

DARES is an abbreviation for Daily Assorted Review Exercise Set. A DARES consists of several questions or problems which are related to previously presented, widely varied course topics (one problem per topic within the set), the set being related by strategic similarity and contrast to other DARESs in a day-to-day sequence.

One day's DARES usually consists of one addition problem, one subtraction problem, one multiplication problem, one division problem, and one or more non-computational problems. The second day's DARES consists of different examples of the same variety of problems, and so on. Difficulty gradually increased; topics shift in and out of the sets as time passes. Unlike typical textbook exercise sets, a DARES invites practice of different kinds of problems within a few minutes' time, allowing the student to practice shifting between the various kinds of problems.

Suggested procedure

1. One day's DARES is given to students as a set, on a flip chart, chalkboard, overhead, or ditto sheet. Editing is invited so long as the set remains an assortment of different problem types.
2. Students work uninterrupted on the DARES for 2-3 minutes while the teacher does uninterrupted housekeeping (attendance, returning graded papers, etc.). The teacher does not help anyone until all have had the chance to attempt the DARES as a set.
3. The teacher does the problems for the students for review instruction, writing/talking at teacher's speed. Answer keys are NOT provided, to help promote this vital step.
4. Papers may be collected for an effort grade. Teachers might collect papers prior to step 3 as needed for motivation or credible evaluation and ongoing diagnosis. Students might otherwise exchange papers, etc.
5. Regular class work begins. Once established, the DARES routine should be 5-6 minutes after the start of the period.
6. Exams (if used) should be cumulative throughout the year, with students informed of this policy at the outset.

Benefits

- 1) Students keep prerequisite skills refreshed for easier learning and understanding of more advanced ideas.
- 2) Conceptual similarities and contrasts between topics and problem types are more available for insight learning.
- 3) Days are not wasted reviewing for exams.
- 4) Discrimination between topics is practiced daily.
- 5) Students are much more likely to experience daily success.
- 6) Less time is wasted reteaching within a given year, making time available for problem-solving, computer, etc.
- 7) Students may easily be directed to task at critical times.
- 8) Slower students get needed reteaching/practice.
- 9) Diagnosis is ongoing.
- 10) Intra-district communication is enhanced by DARES writing.