**Developing a Standards Based Unit of Instruction**

**STAGE 1: Identify Desired Results; *What will students know and be able to do?***

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| **WHAT**  *What step are we on?* | **HOW**  *What is the process?* | **WHY**  *What is the rationale for this step? (a.k.a. Why bother?)* |
| 1. Review Standard/s | Read/Discuss/Clarify connection to new unit and school/department mission | Team articulates focus of instructional goals at onset of unit writing |
| 1. Select Benchmarks | 1. Consider benchmarks that need introducing or revisiting 2. Independently review the benchmarks w/in each standard 3. Develop group consensus   *This can be done based on pre-determined texts or texts might be selected based on benchmark selection* | * Clarity of specific unit goals improves instruction and allows students to coherently build skills and knowledge over time. * Deciding focus of unit is just as important as deciding what is not the focus of the unit |
| 1. Generic Unwrapping | 1. Underline the nouns and circle the verbs in the benchmark 2. In the “to know” column, write down the generic facts, data, concepts, ideas, or pieces of knowledge students will need to know in order to achieve the benchmark. (Benchmark nouns serve as an initial guide) 3. In the “to do” column, write down the verbs or skills that students will need to learn, hone, practice or acquire in order to achieve the benchmark. (Benchmark nouns serve as an initial guide) 4. Remember to pay attention to all levels of understanding (think Bloom’s/Anderson’s Taxonomy!) | * Creates the school’s “discussion board” for instructional goals * Identifies the essential skills and concepts from the benchmarks that students need to acquire in order to master the benchmark |
| 1. Text Study | 1. Study the text through the lens of the selected standard/s and benchmarks: guiding questions/protocols/ art/ close reading/ guiding questions/ other 2. Select the specific texts to be included in the unit 3. Note any gaps in text selection – are there other texts to include that we have not yet studied?   *This step may occur at several moments along the way. Some schools choose to begin unit writing with text study, while others begin with benchmark selection.* | * Creates a shared understanding of the text through the lens of the standards * Opens our minds to new ways of thinking about and approaching text * Allows for multiple interpretations and deepens our knowledge of the text * Fosters faculty collaboration and helps us develop a common language around the study of text |

**STAGE 1 (cont.): Identify Desired Results; *What will students know and be able to do?***

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| **WHAT**  *What step are we on?* | **HOW**  *What is the process?* | **WHY**  *What is the rationale for this step? (a.k.a. Why bother?)* |
| 1. Content Specific Unwrapping | Cite the specifics (i.e. words, phrases, passages, names, opinions, concepts) from the text that students will “know” OR use to learn how “to do”  (optional) Suggest questions to ask in class  (optional) Note ideas for possible learning activities | * Identifies focus of instruction * Determines what to teach AND what NOT to teach * Creates a parking lot of instructional ideas and resources to come back to during Stage 3 |
| 1. Big Ideas | 1. Record the important ideas for students to remember long after they finish this unit of study 2. Determine that these ideas are worth revisiting and apply to more than one unit of study/ subject area 3. Edit into student-friendly language | * Answers the question, “Why are we learning this?” * Gives meaning and importance to the facts * Presents key concepts that are enduring in nature * Connects learning from other areas of school and life |
| 1. Essential Questions | 1. Develop open-ended, but focused questions that invite students into the learning 2. Determine that the questions have intellectual and emotive force 3. Edit into kid-friendly language | * Engages students in the learning process * Establishes a purpose for learning * Deepens critical thinking * Encourage higher order thinking * Stimulates curiosity and deepen student understanding |

**STAGE 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence; *How will students demonstrate skills and knowledge?***

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| **WHAT**  *What step are we on?* | **HOW**  *What is the process?* | **WHY**  *What is the rationale for this step? (a.k.a. Why bother?)* |
| 1. Engaging Scenario | 1. Create an authentic scenario that will serve as a vehicle for students to: 2. demonstrate knowledge & skills indicated in unwrapping 3. grapple with Big Ideas 4. respond to Essential Questions. 5. Determine the role/s, audience, mission, product/s, and purpose | * Promotes student engagement * Creates connection to “real world” applicability   *Authentic refers to real context or task, using actual tools, working towards potential real-world impact, or personal relevance. Sometimes these are simulated scenarios incorporating one or more of these elements.* |
| 1. Performance Tasks | 1. Develop collection of summative tasks (usually 3 or 4) that demonstrate mastery 2. Check that tasks increase in complexity (several levels of higher order thinking) | * Collection allows students to engage in material on increasing levels of sophistication * Demonstrates mastery of the selected benchmarks * Shows understanding of the big ideas and essential questions |

**STAGE 2 (cont.): Determine Acceptable Evidence; *How will students demonstrate skills & knowledge?***

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| **WHAT**  *What step are we on?* | **HOW**  *What is the process?* | **WHY**  *What is the rationale for this step? (a.k.a. Why bother?)* |
| 1. Scoring Guide (Checklist & Rubric) | 1. Determine criteria for success (teacher/ student generated) 2. Articulate and describe various levels of achievement (Beginning, Progressing, Mastery) 3. Shared at the same time the PA is introduced to students | * Expectations and learning goals are clear to students (no mysteries or secrets) * Promotes objectivity in assessing |

**STAGE 3: Design Instruction; *How will students engage in the learning?***

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| **WHAT**  *What step are we on?* | **HOW**  *What is the process?* | **WHY**  *What is the rationale for this step? (a.k.a. Why bother?)* |
| 1. Unit Plan Map | 1. Decide the order and “chunks” of text 2. Select the elements of unwrapping that will be taught connected to each text “chunk” 3. Note the big ideas and essential questions that will be explored during each lesson 4. Identify the PT aligned to the lesson 5. Compose a one-line lesson summary | * Transforms a unit plan into a clear path for instruction * Answers the questions; “What will I teach first,” “How will I introduce the skills and knowledge of the unwrapping?” etc. * Aligns instruction and assessment (teach to the test!) * Creates a clear planning calendar for instruction |
| 1. Lesson Plans | 1. Decide if the focus of the lesson is on interaction with new material, guided practice, independent practice or a combination 2. Formalize checking for understanding throughout the lesson 3. Plan for orientation and closure 4. Assign teaching techniques noting the balance of what students and teachers are doing 5. Develop materials | * Makes the goals for instruction clear * Ensures that the components of effective instruction are incorporated into each lesson increasing the likelihood of student learning * Maximizes learning time * Allows for thoughtful balance of activities that ensure student engagement; “hands on, minds on” |

***During the Unit Writing Process – Alignment***

* Keep stepping backwards in order to move forwards
* Keep all steps aligned with each other
* Remain focused on Standards and Benchmarks
* Engage in tuning protocols with colleagues of same and different subjects and grades

***During and Following Instruction***

* As you teach, copy and keep anonymous samples of student work
* Engage in Looking at/Analyzing Student Work (LASW/ASW) protocols to edit the unit