

A Glossary for Understanding the Ontario Curriculum

Strands - This breaks down a subject into its major components.

Overall Expectations - These are the big ideas. In general terms, “the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade”.

Specific Expectations - These are more detailed expectations, often tasks they do to prove they are meeting the overall expectation. They “describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail”.

Cross-Curricular - Using concepts from more than one subject at a time. These can be connected through a central theme, issue, topic, or experience.

Spiralling - Teaching in a way that allows the student to build on learned concepts. This is in contrast to learning about a topic or a unit, being tested, then moving on to never visit it again.

Achievement Chart - Contains four broad categories of knowledge and skills common to all subjects and disciplines; Knowledge and Understanding, Thinking, Communication, Application.

Rubric - A guide for student assessment that connects the course expectations to the achievement chart and allows for the evaluation of levels (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4)

Assessment for Learning - NOT using assessment as a way to determine a level or grade, but instead, as an opportunity for learning and to decide what next steps are to be taken.

Learning Goals - This is the foundation or backbone of the lesson. Stated in language that the students will understand, it helps them see the reason for what they are learning.

IEP - An Individualized Education Plan is a legally binding document created in conference with parents, teachers and the principal for students who have an exceptionality, including but not limited to, physical or mental disabilities, behaviour issues, or giftedness. This document is reviewed annually and outlines the adaptations and modifications to help that specific student be successful academically.

Modifications - A change to the curriculum for a student with an IEP. Example: a grade 3 student is modified to a lower grade (grade 1) for math and thus required only to meet the expectations for that grade.

Adaptations - Changes given to a student with an IEP to help them be successful at their current grade. Examples: using a scribe, use of computer assistive technology to assist them, or extra time for tests.

Differentiated Instruction - The way a teacher designs and teaches lessons to accommodate various learning styles as well as the modifications and adaptations that various students require within their class.