of student struggle and quickly get struggling students back on track, and remediation strategies that target specific areas of difficulty and prepare students for summative assessments.

Dr. Jackson introduces participants to the four stages of rigorous learning—acquisition, application, assimilation, and adaptation—and shows participants how to support students through each stage. Participants learn specific instructional and support strategies for increasing students' capacity to engage in rigorous learning experiences, ways to increase the rigor of their own courses, and assessment strategies that extend students' rigorous learning throughout the unit. Finally, participants develop a proactive intervention plan that supports students' rigorous learning before the lesson, during learning, and through the summative assessment.

Presenters' Bios

Dr. Robyn R. Jackson earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Maryland. In her work with teachers, administrators, schools, and non-profit organizations, Dr. Jackson focuses on key principles of education rather than isolated strategies. Dr. Jackson founded Mindsteps, Inc. in 2006 to help teachers learn how to help every student meet or exceed rigorous learning standards. Her work with administrators helps them effectively train and support teachers and create highly rigorous school programs that ensure equitable access to college readiness for all students. She also works with school systems and non-profits to remove institutional barriers to equity, access, and rigor for all students, particularly students of color who are traditionally under-represented in advanced courses.

Objectives

After completing this course, educators will know:

- How to identify material students are struggling with and how to apply a variety of intervention strategies to help them
- The difference between rigorous and un-rigorous instruction and assessment strategies
- How to apply rigorous instruction and assessment strategies to their lessons and units



Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, educators will apply the following skills:

- Anticipate students' struggles and develop proactive plans to preclude those struggles
- Identify struggling students and apply a variety of intervention and remediation strategies to help them
- Employ rigorous instruction and assessment strategies through all stages: acquisition, application, assimilation, and adaptation

Unit 1: Introduction to Proactive Support Services

Presenter Robyn Jackson introduces participants to the idea of proactive support and why it is much more effective than remediation in helping struggling students.

Participants learn the theoretical underpinnings of this approach and meet several teachers who have been learning and implementing Jackson's strategies. Classroom videos help participants observe the successes and challenges confronted by these teachers as they implement Jackson's strategies.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The "curse of knowledge" and how to combat it in the classroom
- What constitutes proactive support and the steps involved in developing a proactive support plan
- The characteristics of effective support

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Overcome "the curse of knowledge"
- Provide proactive supports for struggling students

Unit 2: Acceleration Plans

Jackson introduces the concept of acceleration, previewing key knowledge and skills students will need to master prior to the lesson or unit. Acceleration rounds out students' prior knowledge and helps students develop more effective strategies for acquiring and retaining information.

Participants learn to anticipate confusion in order to anticipate their acceleration and support plans. She details methods to activate students' prior knowledge, or, for students who don't have prior knowledge, ways to help students develop a basic understanding of concepts foundational to the lessons.



Participants rejoin the teachers they met in the previous unit as they begin to develop their acceleration plans. Participants also begin to develop an acceleration plan of their own.

Unit Objectives

After completing this course, educators will know:

- The two biggest reasons students struggle prior to learning
- The three “C’s” to help anticipate confusion
- Strategies for activating prior knowledge
- Strategies for creating prior knowledge

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Anticipate and resolve confusion for students prior to a lesson
- Activate prior knowledge
- “Backfill” missing prior knowledge for students

Unit 3: Organizing Strategies

Jackson introduces participants to techniques for previewing organizing strategies that help set students up for success. She shares specific ways participants can use these organizing strategies with their students.

Participants are introduced to the use of advanced and graphic organizers and their value in the classroom.

Educators rejoin the teachers they met in previous units as they continue the development of their acceleration plans. They also continue the development of their own lesson plans.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How to frame learning for students using advanced organizers
- How to preview organizing strategies prior to a lesson to set students up for learning
- Strategies for using graphic organizers successfully as a support for learning

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:



- Develop and use advanced organizers to frame learning for students
- Preview organizing strategies to set students up for success
- Use graphic organizers

Unit 4: Vocabulary

Participants learn how to use vocabulary instruction to support students and set them up for success. Jackson explains the steps of effective vocabulary instruction and explores how to implement these steps.

Participants also learn how to apply specific vocabulary strategies to improve instruction and support of their students. They rejoin the teachers from earlier units as they continue to develop their acceleration plans and participants continue to develop their own.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- Why vocabulary instruction is an effective support tool
- The steps for effective vocabulary instruction

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Implement research-based vocabulary instruction to help students develop key vocabulary skills
- Implement the following vocabulary strategies:
 - Word maps
 - Frayer models
 - Concept maps
 - Double-entry notebooks
 - Cue cards

Unit 5: Red Flag Mechanisms

In this unit teachers learn the difference between productive and destructive struggles and how to respond effectively to those students struggling destructively.

Dr. Jackson demonstrates how to begin developing an intervention plan by establishing mastery thresholds, developing formative assessment, and setting red flag mechanisms that warn teachers early that students are headed for destructive struggle. Participants learn how to develop the first two parts of a proactive intervention plan.



Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The difference between productive and destructive struggle
- How to determine mastery thresholds for individual courses
- How to establish red flag mechanisms that warn of destructive struggle early on
- How to develop formative assessments that reveal red flags

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Identify key signs that their students are struggling destructively and are headed for frustration
- Determine mastery thresholds aligned with their instructional standards
- Establish red flag mechanisms to warn them of the first sign that students might be headed for destructive struggle
- Develop and effectively implement formative assessments

Unit 6: Supports and Interventions

Participants learn how to select and provide students with appropriate interventions. The unit begins with a close look at what interventions are, how they differ from typical supports, and how to select interventions that directly respond to red flags. Participants also learn how to use specific interventions to help students get back on track when they struggle.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The difference between supports and interventions
- How to use progressive interventions as a way of providing targeted support to students who struggle
- Specific intervention strategies

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Distinguish between supports and interventions
- Use progressive interventions
- Match the appropriate intervention strategy to each red flag



Unit 7: Monitoring Intervention Plans

Participants learn how to monitor their intervention plans to ensure that they are effectively meeting the needs of their students. They learn how to select appropriate interventions, understand when interventions are working, and gradually remove supports so that students can become independent learners.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The criteria for effective interventions
- How to select interventions well-matched to red flags
- How to gradually remove supports so that students can become independent

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Develop a proactive intervention plan
- Select appropriate interventions
- Monitor their interventions to ensure they are working effectively
- Gradually remove interventions to help students become independent

Unit 8: Remediation

Dr. Jackson teaches participants how to discern which students need remediation. Participants learn how to select the appropriate remediation strategies and to implement those strategies effectively.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The purpose of remediation
- How to implement remediation
- Specific remediation strategies

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Select appropriate interventions for struggling students



- Develop a responsive remediation process to support students just prior to summative assessment
- Implement specific remediation strategies to support struggling students

Unit 9: Introduction to Rigorous Instruction

Jackson compares rigorous with un-rigorous application. She reveals what thinking skills contribute to rigorous application.

Participants learn how to plan rigorous application lessons that teach specific thinking skills. They also learn how to support students during this stage so they acquire the thinking skills they need to move to other stages of rigor.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What rigorous instruction is
- How to select rigorous content
- The four primary characteristics of rigorous content
- Differences between content that is layered, complex, ambiguous, and implied
- Support strategies that help students successfully manage rigorous application

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Plan rigorous application lessons
- Select and implement specific strategies to support rigorous application
- Teach specific thinking skills

Unit 10: Rigorous Acquisition Strategies

Jackson presents the first stage of rigorous instruction: acquisition. Participants learn the difference between rigorous and un-rigorous acquisition and how to foster rigorous acquisition. They also learn how to support students during the acquisition stage so that they are better prepared to move to other stages of rigor.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:



- The difference between rigorous and un-rigorous acquisition
- How to foster rigorous acquisition through effective instructional practices
- Support strategies that help students move successfully through rigorous acquisition so that they are more prepared to move to other stages of rigor

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Plan rigorous acquisition lessons
- Select and implement specific strategies to foster rigorous acquisition

Unit 11: Rigorous Application Strategies

Dr. Jackson compares rigorous with un-rigorous application. She reveals what thinking skills contribute to rigorous application.

Participants learn how to plan rigorous application lessons that teach specific thinking skills. They also learn how to support students during this stage so they acquire the thinking skills they need to move to other stages of rigor.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- The difference between rigorous and un-rigorous application
- The specific thinking skills involved in rigorous application
- How to plan rigorous application lessons
- Support strategies that help students successfully manage rigorous application and develop the thinking skills required to move to assimilation and adaptation

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Plan rigorous application lessons
- Select and implement specific strategies to support rigorous application
- Teaching specific thinking skills

Unit 12: Rigorous Assimilation Strategies

Participants learn how to help students use what they have learned in meaningful ways. They learn what rigorous assimilation is, how to create learning environments in which students assimilate their knowledge



meaningfully, and specific strategies to help students develop the appropriate thinking processes.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What rigorous assimilation is
- Specific strategies to help students develop thinking processes
- Support strategies that help students master rigorous assimilation tasks

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Plan rigorous assimilation lessons
- Select and implement specific strategies to support rigorous assimilation
- Teach specific thinking processes

Unit 13: Rigorous Adaptation Strategies

Participants learn what adaptation is, why it is important, and how it relates to habits of mind. Jackson prepares participants to plan adaptation lessons and help students develop 16 habits of mind as they learn content in a highly rigorous way. Participants also learn to develop support strategies to help students successfully reach adaptation.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What adaptation is and how it relates to the other stages of rigor
- How to plan adaptation lessons
- How to help students develop habits of mind
- Support strategies to help students reach adaptation

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Plan rigorous adaptation lessons
- Select and implement specific strategies to support rigorous adaptation
- Teach the habits of mind



Unit 14: Rigorous Assessment Strategies

Participants learn how to create highly rigorous assessments. They study several characteristics of good assessments and learn how to select appropriate assessments that provide rigorous endpoints and extensions of students' learning. Dr. Jackson demonstrates strategies for creating or selecting rigorous assessments that measure how well students have met the standards. In addition, participants learn strategies for helping students prepare for rigorous assessments, including how to provide supports that ensure all students' success.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- What makes an assessment effective in measuring rigorous learning and extending thinking
- How to create or select rigorous assessments that measure how well students have met rigorous learning standards
- Support strategies that help students prepare for rigorous assessments

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Analyze their assessments for rigor
- Create rigorous assessments
- Implement rigorous summative assessment strategies
- Support students who struggle with rigorous summative assessments

Unit 15: The Action Plan

Participants review the keys concepts of the course and develop an action plan for systematically implementing the course's strategies with their students.

Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, educators will know:

- How to support students struggling with rigor
- How to develop an action plan for supporting those students

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this unit, educators will apply the following skills:

- Develop an action plan for implementing course strategies with students



- Make informed choices about which strategies to use when
- Customize strategies for use with their own students

Methods of Instruction

- Videos with PowerPoint presentations (teacher workshops and additional resources)
- Reflection questions (open-ended questions at intervals throughout the videos where educators are asked to reflect on the course content, their own practice, and their intentions for their practice)
- Quizzes (selected-response quizzes to assess understanding of the video presentations)

Plagiarism Policy

KDS recognizes plagiarism as a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as one's own and includes failing to cite sources for others' ideas, copying material from books or the Internet (including lesson plans and rubrics), and handing in work written by someone other than the participant. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and may have additional consequences. For more information about plagiarism and guidelines for appropriate citation, consult plagiarism.org.

Passing Requirements:

In order to complete the requirements of the course, the participant must complete all course work. We do not award partial credit.

- Quizzes 40% of total grade
- Reflection Questions 60% of total grade

KDS Self-Assessment Rubric:

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Quizzes	100% Correct	80% Correct	60% Correct	0-40% Correct

	Distinguished	Proficient	Basic	Unsatisfactory
Reflection Questions	Participant provides rich detail from the content of the course in his or her responses Participant makes his or her responses to the questions personally meaningful	Participant includes appropriate content from the course in his or her responses Participant makes thoughtful comments in direct response to the questions	Participant includes some content from the course, usually appropriate, in his or her responses Participant answers the questions directly, not always fully	Participant includes no content from the course in his or her responses Participant does not address the questions posed