

BASIC SKILLS FOR LEARNING

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR BASIC SKILLS FOR LEARNING

Saskatchewan Education has completed new curricula in Language Arts and Mathematics for grades K to 12. There is a change in focus evident in the new curriculum. This change in focus is based on three important foundations which need to be clearly examined for acceptance by teachers, administrators and parents.

These three foundations include:

1. The importance of "thinking" skills such as:
 - information processing (recalling, analyzing, assessing)
 - problem solving
 - meta cognition (monitoring one's own learning - becoming an independent learner)
2. Teaching methods need to incorporate a variety of strategies such as:
 - direct and indirect instruction
 - independent study
 - experiential learning
 - interactive: cooperative and social learning
3. Assessment techniques need to be expanded to include a balance among:
 - observation
 - portfolios
 - performance assessment
 - paper-pencil tests

The implementation of both curricula involves five main areas:

- curriculum
- indicators of progress
- instructional approaches
- assessment
- reporting

Necessary Condition for Success

The principal needs to be the first person to bring the components of the implementation to staff and to parents.

These components are:

- Curriculum
- Indicators of Progress
- Instructional Approaches
- Assessment Practices
- Reporting Practices