

## Sample Curriculum Planner

### (Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment)

**Note:** The sample entries in this curriculum planner are quoted, derived, or imagined from a variety of sources. They are not meant to represent a coherent unit of study or to be comprehensive in any way but to provide an array of examples to facilitate discussion of the planner. Elements in this planner are inspired by Grant Wiggins' and Jay McTighe's *Understanding by Design*. For further information, contact Dale Worsley, The Education Alliance, [cdw1@columbia.edu](mailto:cdw1@columbia.edu).

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#### Core beliefs that guide my teaching:

- With flexibility, teachers can bring art to the demands they must meet.
- Good teaching means good planning, using the strengths of the students, accommodating learning styles, and being prepared to provide technical support.
- Mindful creativity is essential to deep learning.
- Students must be empowered to think and dream for themselves, to make discoveries on their own.

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#### Mandates to which my teaching must conform (standards, tests, school initiatives, departmental maps, grade-team collaborations, yearlong curricular goals, etc.):

- Standards
- State curriculum
- District, school initiatives
- Academy theme

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#### Understandings I would like students to grasp:

- The function of history may not be so much to make the past familiar as to make it strange. (History)
- We can find our own place in a poetic tradition. (English)
- Statistics is the organization of data to help understand important things more objectively so we can make better decisions. (Mathematics)
- Natural selection provides a good biological explanation of how different species, including human beings, got here. (Science)
- Democracy is grounded in mathematical principles. (Integrated)
- You are what you eat. (Integrated)

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**Common misconceptions about the subject of our study:**

- History is a way of making the past familiar. (History)
- Poems are born complete, purely by the imagination. (English)
- There is only one right way to solve word problems. (Mathematics)
- Evolution is always a gradual process. (Science)
- The plurality method of voting always produces the winner preferred by a majority of voters. (Integrated)
- The theory of evolution began with Darwin. (Integrated)

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**Essential questions that will guide my students' inquiry:**

- Why did the Europeans "discover" America instead of the Asians? (History)
- How do poetic traditions begin? (English)
- Is zero something or nothing? (Mathematics)
- Is the Earth in balance? (Science)
- Are historical novels a good way to learn history? (Integrated)
- Is mathematics discovered or created? (Integrated)

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**Skills necessary to achieve understanding:**

- The ability to make inferences from primary documents (History)
- The ability to use critical vocabulary and literary terminology (English)
- The ability to model as well as to investigate mathematical operations (Mathematics)
- The ability to collect, analyze, synthesize, and present data (Science)
- The ability to create a web site (Integrated)
- The ability to collaborate (Integrated)

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**Knowledge necessary to achieve understanding:**

- The relative distribution of wealth in the era under study (History)
- The functions of rhyme in the sonnet forms (English)
- The formulas for perimeter, circumference, area, surface area, and volume of many types of figures (Mathematics)
- Cell structure and function relationships; regulation and biochemistry; and energy and photosynthesis (Science)
- Etymologies of basic Greco-Latin vocabulary (Integrated)
- The names and dates of significant cultural, historical, and scientific developments (Integrated)

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**How understanding will be assessed:**

- Performance tasks
- Projects
- Quizzes, tests, academic prompts
- Observations, work samples, dialogues
- Student self-assessment

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**Learning activities / instructional strategies that accommodate learning styles:**

- Shared, guided, independent reading of primary documents (History)
- Memorize and illustrate or perform literature; reflect on process (English)
- Introduce problem; students work in groups in areas of the classroom that have different environmental conditions such as light, level of noise, etc., share strategies in "lesson study" format (Mathematics)
- Design and execute lab experiment in groups; compare results (Science)
- Note above activities and innumerable others applicable across disciplines

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**Timeline:**

- Yearlong integration into curriculum
- Connecting activity between curriculum units
- A discrete sequence of days or weeks
- Beginning/concluding activity to quarters/terms
- Others

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**Resources:**

- Visiting experts
- Internet resources
- Textbooks
- Primary documents
- Community organizations and institutions
- Etc.