ACT® Online Prep™ 2023–2024

Educator Guide: Using AOP to Drive the Teaching and Learning Cycle for Student Success

Overview

This guide is intended to provide ideas for incorporating ACT Online Prep for students to improve achievement in English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science. This versatile, supplemental curriculum resource allows for use with whole group, small group, and independent learning instructional models and supports multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) for meeting individual student needs. This guide includes tips for teaching ACT® Online Prep (AOP) with success (including sample classroom configurations), and how to use the rich formative data that comes from student use of the learning tool to develop additional next-step instructional decisions to promote student success.

Why Use ACT® Online Prep?

For Students:
- The more students who used AOP, the greater their ACT score gains were likely to be.
- Those who used AOP for less than seven hours saw greater score gains than students who did not use test preparation.
- Those who used AOP for seven or more hours saw an average gain score over double that of students who did not use test preparation.

For Teachers:
- Lessons can be integrated into the core curriculum.
- Lessons provide a deep dive into the skills that are aligned to ACT College and Career Readiness Standards reporting categories, creating efficiencies in lesson planning.
- Lessons can be used in a variety of blended learning and rotation models.
- Customized learning task assignments provide the instructional content needed for quality tiered intervention supports.

Core Features of AOP

- Organizes content into 16 Study Plan Steps, composed of lessons and practice question sets, for each of the subject areas. Based on composite score range and time available, students are guided to do a quick review, or a more in-depth study, of the tasks associated with the step.
- Provides content designed to support reinforcement and practice in the core content needed for college and career readiness in English, Reading, Science, and Mathematics as measured by the ACT.
- Helps students to become more familiar with the format of the ACT test.
- Includes two, full-length ACT® Practice Exams that provide students with a predicted ACT score range as well as four short subject tests for each core content (English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science). Students and teachers can gauge students' progress in meeting achievement outcomes.
- Includes prompts for writing essays that are AI scored to allow for quick feedback on writing skill achievement.
- Includes over 2,400 practice questions, flashcards, and a game center for a variety of ways to engage student learners.
- Includes an optional Online Discussion Forum so students can connect with other users in the system to ask questions and engage around the content.
- Allows for anywhere, anytime access via the internet on any device and with smart phones on the ACT Online Prep Mobile App.

Using AOP to Teach Core Content for College and Career Readiness

Models for Using AOP as a Supplemental Curriculum Resource

Whole Group

For modeling of skills and knowledge: teacher-facilitated instruction where students experience the same learning with the same pacing.

- Project a lesson and guide students through the activities. Consider using a read-aloud, think-aloud method, where you read aloud the content and speak aloud what you might think or do if you were completing this lesson independently. By demonstrating clearly how to process lessons, you can strengthen students' understanding of how to best use the lessons provided when students are working independently.
- Project a lesson and guide students through the lesson activities, adding in opportunities for students to share aloud strategies they would use to address the lesson if working independently. Provide feedback to guide students in effective strategies for working through these lessons independently.
- Project a sample practice problem that requires use of the concepts under study in your core curriculum. Model how to solve the problem, focusing on core knowledge and skills needed to address the problem. Follow up by having students work in small groups or independently as you serve as guide-on-the-side to support student acquisition of the targeted knowledge and skills.
- Project a sample practice problem that requires use of the concepts under study in your core curriculum. Give each student time to work on the problem; have students share their solutions and reasoning for the strategies and approaches used to solve the problem. Shape student understanding of which strategies and solutions are viable, and which are not, focusing on helping students address misconceptions and misunderstandings.

Small Group

For tiered intervention and extension supports.

Station Rotation: You work with students in small group to provide tiered supports; students with you can work on meaningful instruction using AOP either in pairs, collaborative groups, or individually.

- AOP is engaging and allows groups of students to learn important concepts and skills when not working with you directly as an instructor.
- You can use the same resources and techniques described for whole group instruction, but with a smaller, homogenously grouped set of students (grouping based on student needs), so you can provide more intensive and/or targeted feedback to individual students.
- You can use the materials from AOP to set up learning centers around the room. One group can work together or independently with flashcards, one group can play reinforcement games either together or independently, one group can work on a collaborative learning problem, while still another group can work on a lesson with you or complete "catch up" work. This structure allows for all students to be actively learning, opportunities for you as an instructor to successfully support individual needs, and it breaks up the monotony of day-to-day whole group instruction.

![ACT Online Prep logo]

Collaborative Learning
For students to work together to search for understanding, meaning, or solutions or to create an artifact or other demonstration of their learning.

- Consider providing each group with the same problem to solve, and then have the students present their strategies for solution and the solutions to the others in the class. This activity works well as a think-pair-share (begin by having students work on the problem independently, then to pair with a partner, and then have two pairs share ideas/solutions). You serve as a guide-on-the-side to support individual students or groups who need scaffolded inputs to successfully work through the problem. Be sure to summarize the key learning points for all students to ensure they leave the lesson with clarity on the knowledge and skills linked to the learning objective(s). This activity works well with heterogenous as well as homogeneous groups.

- Determine student strengths and needs using the data from AOP. Place students in groups with others who have similar needs. Have students work collaboratively to solve one or more problems linked to content where the students need more practice to address these needs. You serve as a guide-on-the-side to support individual students, or groups of students, who need scaffolded inputs to successfully work through the problem. By providing each group with different problems, you can differentiate learning based on student needs

Independent Learning
For independent learning and reinforcement, practice of core knowledge and skills.

- Workshop Model: Each student works independently on AOP lessons and practice activities. As an instructor, you conference (workshop) with individual students to provide intensive, targeted feedback to support increased student achievement on knowledge and skills of focus.

- Goal Setting Model: Each student independently set goals and creates a plan to achieve them. This helps students to instill a growth mindset in the classroom: when students believe they can achieve a goal through persistence and hard work, they learn to be resilient; overcoming small failures can lead to larger successes.

- Individual Computer-Time Model: Each student works independently on AOP lessons and practice activities. Even without direct instruction, students benefit from time spent working through the AOP lessons and practice activities.

Combined Instruction
Putting it all together.

- Create a lesson over one or more periods that provides whole group, small group, and independent learning to teach a targeted skill or strategy.
  - Set a learning objective and have students set goals linked to this learning objective.
  - Provide a brief mini lesson to the whole group where you model a skill or strategy linked to your academic standards.
  - Break into small groups of students (using one of the small group options) and have them practice the modeled skill or strategy.
  - Provide time for students to practice the skill or strategy independently.
  - Bring the group together to de-brief: share successes in meeting goals set, reinforce lessons learned, and clarify any remaining misconceptions or misunderstandings linked to the targeted skill or strategy.

Sample Classroom Configurations/Schedules for Using AOP as a Supplemental Curriculum Model

Configurations which can be used in any content classroom

All Teachers			
Daily	Weekly	Biweekly	Monthly
Bellringers: Exercises that should only take 5 minutes	One day a week for approximately 20 minutes	Two times a month each 20-30 minutes	One time a month, take a full class period

All classroom teachers can provide ACT support using the ACT Online Prep program
- Bellringers can be 2-3 problems daily.
- Practice can be one day a week using a set number of questions or a set time frame.
- Establish study plans for each student based on the time available for student learning. Have students use these plans and work with them to monitor and adjust the study plans as needed.
- Model test-taking strategies and problem-solving for core content using AOP problems, alongside core curriculum content whenever possible, so students learn to apply their knowledge and skills to ACT-like problems.

NOTE: While all classroom teachers can support student success in learning, the core content measured on the ACT (English, Mathematics, Science, and Reading), it is best practice for school-based teams to determine which teachers will work on which content, so students receive ample instruction and practice in all content areas. Schools may also use school-based data to determine school-based targeted instructional focal points (e.g. if 95% of the students demonstrate high need in mathematics, the school might choose to have most students doing additional mathematics work, with the 5% of students not needing mathematics supports being provided other available enrichment options).

Configuration which can be used in core content classrooms

Sample Instructional Plan: Embedding AOP into core English Instruction (approximately 20 minutes per period)

	Description
Week 1	This week is designed to establish student routines and familiarity to the core curriculum Introduce: Welcome to ACT Online Prep • Watch the video (can be used in blended learning) • Conduct question and answer session
Week 2	Short ACT English Test. The teacher has the option to test all students at once, stagger student testing, or assign as part of a blended learning model. NOTE: students require approximately 60 minutes of testing.
Week 3	Review overall class results with students and model setting classroom goals Understanding Your Score and Goal Setting • Learn about SMART Goals • Set personal goals
Week 4	ACT Basics and General Strategies to learn about navigation supports Your Personalized Study Plan Introduction to the ACT English Test
Week 5	Subject/Verb Agreement • Work through Example Questions (can use this as part of a station rotation) • Watch the video (can be used in blended learning)
Week 6	Subject/Verb Agreement Practice Questions where students discuss results (teacher can do small groups based on results) Mini-lesson station rotations for remediation/extension
Week 7	Elements of Strong Writing • Work through Example Questions (can use this as part of a station rotation) • Watch the video (can be used in blended learning)
Week 8	Answer as You Read to combine this lesson with current classroom core curriculum for additional practice
Week 9	End of Quarter (option to combine completed AOP practice with core curriculum end of quarter summative assessments)

Note: This configuration can be used for Math, Science, or Reading. Tasks/activities are optional and times approximate. Teachers can and should arrange topics to match with their core curriculum and use results of practice tests to determine where students may need additional support.
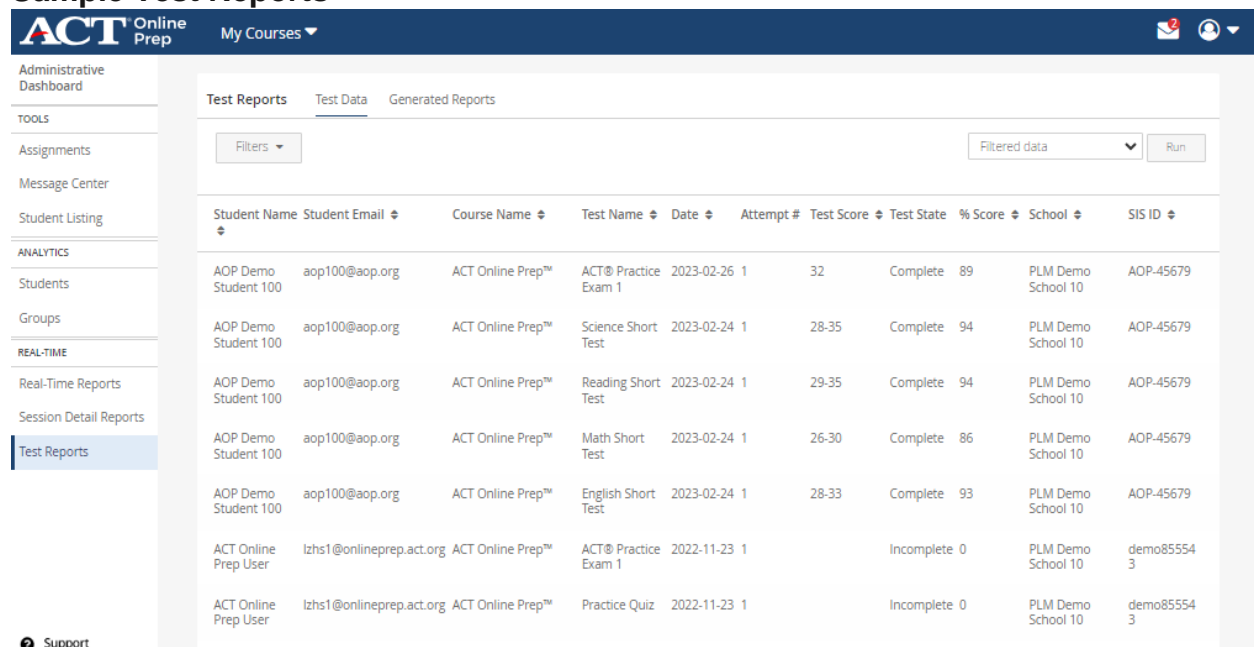
Other Tips for Lesson Planning using AOP

1. Use student data or school-wide aggregate data to drill down to specific areas of strength and need to support instructional decisions on flexible grouping structures, specific differentiated lessons needed, etc. Combine the data insights derived from the practice tests and/or short tests in AOP with other data such as results from ACT®, PreACT®, WorkKeys®, Mosaic by ACT® interim assessments and/or classroom tests, quizzes, and projects to inform instructional decisions.
2. Provide time for students to set/review goals; AOP allows students to gauge their own progress and can motivate them to achieve new successes.
3. Use the Assignments feature to align assignments in AOP with core curriculum content as it is introduced in your course syllabus.
4. Design AOP lessons based on what is currently in the syllabus OR choose to spiral topics after reviewing or teaching them.

Understanding the Data Available—Key Data Reports

Test Report

- Data Details Shared in this Report:
  - Score data for each short topic test, full-length practice exam, or quiz
  - Grow over time if taking short topic tests at the beginning and at the end
  - View scores for all attempts if the student has reset a test
- Ideas for Using This Data Instructionally:
  - Use to group students by need for small group instruction
  - Measure growth to determine if instructional strategies are successful

Sample Test Reports

Student Name	Student Email	Course Name	Test Name	Date	Attempt #	Test Score	Test State	% Score	School	SIS ID
AOP Demo Student 100	aop100@aop.org	ACT Online Prep™	ACT® Practice Exam 1	2023-02-26	1	32	Complete	89	PLM Demo School 10	AOP-45679
AOP Demo Student 100	aop100@aop.org	ACT Online Prep™	Science Short Test	2023-02-24	1	28-35	Complete	94	PLM Demo School 10	AOP-45679
AOP Demo Student 100	aop100@aop.org	ACT Online Prep™	Reading Short Test	2023-02-24	1	29-35	Complete	94	PLM Demo School 10	AOP-45679
AOP Demo Student 100	aop100@aop.org	ACT Online Prep™	Math Short Test	2023-02-24	1	26-30	Complete	86	PLM Demo School 10	AOP-45679
AOP Demo Student 100	aop100@aop.org	ACT Online Prep™	English Short Test	2023-02-24	1	28-33	Complete	93	PLM Demo School 10	AOP-45679
ACT Online Prep User	lzhs1@onlineprep.act.org	ACT Online Prep™	ACT® Practice Exam 1	2022-11-23	1		Incomplete	0	PLM Demo School 10	demo855543
ACT Online Prep User	lzhs1@onlineprep.act.org	ACT Online Prep™	Practice Quiz	2022-11-23	1		Incomplete	0	PLM Demo School 10	demo855543

Dashboard navigation (left panel): Administrative Dashboard; TOOLS — Assignments, Message Center, Student Listing; ANALYTICS — Students, Groups; REAL-TIME — Real-Time Reports, Session Detail Reports, Test Reports; Support. Tabs: Test Reports, Test Data, Generated Reports. Filters / Filtered data / Run.

Real-Time Student Reports

- Data Details Shared in these Reports:
  - View real-time data on student performance on practice questions, short topic tests, full length practice exams, quizzes, and assignments.
  - View progress toward teacher created assignment completion
  - Drill down to performance data on practice questions, tests, exams, and quizzes
  - Review time spent per question to determine level of effort
- Ideas for Using This Data Instructionally:
  - Group students by topics needing growth and or enrichment for small group instruction
  - Use program as a blended learning to support classroom instruction based on individual student need
  - Measure growth to determine if instructional strategies are successful

Sample Real Time Reports

Real-Time Reports

Overall

	Name ⬍	ID ⬍	Email ⬍	Institution	Created At ⬍	Last Active ⬍	SIS ID ⬍
1	PLM 8 Student 3	37330792	plm8student3@aop.org	PLM Demo School 8	03/13/2023	03/30/2023	demo3457
2	PLM 8 Student 2	37035032	plm8student2@aop.org	PLM Demo School 8	03/03/2023	03/13/2023	
3	PLM 8 Student 1	36831642	plm8student1@aop.org	PLM Demo School 8	02/24/2023	06/23/2023	AOP123456
4	Jill Ralph (Student)	34924551	jill.ralph.student@onlineprep.act.org	PLM Demo School 8	01/05/2023	Never	
5	Mark Review Student	18148301	plmexam@aop.org	PLM Demo School 8	08/25/2021	08/25/2021	
6	Wes Gentry	852716	run.wes.run@gmail.com	PLM Demo School 8	12/14/2015	06/27/2023	

PLM 8 Student 1

- ID #36831642
- School PLM Demo School 8
- Groups PLM 8 Demo Group , PLM 8 Science 5th , PLM 8 Afternoon test prep
- Courses ACT Online Prep™
- SIS ID AOP123456

ACT Online Prep™ - Active

06/23/2023	6 hrs 26 min	195 of 342
Last Active Date	Total Time Spent	Study Tasks Completed

Practice questions

Category Name	Time Spent Answering Questions	% Correct
English	43 minutes	97% (417 / 430)
Conventions of Standard English	34 minutes	98% (240 / 245)
Knowledge of Language	5 minutes	94% (100 / 106)
Production of Writing	3 minutes	97% (77 / 79)
Mathematics	51 minutes	95% (307 / 323)
Integrating Essential Skills	3 minutes	95% (60 / 63)
Preparing for Higher Math - Number and Quantity	5 minutes	95% (75 / 79)
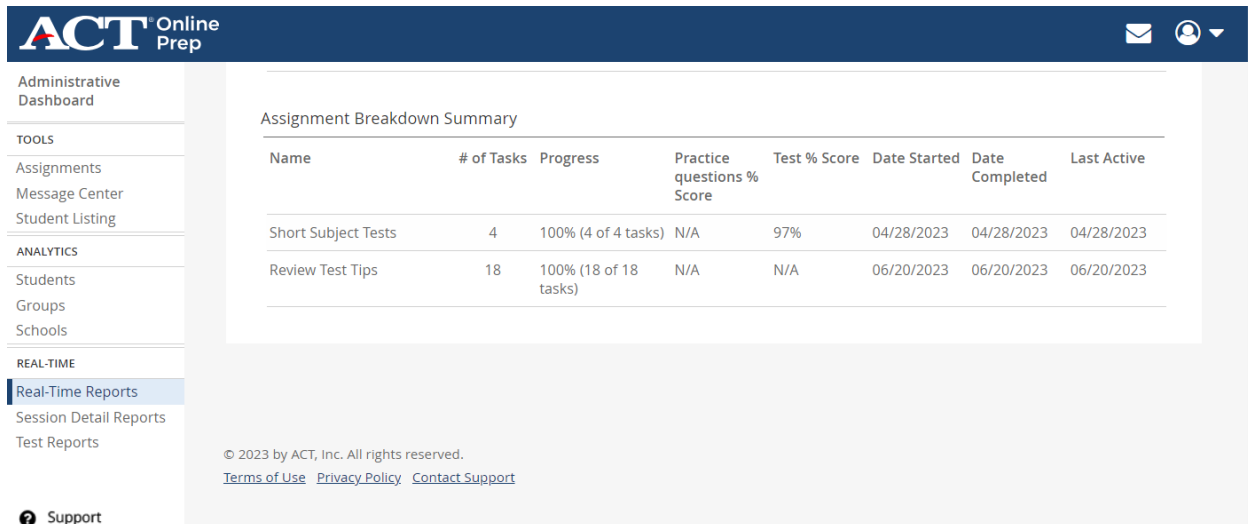
Tests

Test Name	Test Length	% Correct	Last Active Date	Score
English Short Test	30 Questions	97% (29 / 30)	03/01/2023	30-35
Complete				
Math Short Test	22 Questions	95% (21 / 22)	03/02/2023	29-34
Complete				
Reading Short Test	18 Questions	100% (18 / 18)	03/02/2023	31-36
Complete				
Science Short Test	18 Questions	94% (17 / 18)	03/02/2023	28-35
Complete				
ACT® Practice Exam 1	215 Questions	94% (203 / 215)	03/03/2023	34
Complete				
ACT® Practice Exam 2	215 Questions	97% (209 / 215)	03/03/2023	36
Complete				
Practice Quiz	97 Questions	96% (93 / 97)	03/02/2023	--
Complete				
Math and Science Quiz	49 Questions	90% (44 / 49)	03/02/2023	--
Complete				

Assignment Breakdown Summary

Name	# of Tasks	Progress	Practice questions % Score	Test % Score	Date Started	Date Completed	Last Active
Short Subject Tests	4	100% (4 of 4 tasks)	N/A	97%	04/28/2023	04/28/2023	04/28/2023
Review Test Tips	18	100% (18 of 18 tasks)	N/A	N/A	06/20/2023	06/20/2023	06/20/2023

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Tips for Using Data to Support Student Learning

You can most effectively use the data from AOP to support student learning by applying the following tips.

1. **Track students' progress using the online dashboards**. The dashboards provided give key information to you as an instructor. The information available on the dashboards include:
   - Student Overall Session Summary displays:
     - Last Active: The most recent date the student was active in the course
     - Total Time Spent: The amount of time the student has spent logged in
     - Avg. Progress: The percentage of total progress through ACT Online Prep material
     - Avg. Practice%: The percentage of practice questions answered correctly
     - Avg. Test%: The percentage of ACT Practice Exam questions answered correctly
     - Avg. Session Time: The average time a student spends in the program each time they log in
   - Courses Breakdown Summary displays:
     - Last Active: The most recent date the student was active in the course
     - Student Status: The student's percentile ranking among all ACT Online Prep users
     - Progress: The percentage of total progress through ACT Online Prep material
     - Avg. Practice%: The percentage of practice questions answered correctly
     - Avg: Test%: The percentage of ACT Practice Exam questions answered correctly

2. Optionally, you can also run Session Detail reports which provide time on task data and can be filtered by date range.
3. **Consider taking anecdotal notes on what you discover as you analyze the data and look for patterns or trends in the data.** Some common patterns or trends and relevant next steps may include:

Pattern or Trends	Next Steps
Strengths for specific content for individual students	Provide enrichment opportunities during instructional periods focused on that content
Opportunities for improvement for specific content for individual students	Assign lessons and practice aligned to student needs
Strengths or opportunities for improvement for specific content for a small group of students	Plan tiered interventions or extensions (using one of the small group instruction models)
Strengths for specific content for all but a handful of students	Consider means to extend or compact learning tied to that content
Opportunities for improvement for specific content for all but a handful of students	Build opportunities to revisit core content in whole group instruction with differentiated extension activities for the handful of students who do not require additional time on task for this specific content Review the curriculum to determine if the curriculum needs strengthening in this specific content for future instruction with other groups of students

4. **Use the data from AOP, including students' predicted ACT scores, alongside classroom data and other available data to determine the degree to which students have met the ACT College and Career Ready Standards.** Consider additional options for tiered intervention or extensions to ensure all students will be ready for college and careers upon graduation from high school.

5. **Schedule opportunities for students to complete a full-length ACT Practice Exam with Scoring under actual testing conditions in AOP.** While the best preparation for the ACT is quality instruction, such as core instruction with AOP, since most people perform best in familiar contexts, giving students an opportunity to experience the testing context can support increased achievement on the actual ACT.

6. **Make sure students select a test day so they have a target goal; the Study Plan will help guide how much they need to complete to remain on track.** Most of us achieve better when we have clear goals and a realistic plan to achieve those goals. When students know their test day and have a study plan tied to that goal, this can motivate and help them experience greater success when they take the ACT.

To access additional information about AOP administration and reporting, visit the AOP Training Toolkit.