

# Program 5

## Designing a Multi-Arts Curriculum Unit

### Description

In Program 5, you will be introduced to a curriculum design process that you can use in your own classroom. The process uses an approach based on the book and workshop series entitled *Understanding by Design* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Additional ideas were developed through the national education reform project called Transforming Education Through the Arts Challenge (TETAC), which was funded by the Walter H. Annenberg Foundation and the Getty Education Institute for the Arts.

Unlike traditional approaches to curriculum design, the process presented here focuses on the enduring ideas, also known as enduring understandings, that drive the curriculum—the “why” rather than the “what.”

In the program, you will see Learner Team members:

- investigate the components and process of this curriculum design model, using as a reference the multi-arts unit of study based on *Quidam*;
- analyze various curriculum topics for significant enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and unit objectives; and
- construct enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and objectives for their own integrated units of study, working in collaboration.

In this session, you will work in groups to construct these elements for your own curriculum topics. You also will identify the enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and goals and objectives for your units of study.

### Learning Objectives

- Identify elements of curriculum design, including enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and unit objectives.
- Analyze curriculum for appropriate and significant enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and unit objectives.
- Collaboratively write the enduring ideas/understandings, essential questions, and unit objectives for an integrated unit of study.

## Guiding Questions

The following are questions for your group to consider as you work through the session.

- What is curriculum design?
- How can curriculum design inform your daily classroom activities?
- How can this curriculum design process be useful to you as you begin to integrate the arts into your curriculum?

## Key Concepts/Vocabulary

- *Enduring ideas/understandings*: the big concepts about a theme or topic that students should comprehend and retain after they've forgotten many of the details (a *topic* is a subject; a *theme* is an idea about the subject)
- *Essential questions*: questions that guide teaching and engage students in uncovering the important ideas at the heart of each subject
- *Unit objectives*: knowledge and skills necessary for students to demonstrate their understandings of essential questions

# Workshop Session (On-Site)

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## Materials and Resources

- Videotape or broadcast of Program 5—Designing a Multi-Arts Curriculum Unit
- Handout: Developing a Unit of Study
- Handout: Indicators of Enduring Ideas/Understandings and Essential Questions
- Handout: Enduring Ideas/Understandings Worksheet

Handouts are available in the Appendix of this guide or on the workshop Web site.

## Getting Ready (25 minutes)

If you have been able to have your own students analyze a work of literature looking for elements of the classic hero's journey structure, discuss your experiences.

Begin thinking about your current curriculum design process by discussing the following questions.

- What is the difference between lesson planning and curriculum design?
- With which curriculum design models are you familiar?

## Watch the Workshop Program (60 minutes)

View Program 5—Designing a Multi-Arts Curriculum Unit.

As you watch the program, consider the following focus questions.

- Where do your curriculum topics originate?
- Once you select a topic, what design process do you follow?
- What is the value of considering the “why” as well as the “what” of instruction?
- What are essential questions, and how can they help clarify unit objectives?

<p><b>Facilitator:</b> Distribute the handout, Developing a Unit of Study.</p>
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# Workshop Session (On-Site), cont'd.

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## Suggested Activities and Discussion (35 minutes)

### Beginning the Curriculum Design Process (30 minutes)

Each group will begin the curriculum design process for a lesson that integrates the arts by constructing an enduring idea/understanding for their topic. Begin by brainstorming and mapping a web of concepts that support your assigned topic. From the concepts, construct a list of generalizations—general statements developed by connecting concepts together.

Using the generalizations, craft the enduring idea/understanding for the unit. Refer to the handout, Indicators of Enduring Ideas/Understandings and Essential Questions, for criteria.

Then, using the same handout, construct the essential questions. These should support and address the unit concepts you have identified.

Finally, use the essential questions to define your unit goals and objectives.

### Reflection (5 minutes)

- What affected your ability to work collaboratively?
- How has this process encouraged you to explore the “why” in your teaching?

Save your written work and notes from this workshop session and bring them to the next workshop session, when you will be asked to discuss these topics further.

**Facilitator:** Distribute the handout, Indicators of Enduring Ideas/Understandings and Essential Questions, and the handout, Enduring Ideas/Understandings Worksheet. Divide participants into four groups. Assign each group one of the following topics:

- Arts and History
- Arts and Literature
- Arts and Math
- Arts and Science

**Facilitator:** Use the following questions to focus a closing discussion.

# Between Sessions (On Your Own)

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## Homework Assignment

You can find the curriculum design plans and handouts on the workshop Web site at [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom). Based on the lesson plans and handouts for Program 5, think about how you might apply the curriculum design process discussed in this program to a content standard, topic, or theme relevant to your classroom. Write some notes in your journal.

Be prepared to respond to the following question at the next workshop session:

- Based on this journal exercise, what difficulties or advantages do you foresee in working with the curriculum design model discussed in this program?

## Optional Activities

Other enrichment activities can boost your learning between workshop sessions. Consider the recommended activities below and choose those that best meet your needs. Time permitting, you might share what you find out before or after your next workshop session.

Watch some or all of these programs from *The Arts in Every Classroom: A Video Library, K–5*:

- Teaching Dance
- Teaching Music
- Teaching Theatre
- Teaching Visual Art
- Developing an Arts-Based Unit
- Collaborating With a Cultural Resource
- Leadership Team
- Students Create a Multi-Arts Performance
- Three Leaders at Arts-Based Schools

Research resources on arts integration and curriculum design at your school or public library or on the Web.

Consider what multi-arts performance pieces, in addition to *Quidam*, might provide a powerful platform for teaching and learning in your school.

## Reading Assignment

To support your understanding of Program 5, see the following article and book:

- “Teaching for Understanding” ([www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/resources/workshops/teachingforunderstanding.html](http://www.exploratorium.edu/IFI/resources/workshops/teachingforunderstanding.html)) This article provides insights from research and educational practice about both the nature of understanding and how people learn for understanding.
- *Understanding by Design* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, Prentice Hall College Div; ISBN 013093058X (December 28, 2000), ([www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/wiggins98book.html](http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/wiggins98book.html)). This book is about the design of curricula to engage students in exploration and to deepen their understanding of important ideas and about the design of assessments to reveal the extent of their understandings.

# Between Sessions (On Your Own), cont'd.

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To prepare for Program 6, review this reading:

- Criteria for Planning Multi-Arts Instruction

This reading can be found in the Appendix of this guide or on the workshop Web site at [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom).

In addition, read the following articles:

- "Using Rubrics to Promote Thinking and Learning" ([www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html](http://www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html)), *Educational Leadership*, Volume 57, February 2000. Instructional rubrics have two features: a list of "what counts" in an assignment and gradations of quality for each criterion.
- "Creating Rubrics: Inspire Your Students and Foster Critical Thinking" ([www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-4523.html](http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-4523.html)). This five-part series of articles explores how to design, refine, and implement rubrics in a variety of subject areas.