

**10 Best Practices for implementing Excel Math:**

1. Start by reading the introductory pages in the front of your Texas Teacher Edition. Highlight or bookmark any suggestions that may be new to you. Become familiar with the various components included with Excel Math lessons.
2. Begin with Lesson 1 as your starting point, even if it does not match your district curriculum pacing guide. Because Excel Math uses an intricate spiraling system, the concepts will return again and again throughout the year. Do not expect mastery from your students the first time a concept is presented.
3. Remember that every fifth lesson day includes a test, and no homework is assigned on that day. If you want the fifth lesson day to fall on Friday, take this into account (as well as school holidays) as you pace your lessons. Continue the lessons in successive order. Some lessons may take more time than others, but remember, we do not expect mastery the first time a concept is introduced.
4. Let the students complete at least some of the Guided Practice problems each day. Pay close attention to your students as they work through the Guided Practice portion. This section reviews concepts that have been introduced previously in the Lesson of the Day.
5. With Excel Math's CheckAnswer (Grades 2-6), students can check their own work. During Guided Practice, have students work independently while you assist those who need more help. Ask students to raise their hands or place an eraser near the edge of their desks to let you know when they don't grasp a particular concept. Have them mark that problem so they can continue working until you get to them.
6. If your students find the Guided Practice problems to be too easy, skip forward a week or two or let them skip those problems that they have mastered. If your students are finding that it's too difficult, take time to review those concepts where they are having difficulty.
7. Use the test tables in your Teacher Edition to determine which lesson to review when a majority of your students miss a test question. Remember, Excel Math is very flexible. Your students can move as quickly as they (and you) are comfortable moving.
8. Use the Stretches (brainteasers) in your Teacher Edition for students who need an extra challenge.

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## **Excel Math Best Practices, continued:**

9. Use the Activities in the back of your Teacher Edition (and on the Teacher lesson page for Grades K and 1) for hands-on and active learning projects. These activities are designed to reinforce TEKS concepts specific to your particular grade level. Many lessons will suggest specific activities to use.
10. Create A Problem exercises on the back of the Test Page (Grades 2-6) do not need to be part of the test. In fact you can do them as group work on the Monday after the test, since no homework is done over the weekend. Instead of going over homework, some teachers do the Create A Problem exercises with the whole class. These problems merge math with literacy and are often more in depth and multi-step word problems. Eventually, students begin to write their own problems.

### **Things to remember:**

1. The first 4-6 weeks of any grade level review the previous year's concepts.
2. Excel Math uses a finely-tuned spiraling system. Concepts are introduced and reinforced throughout the year. Mastery occurs via Guided Practice, not at the initial presentation of a concept. For this reason, we suggest you teach the lessons in the order they occur in the Excel Math program, without skipping lessons.
3. A Free Placement Test in English and Spanish is available on our website:  
<http://excelmath.myshopify.com/collections/free-placement-tests>
4. Correlations to TEKS, sample lessons plus free downloads are also available on our website: [http://excelmath.com/downloads/state\\_stdstx.html](http://excelmath.com/downloads/state_stdstx.html)
5. A grade level Glossary in English and Spanish can be printed for your students, along with vocabulary word cards:  
<http://excelmath.com/downloads/Glossary.html>
6. You'll find additional resources, manipulatives and web links on our website:  
<http://excelmath.com>

Thank you for using Excel Math. Please contact us if you have questions—we're here to help.

