

JUNE PLANNING GUIDE FOR *ELA* 2008

“First, have a definite, clear, practical ideal; a goal, an objective. Second, have the necessary means to achieve your ends....Third, adjust all your means to that end.”

-Aristotle



OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT

What is JUNE planning?

June planning is a special planning opportunity for schools/teachers to reflect on the teaching and learning of the past year, and plan strategically for the coming year.

One of the most effective types of June planning makes use of the **'backward planning'** design process. Backward planning is inspired by the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in their book, *Understanding by Design*. This kind of planning begins with the desired end in mind.



The **New York State Standards and Core Curriculum in ELA** offer expansive and rich guidance, but teachers can easily become overwhelmed by the volume of literacy competencies expected at each grade level. Using the principles of backward planning can assist educators in making important decisions about what we will decide to teach, how, to what extent or depth, and why. Once we begin to think carefully about what we expect the students to learn, think and be able to do by the end of a specific unit of study, we can plan efficiently and strategically and make sure that the appropriate learning experiences and resources are provided.

How do we begin?

Reflection...

The first step to successful June Planning is to engage in honest reflection by examining and analyzing the units of study taught in the current year. Ask the important but difficult questions concerning your work with students.

- Which units of study were most successful for your students? For which units did you see evidence of meaningful learning?
- What happened that made them so successful?
- Which units of study were most engaging for your students?
- How did you assess the level and quality of student learning? What assessments were most useful?
- In what way did assessments inform your instruction and student learning? How did you assess the level and quality of student learning?
- How did each unit build upon, relate to and support each other?
- Did you accomplish all that you set out to accomplish in each unit? Why or why not?
- To what extent did your planning process affect your unit's actual outcomes?
- How often did you plan for the diverse learning needs of your students?
- In what ways did you provide opportunities for differentiated teaching and learning?
- Where and when did you provide opportunities for integrated learning – connection to other content?
- Did you provide students with adequate instruction and exposure to reading and writing in content areas?
- Did you make use of recent research in literacy instruction? How?
- What do you think should change? Why?

Once the reflection process is completed, planning for the new school year can begin in a more informed way. Please feel free to use any of the attached ideas and templates you find useful and appropriate.

The action plan...

- Select the unit of study or theme. Examples: Non-Fiction Reading Centers, Poetry, Writing with Purpose and Precision, etc.
- You may find it helpful to engage in pre-planning activities by participating in a **brainstorming** session with your colleagues. Chart the results in a web. We have included an organizational web for your pre-planning use.

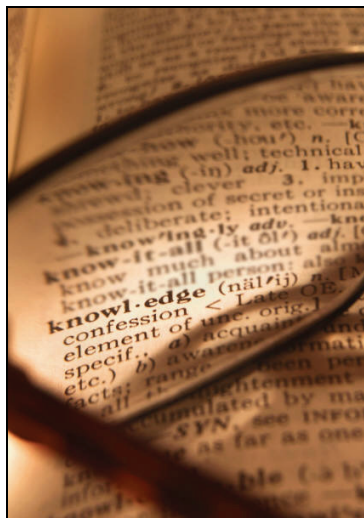
Remember the purpose of a brainstorming session – to bring out as many ideas as possible that relate to your topic, theme, or unit of study.



- Decide on an **Essential Question**. The essential question serves as an organizing thread for your unit of study. An essential question can be defined as a question that goes beyond the literal. A good essential question is multi-faceted and open to discussion and interpretation. Some examples are: "Why do writers revise their writing?" or "How do good readers read?"
- Develop a series of **focus** or **guiding** questions. Focus questions are questions that are **content**, process or skill **specific**. They should frame your unit of study and act as guides for future lessons and activity development. Focus questions should also be connected to the essential question.
- The next step is to think about the **goals, objectives** and **outcomes** for student learning. It might be helpful to also keep in mind that your goals and outcomes for the unit can be *concepts, themes, skills, strategies* or *content knowledge*. A **goal** is the stated

intention or expectation, usually requiring several related objectives to produce the desired result. An **objective** can be thought of as a first step toward achieving a goal. **Outcomes** are stated in terms of expected accomplishments, while goals are usually in the form of actions. You can also begin to think about possible student projects and products that will demonstrate student competency and mastery.

- Assemble appropriate, multi-dimensional and **varied resources** such as human resources (guest speakers, authors, parents, etc.), essential professional books and mentor texts that you will use for teaching purposes (all genres of quality literature that relate to your unit of study), magazines, articles, videos, DVDs, internet and on-line resources, etc.
- Decide on various types of **assessments** that meet the needs of the diverse learners. Think about possible rubrics to evaluate student projects and products.
- Consider appropriate celebrations or culminating activities to assess, validate and honor student learning and final products.



KEY PLANNING RESOURCES

New York State ELA Standards

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/ela/pub/elalearn.pdf>

Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

As listeners and readers, students will collect data, facts, and ideas; discover relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and use knowledge generated from oral, written, and electronically produced texts. As speakers and writers, they will use oral and written language to acquire, interpret, apply, and transmit information.

Standard 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Students will read and listen to oral, written, and electronically produced texts and performances, relate texts and performances to their own lives, and develop an understanding of the diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions the texts and performances represent. As speakers and writers, students will use oral and written language for self-expression and artistic creation.

Standard 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

As listeners and readers, students will analyze experiences, ideas, information, and issues presented by others using a variety of established criteria. As speakers and writers, they will present, in oral and written language and from a variety of perspectives, their opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information and issues.

Standard 4: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Students will use oral and written language for effective social communication with a wide variety of people. As readers and listeners, they will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

Link to New York State Education Department ELA Core Curriculum:

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/ela/elacore.pdf>

Link to New York State Education Department ELA Test Information:

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/elintela.html>



Information Fluency Continuum

The DOE Department of Library Services has created an important resource that can also be used to guide your planning. Access the complete document at

http://schools.nycenet.edu/offices/teachlearn/sls/INFO_FLUENCY_CONT_K12Final.pdf

Information Fluency Continuum

- Ask authentic questions
- Write questions based on key ideas or areas of focus
- Determine what information is needed to answer a question
- Follow a complete research plan and stay on a timeline
- Use skim/scan to locate information
- Distinguish between fact and opinion
- Use various note-taking strategies
- Paraphrase, summarize information
- Use different formats as sources for information
- Recognize and use a variety of systems for organizing
- Identify main ideas and supporting details
- Select information that answers research question
- Differentiate between important and unimportant details
- Make inferences based on explicit information in text
- Combine and categorize information to draw conclusions and create meaning
- Use writing process to express new understandings
- Cite all sources used
- Use information to create original products
- Draft presentation using an outline
- Select and present creative products in a variety of formats
- Identify and evaluate the important features of a good product
- Read a variety of fiction and nonfiction for enjoyment and information
- Participate in discussions and listen well
- Show respect for the ideas of others
- Work collaboratively

Assessment

Effective assessment must be an ongoing part of a high quality ELA program. It is multipurpose in nature and can be used to:

- plan additional units of study
- assess student understanding and differentiate instruction
- provide the student and teacher with guidance in determining student intervention or enrichment
- assist with student self-evaluation
- indicate individual or group instructional needs
- demonstrate student achievement in knowledge and skills acquisition
- indicate the effectiveness of classroom procedures, strategies, and materials
- provide qualitative and quantitative feedback on performance for parents, teachers, and students

Effective evaluation requires ongoing attention to such questions as:

- Are students achieving the knowledge and skills that you set as unit outcomes?
- How efficient are the assessments in demonstrating student knowledge?
- What can we best use to understand what our students know?

Assessment *FOR* Learning: In day-to-day instruction, the teacher's use of a wide variety of evaluation techniques and strategies that will be used to inform and adapt our teaching. These include but are not limited to observations, student conference notes, portfolio reviews, rubrics, student self-assessment, anecdotal records, group and individual discussions, journal entries, responses, reading logs, student writing drafts, etc.

Assessment *OF* Learning: The variety of formal and informal interim and summative assessments that provide information about students' learning, after the learning has taken place. These include but are not limited to interim assessments, teacher-made unit tests, quizzes, ECLAS 2, EPAL, city and state end of year assessments (in grades 3-8).

By utilizing a broad range of assessments, teachers can provide students with many opportunities to demonstrate their strengths and understandings.

What Does Quality Unit Planning Look Like?

Teacher's Role

Think about your role in the unit. How will you mediate and facilitate student learning? What will you emphasize? How will you structure your mini-lessons? What are the essential teaching points? How do you plan to consider the time to be spent in each component of reading/writing workshop (guided reading, independent reading, partner work, etc.)? What resources will you need? What steps will you take? How will you determine if you are successful? What management strategies will you employ for your own learning and for student learning? How will you help students reflect and build their metacognitive processes?

Plan with Differentiation in Mind

As you proceed with planning, think purposefully about who your students are as learners. Design the delivery of instruction in a way that maximizes their potential and learning. Determine your students' strengths and challenges and target the instruction accordingly. Develop lessons to ensure access, participation and success of curriculum for all your diverse learners.

Scaffold the Learning

Scaffolding requires a clear analysis of your instructional goals, student outcomes and student readiness. It is important to plan for specific yet temporary and dynamic scaffolding that will support students as they build their own skills, strategies and knowledge base. Mini-lessons are planned around student needs to help move them towards successful completion of a task, acquisition of a skill or understanding of a concept. Divide tasks into manageable sub-skills (while keeping the context real and meaningful!) to help students achieve proficiency and success. Allow for ongoing assessment to substantiate the effectiveness of scaffolding strategies.

Students' Role

Students should be engaged and active participants in their learning. They must be attentive and learn how to gather information in multiple ways (from teachers, peers, texts and technology). They must be encouraged to ask questions for themselves, to confirm understanding, to clarify and to assess their own learning. There must be a balance between learning experiences that nurture independence (from the teacher), interdependence and dependence on others (partner or group activities).

Core/Academic Vocabulary

Think carefully about how you will integrate the teaching of core/academic vocabulary to your students every day. Knowledge of academic vocabulary is important to student's language growth, comprehension and school success.

Content Area Literacy

Because reading and writing in the content areas is at the heart of success in secondary education, it is very important for students to have sufficient instruction and exposure to content literacy in all grades.

Assessment

Quality assessment has a direct influence on instructional planning. It should reflect what students know as well as what they need to learn. A teacher needs a broad range of assessments to determine students' depth and level of knowledge and abilities. Assessment should include both formal and informal measures; be both formative and summative and include student self-assessment.



Summary of Guidelines for Mapping and Unit Planning

Immersion Just as we immerse students in a genre or topic, we need to immerse ourselves in a unit before we can successfully create a learning experience for students.

Read about the topic (professional books, research, children's literature, websites, articles, adult literature).

- **Essential questions**

Consider the big picture for the unit. What are the important understandings, overarching themes, or discrete skills you want students to have at the end of the unit?

- Questions should be broad yet connected to the unit
- Questions should help guide understanding for students

- **Student Outcomes**

Be clear about what you want students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of this unit. This will make your mini-lessons and teaching points clear.

- **Focus or Guiding Questions**

These questions should address the actual content of your unit and will be helpful when developing mini-lessons and other learning experiences for the unit.

- **Learning Experiences**

What experiences (mini-lessons, read-alouds, small-group work, partner work, etc.) will give students the tools they need to demonstrate understanding and mastery of the unit? Here, consider all the mini-lessons and additional experiences you will provide during the unit to support student understanding. Once these are listed, determine the best order for their presentation.

- **Core Language/Academic Language**

Recent research has shown the importance of academic vocabulary knowledge and its connection to student achievement. What are the **shared** key words, phrases or terms that are essential for students to hear, use and learn for this unit?

- **Assessment**

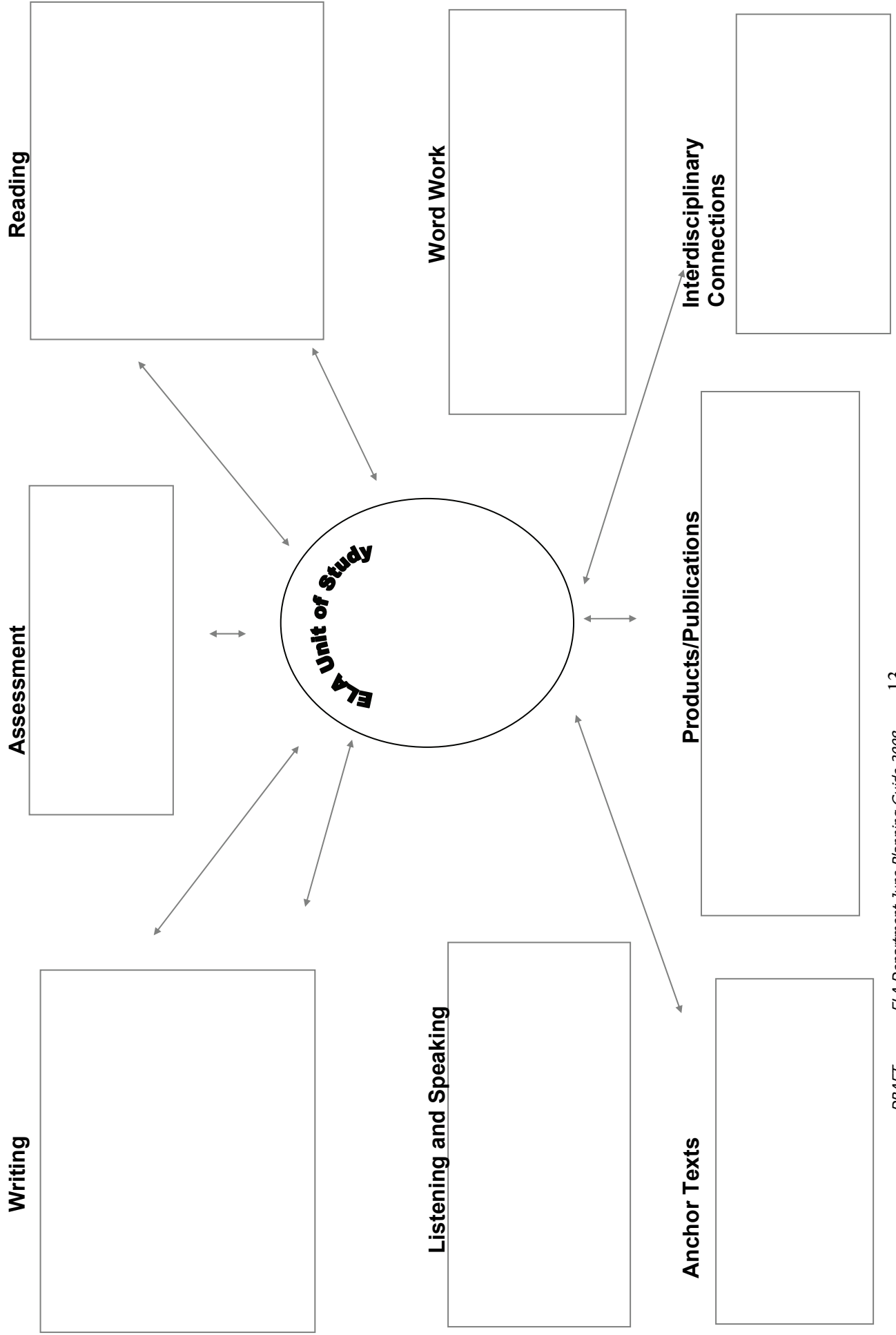
How will you use assessments to make decisions about your teaching before, during and after the unit? What evidence will you use to determine student understanding and growth during and after the unit?

- Projects
- Publications
- Observations
- Work samples
- Student conferences
- Student self-assessments and reflections
- Student notebooks



Planning Templates

BRAINSTORM



Compiling Mapping and Unit Resources

For the Teacher Professional References and Resources	For the Students Literature and other essential texts	Other Classroom Materials	Web Sites & Technology Supports

ELA Unit Planning Guide

Grade:
Unit:

Essential Question:



Core Vocabulary:

Focus Questions



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Student Outcomes (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Word Work)

Think about what you want the students to know and be able to do by the end of this unit.

Anchor Texts/Resources

Planning Template

Essential Question: _____

What are the focus or guiding questions?	Possible mini-lessons and Teaching Points	What resources will you need? Books? Websites? Short Texts? Materials?	What <i>specific</i> literacy skills will you focus on? <i>What specific strategies will you focus on?</i> What critical thinking skills are being integrated?	How will you integrate speaking, listening and viewing? How might you integrate social studies, science, math and the arts?	How will you differentiate this lesson/activity to meet the needs of a range of learners?	How will the students exhibit their understanding or mastery of this skill//strategy/content?

Weekly Planning Template

Essential Question: _____

Use this planning guide to sequence and review lessons you outlined.

	Mini-lesson	Mini-lesson	Mini-lesson	Mini-lesson	Mini-lesson
Week _____ Focus Question:					
Week _____ Focus Question:					
Week _____ Focus Question:					
Week _____ Focus Question:					
Week _____ Focus Question:					

[**Note:** Based upon the needs of your students and the content you are covering, some units of study may be longer than others.]

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Active Literacy across the Curriculum: Strategies for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening by Heidi Hayes Jacobs
Eye on Education, 2006.

Building Academic Vocabulary: Teacher's Manual by Robert J. Marzano and Debra J. Pickering
ASCD, 2005.

Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement: Research on What Works in Schools by Robert J. Marzano
ASCD, 2004.

Content Area Literacy Instruction for the Elementary Grades by Donna E. Alvermann, Jeanne Swafford, and M. Kristina Montero
Allyn & Bacon, 2003.

Content Reading and Literacy: Succeeding in Today's Diverse Classrooms (4th Edition) by Donna E. Alvermann and Stephen F. Phelps
Allyn & Bacon, 2004.

Educative Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance by Grant Wiggins
Jossey Bass Education Series, 1998.

A Guide to Curriculum Mapping: Planning, Implementing, and Sustaining the Process by Janet A. Hale
Corwin Press, 2007.

How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms (2nd Edition) by Carol Ann Tomlinson
ASCD, 2004.

Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design (Connecting Content and Kids) by Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe
ASCD, 2006.

Mapping the Big Picture: Integrating Curriculum & Assessment K-12
by Heidi Hayes Jacobs
ASCD, 1997.

Reading for Information in Elementary School: Content Literacy Strategies to Build Comprehension by Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher
Prentice Hall, 2006.

Tools for Teaching Content Literacy by Janet Allen
Stenhouse, 2004.

Understanding by Design, Expanded 2nd Edition by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe
Prentice Hall, 2005.



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