

# CURRICULUM GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

Through a unit of a comprehensive approach to arts education, students should be provided opportunities to become proficient and competent in:

- making artworks.
- interpreting and judging artwork.
- examining the historical, social, and cultural context of artworks.
- exploring the nature and value of art.
- making connections between art and other content areas.
- demonstrating learning and complex understandings and skills.

As a school team, discuss the above criteria. Do they reflect criteria found in your district or state curricula? How are they the same? How are they different?

*Be prepared to share your answers with the larger group.*

## DESIGN

The concept of *design* enumerates criteria that the user should keep in mind as the process of curriculum development begins, as the work progresses, and as a final check for looking back over the work that has been completed. On a practical level, the format of units and lessons must initially be considered. The suggested unit and lesson format provided in this guide was developed by the TETAC Curriculum Task Force. Revised or different formats may be used if the key components are present and clearly indicated. A variety of other worksheets are provided later in this document to offer choices of approach for the design of curricula format.

Another critical aspect of curriculum design concerns content. Teachers should be sure that:

- objectives are truly outcomes for learning.
- there is diversity in the artwork and artists studied.
- units are centered on works of art or ideas about art.
- technology components, if available, should promote learning.
- local museums and artists are utilized if available and appropriate.

As a small group, discuss the above. Which of these components have you used? Which would be the most difficult to implement? Be prepared to share your responses with the entire group.

# SUGGESTED UNIT AND LESSON PLAN FORMAT

## Unit Format

- I. Unit Title
- II. Rationale and Overview of Unit
- III. Unit Objectives
- IV. Overview of Lessons
- V. Resources and Materials for the Unit
  - A. Reproductions
  - B. Videotapes
  - C. Publications
  - D. Handouts
  - E. Audiovisual Equipment
  - F. Consumable Materials

## Individual Lesson Format

- I. Overview
- II. Objectives
- III. Materials and Resources
- IV. Planning and Preparation
- V. Background Information for Teachers
- VI. Vocabulary
- VII. Body of the Lesson
- VIII. Summary and Closure
- VIII. Assessment
- X. Extensions/Interdisciplinary Connections
- XI. Correlated Local, State, and National Standards

*How are these similar to the formats you have been using? How are they different?*

## UNIT FOUNDATIONS

*Unit Foundations* are ideas that underlie our culture, drawn from philosophical, religious, ethical, and other sources. Enduring ideas address beliefs about the human experience. They include the big questions which artists and other thinkers have pondered over time. These enduring ideas and essential questions guide students to understand what it means to be human, to live alongside others, and to live in the natural world. Additionally, the unit foundations include enduring ideas that are important for the arts. Each art discipline - art making, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics - brings a unique perspective to the exploration and expression of the human experience.

The process of developing the content of a unit begins with determining the unit foundations. You may start a unit with an over-arching, enduring idea or through the choice of artworks, but the key concepts and essential questions must provide the focus of the unit. Unit goals and objectives will grow out of these ideas to provide paths of investigation for experiencing and making art.

*With your team, discuss these concepts and then choose an enduring idea for an art-centered unit. Identify key concepts and essential questions and/or suggest possible appropriate works of art. Be prepared to share your efforts with the larger group.*

## KEY CONCEPTS AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

*Key concepts* and *essential questions* express the same idea, but the first is written as a statement and the second as a question. You can use either or both. Key concepts and essential questions are derived from the enduring ideas of the unit. They should prompt the most meaningful exploration of the artwork.

Sample key concepts for a unit on the enduring idea “Conflict”:

- Conflict can involve issues of power.
- Conflict can involve personal and social beliefs and values.

Essential questions have the following characteristics:

- They are “big” questions.
- They are not easily answered and cannot be answered with lists or statement of facts.
- Essential questions require students to make a decision or solve a problem.
- Answers to essential questions require reasoned support.

Sample essential questions for a unit on the enduring idea “Conflict”:

- What causes conflict?
- What justifies conflict?

With your team, use your chosen enduring idea and develop three key concepts and three essential questions. Also suggest possible appropriate artworks.

## CONTENT

The curriculum guidelines for *content* fall into two categories. The first category addresses the content of art:

- art production, criticism, history, and aesthetics,
- key concepts and terms, and
- the ways appropriate art knowledge and skills can make natural and logical connections to other disciplines.

The second category offers ways to organize content to draw attention to:

- the way content is sequenced in a logical way.
- the need for overall cohesiveness within the unit.
- providing for appropriate developmental levels.
- listing resources.

*With your group, discuss the above criteria. Which criteria do you think are most important? Be prepared to share your answers with the entire group.*

## INSTRUCTION/PEDAGOGY

*Instruction/Pedagogy* refers to the ways teachers construct and shape the learning environment, the experience of learning, and the order of learning activities. Teachers must provide paths to substantive learning and help students make connections to real life. They must reference new skills and concepts in art and advise students of assessment expectations. They must guide discussions and individual inquiry and provide a variety of learning activities that help students arrive at an understanding of the enduring questions.

*With your team, discuss the explanation above. What criteria does your district use to evaluate individual teachers on instruction? How well do these criteria correlate with this concept of instruction/pedagogy? Be prepared to share your discussion with the entire group.*

## ASSESSMENT

The construction of *assessment* tasks that are integral and embedded in learning experiences helps teachers insure that learning activities for students are relevant and engaging and display continual evidence of learning. These guidelines provide ways for teachers to understand assessment as a range of activities. The assessment criteria provided in the accompanying charts encourage teachers to:

- align unit goals with assessment as an integral process in curriculum development.
- gauge accomplishment according to stated objectives during the learning experience.
- assess student mastery of art ideas and skills at the completion of the unit.
- enable students to pay attention to their own methods of learning.

*Assessment in art is a continuing challenge. In your small group, share any assessment efforts you have found to be successful. Also list any question you may have about assessment. Be prepared to share your experiences and questions with the entire group.*