

Creating Quality Units to Improve Instruction

Revising the Maps Based on
Studying Student Work

Quality Units

- **Content:**
 - Have you identified the big ideas for the unit?
What are the larger concepts that you want the students to understand?

Skills

- Have you identified the thinking skills that will be required to give meaning to the content?
- Have you identified the literacy skills?
- Have you identified the pre-requisite skills in order for students to be successful with the work?

Assessments

- Have you identified the ways that students can show you what they know?
- Have you provided a range of assessments rather than just one type?
- How are you providing for assessments for learning?

Lessons

- Do the lessons provide scaffolds for learning?
- Are there choices for students that match different learning styles?
- What are the products and activities that will support the learning?

What are the results?

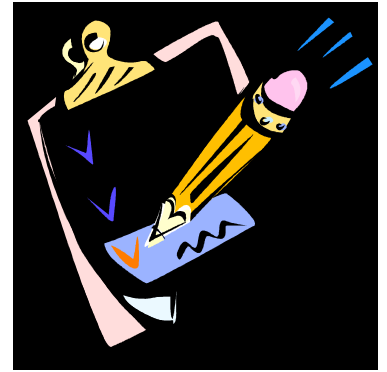
Protocol for Studying Student Work

Teacher/presenter gives a brief introduction to the work (10 minutes)

- What was the purpose for this unit?
- How did this unit fit into the projected map for the year?
- How long did unit take?
- How was the unit evaluated?

ACTIVITY

- Practice Peer Review



› **Divide up roles**

› **Presenter**

› **Facilitator**

› **Timekeeper/Process checker**

› **Note-taker**

Examining Work Samples

Groups study work in descriptive rounds:

- What do you observe?
- What is this student working on?
- How does the work match with the rubric?
- Implications for future learning for this child?

Questions you might consider

- Is the work “good” enough? What evidence do you find that supports your opinion?
- Was the student able to answer the essential question(s)?
- What inferences can you make about the engagement of the student?
- What evidence is there that demonstrates the student's understanding?
- What can you tell about the range of work, if a range is represented?

Sample Prompts for Probing Questions

- What are/were you hoping would happen when...?
- How did your assumptions about ____ influence your decision to ____?
- What would you change if ____ happened?
- What would have to change if you wanted _____ to happen?
- What is the connection between _____ and _____?
- What would happen if...?

Revising the Map

- As you consider doing this unit next year, what revisions might you make for this unit? (*put in your revisions in italics so that you do not forget*)
- As you think about the units that you have projected for the next few months, what have you learned from this process that might help those units improve? (*revise as is necessary*)

Silent Writing Time

5 minutes

Indicators of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning

- The district develops clear statements of what students should know and be able to do.
- Standards apply to all students with high expectations for their success
- The teacher knows how each lesson relates to district and state academic standards

- Students know what they are learning, what standards are related to it, and why they are learning it.
- Standards are constant, instructional strategies and time are the variables.
- Planning begins with standards rather than materials.

- Practice activities are clearly aligned to standards with the student as worker and the teacher as coach.
- Students know how the teacher expects them to show what they've learned.
- Students frequently evaluate their own work before the teacher does, using the same criteria

- Feedback to students is related to performance levels on standards, not based on comparison with other students.
- Student performance data is used to revise curriculum and instruction.
- The assessment system includes a balance of external tests for program evaluation and classroom assessments for individual student diagnosis and instruction.

- Students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate achievement of standards.
- Assessment of student achievement is consistent across teachers and schools, using common performance indicators.
- Teachers work with colleagues to share and compare scoring of classroom-based assessments

Considerations for Mapping Units

- What elements from your units do you want to have included in the map?
- What aspects of your units do you consider to be “core” and what aspects of your units do you consider to be open to individual variations?

Consistency vs. Flexibility

- Determine where consistency in the curriculum is critical for success of the students
 - ✓ This may vary based on issues such as mobility of students, experience of teachers, etc.
- Determine where flexibility in the curriculum is just as important for the success of students.
- Disciplines vary on the need for flexibility and consistency.

No common end of unit assessments
Teach units when choose
Free choice of instructional materials

Common end of unit assessments
Teach units within quarters
Free choice of instructional materials

Common end of unit assessments
Teach units in required order & month
Limited choice of instructional materials

Common end of unit and during unit assessments
Teach units in required order and month
Common lesson plans & instructional materials

Flexible

Consistent

Hamburg, NY

Kau Keaau Paho, HI

Glendale Unified HS District, AZ

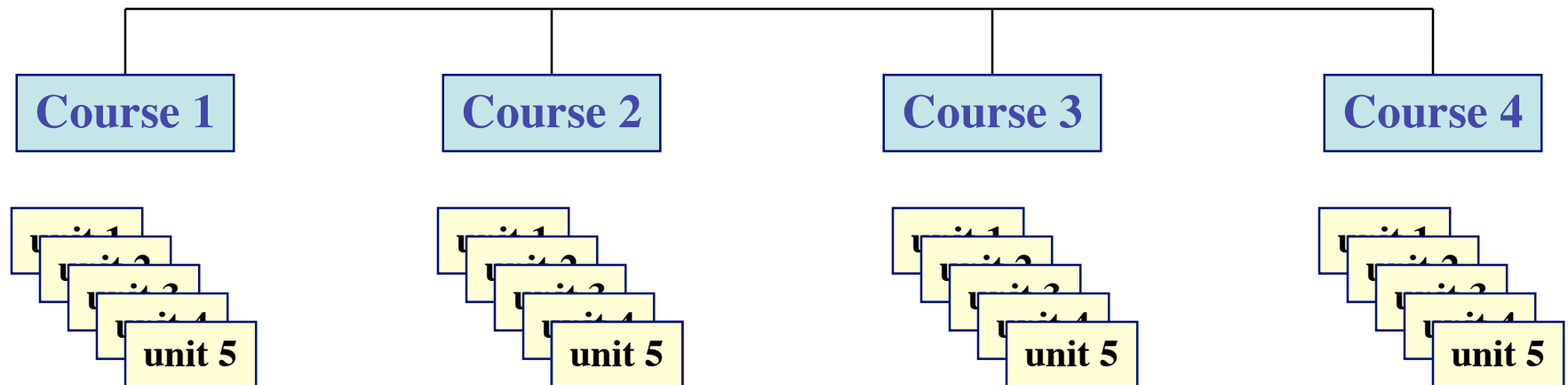
Program Area

Content Standards

Overarching Understanding(s)

Overarching Essential Question(s)

Cornerstone Assessments



Determine Suggested Length of Each Unit

- Determine the total number of available instructional days based on the school calendar. Considerations for determination of a realistic number of instructional days available should include days for required testing, assemblies, etc.
- The suggested length for each unit is determined taking into account:
 - ✓ The priority levels of the unit's standards
 - ✓ The depth and complexity of the unit's standards

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