

Final Transcript – Ottawa Clip P2

UNPACKING THE CURRICULUM

Narrator: Designing tasks that effectively provide students an opportunity to show what they are learning requires teachers to understand the connections between the knowledge and skills in the curriculum, and the categories and criteria in the achievement chart. The process of designing effective tasks that are derived from the curriculum and appropriately connected with the achievement chart may appear to be sequential, but in reality the process is much more organic. While teachers are encouraged to begin with the curriculum expectations, they may be thinking about possibilities for the tasks, as well as considering how the expectations addressed in the task connect to the achievement chart, all at the same time. With each consideration of the curriculum and the achievement chart, the alignment between the elements is refined, and the task becomes more effective.

Narrator: Two teachers plan a cross-curricular unit of learning from the Mathematics and Science & Technology curricula for Grade One.

Stephanie: So for the unit of geometry, they have to look at two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional figures. And that fits in really well with the science of materials and structures - to have the knowledge of the 3D figures in order to build a safe and effective structure. So do you want to connect them?

Lisa: Perfect. Sure. So let's look at the overall expectations and see how they compare to the expectations for the science unit. So, our first one is identify common 2D shapes and three-dimensional figures, and sort and classify them by their attributes. So if we look at the overall expectations for the structures and materials unit, is there something that we can connect?

Stephanie: The second overall expectation of the science is to investigate structures that are built for a specific purpose, to see how their design and the materials suit the purpose. So we can also look at having them explore how a shape helps with the purpose of a structure. Any structure, not just a building, but—

Lisa: Absolutely. And the second overall expectation here is composing and decomposing common 2D shapes and 3D figures. So there's an element of building the shapes as well as building the structures. So they're going to need to know how to construct the shapes if they're going to be including those shapes in their structures. So there's a nice connection too. So they're going to be learning about 2D shapes, 3D shapes, and we're hoping to transfer that knowledge to building structures and understanding that 2D shapes and 3D shapes make up so many different objects in structures and things in our environment.

Narrator: Having identified the learning in the overall expectations, the teachers next examine the specific expectations, paying particular attention to the verbs, which give insight into the knowledge and skills students are expected to develop and demonstrate.

Stephanie: So what do they need to know to get there? If we go through the specific expectations in the geometry curriculum, we would have—they need to identify and describe the common 2D shapes and 3D figures. They need to have practice with tracing and identifying the 2D shapes of the 3D figures. They would have to have practice with composing and decomposing those shapes with a variety of materials. And we have the idea of the comparing the shapes, a 2D shape and a 3D shape, or even comparing and sorting two different 3D figures, that way.

Lisa: Excellent.

Stephanie: So we should take the learning goals from the math and the science since they need both for the one cumulative task.

Lisa: So why don't we use the overall expectations to help us create some learning goals.

Stephanie: And as I'm looking here through the specific expectations, many of them lend themselves very well to creating success criteria for our learning goals.

Narrator: Carefully examining the knowledge and skills identified in the curriculum expectations is one step in the process of effective task design. Teachers use this information as they consider how to structure the tasks that students will do to learn, and to demonstrate their learning.