

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

1e, 1a - Using Backwards Design:

Example One:

Unit of Study: [Korea – Conflict and Cooperation Unit](#) (*I designed this unit for the New England Regional Conference Social Studies in Sturbridge this year.*)

This unit uses the ASFMS Social Studies Department Essential Question: How has conflict and cooperation shaped human history? Working backwards, the unit incorporates much of the content I learned and materials I gathered on my study tours to Korea. I have some editing to do still and have not implemented it with the students yet. I plan to cover this in the East Asia Unit this spring.

Example Two:

Unit of Study: [Silk Road – Yesterday & Today Unit](#) (I designed this unit for the New England Regional Conference Social Studies in Boston last year.)

This unit uses the ASFMS Social Studies Department Essential Question: How has the quest for resources shaped human history? This unit also incorporates backward design. Ultimately, I'm working to create an in-depth unit for each one of our Essential Questions. It has helped the department and students understand how to go about answering these complicated questions. Other department members have implemented this unit as well and liked it.

*All of our curriculum and that of which I use is shaped around these questions using backwards design.

1a - Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment to GSE's:

Example One:

[ASFMS Social Studies Curriculum Maps](#) (Currently being revised to include Common Assessments)

As a department, we have aligned our essential questions and content units to the RI Civics GSE's and the National History Standards. I believe more work needs to be done here, but we are working on common assessments and I'd like to wait until we solidify these prior to editing the Curriculum Maps (We might be able to eliminate lessons given the assessments). Each unit focuses on a few Essential Questions, yet covers all of them. As a department, we worked to ensure that all questions are covered extensively.

Example Two:

[ASFMS Common Assessment: Why do people live the way they do?](#)

(Has not been piloted yet)

I created this with Charlie Blanchette. It is designed to be used in most of the units of study, but not specifically to any one time period or region of study. The department agreed that this strategy or type of assessment was most appropriate for our curriculum here. RIDE has a few assessments like this as well and we used their templates as protocol. It has been aligned to our Essential Questions, the RI GSE's and National History Standards.

Domain 2: Instruction

2a - Modeling Student Expectations:

Example One:

Department Site: [Current Events](#) (Department assignment designed/alterd by Justin Howman) [Student Exemplar](#) (#2 – My student)

The Social Studies Department adopted these formats and I posted an excellent student example for students to follow. Justin Howman created the graphic organizer, modified from one we had been using in the past individually – He is very talented in creating organizers such as these). Our overarching question is “How does understanding the past help us to understand the present?” Current events are critical to our curriculum and the students have responded well to this as indicated by the exemplar online.

Example Two:

Lesson – [Assembling an Archeological Team Student Exemplar](#) (See bottom of lesson page)

I have been consistently working to scan in exemplary student work for students and parents to view and model. While I have many posted now, eventually, I should have examples for all.

2c, 2h - Ability to Actively Engage Students:

Evidenced in evaluated lesson? Not sure how to demonstrate this in a document. We should submit video evidence eventually? Online Evidence: I have added many different mediums for learning in the lessons posted online. For example, I do offer online streaming video, supplemental links, images, maps, etc. This differentiation works to actively engage student interest.

2a, 2b - Use of Effective Questioning Strategies:

Example One:

Thematic Question Assignment: What [role has the Yangtze River played in shaping Chinese history and development?](#) (All questioning revolves around this Essential Question)

I presented this unit at a NERC conference (2008). The whole unit is governed by the Essential Question: Why do people live and move where they do? - The role of geography in shaping history. Students use various media collected from the China study tour I went on in 2006 to answer this question and sub-

questions. If you browse through the site, the sub-essential questions work to guide them toward the larger essential question.

Example Two:

[Sumerian Achievement Lesson](#): Writing Prompt on (see bottom of lesson page) whether U.S. is a civilization or not based upon the characteristics learned.

At the end of this lesson, students are questioned on the fourth level of Webb's Depth of Knowledge asking them to synthesize and critique the U.S. In this way, the students may use their knowledge of the U.S. History learned in 6th grade and apply it to 7th grade World History curriculum.

2b, 2c - Facilitating Student Dominated Discussions:**Example One:**

Lesson: [Discovering How Sumerian City-States Emerged](#) (See [Teacher Resources Link](#) (Username: socialstudies / Password: topsecret) for more detail on structure of lesson)

Student groups debate and conclude in group discussions on their theories, then, each group shares out to the rest of the class, debating as a whole class discussion. Many of the History Alive! lessons offer these scenarios or are easily tweaked to promote student dominated discussions. In this way, students are provided with various artifacts, research, and evidence and they work as a group, coming to a conclusion or deducing a possible historical explanation. Cooperative Literacy grouping facilitates and is critical to the success of this process.

Example Two:

Lesson: [Alexander the Great – Hero or Villain?](#) (See [Teacher Resources Link](#) for details of class discussion and debate)

Students take sides in this debate defending or prosecuting Alexander using the information given. The students derive the questions and points in this debate. The students run this debate, using evidence derived from the texts given to them and come up with an argument(s) facilitating Accountable Talk. I posted a [PD video online of Courtney](#) conducting this lesson. Most of us in the Department, conduct this lesson in this fashion.

2 - Integration of Literacy Strategies Across Content Areas:

Example One:

Assignment – [Virtual Tour of Catal Hoyuk](#) (Students will have previously completed the lesson: [Assembling an Archeological Team](#). Reading comprehension with visual supplements)

Students read and view content online in addition to the text provided about the archeological site. They use a graphic organizers and word processing on comprehension questions, citing evidence from the text.) This is a reading comprehension lesson, but with added media, such as 360 degree virtual tours of the dig site to provide visual supplements. There's even some audio that helps with correct pronunciation. The students are very engaged given its different approach to reading comprehension.

Example Two:

Assignment – [Creating Illustrated Journals About Egyptian Daily Life](#) (Use of graphic organizers, paraphrasing, and synthesizing text)

Student reads informational text, organizes information/paraphrases in the graphic organizer. The students peer edit with a partner. Then the students synthesize their research in an illustrated journal assignment. I model all components with the students then gradually release them into the tasks. Student exemplars are provided as well.

*All lessons incorporate teacher modeling/reading text out loud and gradual release.

2b, 2f - Allowing All Students to Have a Voice:

Example One:

Cooperative Literacy - [Point Sheet](#)

Much of this category would have to be evaluated in the classroom, but I do incorporate Cooperative Literacy grouping in all classes. Different students or members of each group have roles, but are also given different opportunities to present out or conduct a task. In this way all students are able to voice their opinions and are backed up by their groups as well.

Example Two:

[Student Led Conferencing](#)

My team holds Student Led Conferences each year to provide students with the opportunity to voice their concerns and accomplishments to their parents and teachers. This process is very effective in building a partnership between the student, parent, and teacher. The student, parent, and teacher create a plan and all sign off on it, agreeing to support it in a specific way.

2d, 2e - Providing Specific Feedback, Collectively and Individually:

Example One:

[Student Work Example](#) (From the Early Humans Unit Lesson – [Changes in Daily Life: Paleolithic to Neolithic](#))

Rubrics ([Graphic Organizer Rubric](#), Reading [Comprehension Questions Rubric](#))

This is a student's average class work. This is normal feedback on the assignment I give back to them on paper. I also work with each student as I move around the room to edit their work as it is ongoing. In addition, I conference a couple of times a trimester with each student to review their grades and progress – usually right before Progress Reports and Report Cards go home. In this way each of them has an opportunity to justify their work and argue a grade that I have given. They frequently request conferences during lunch when there is a grade in question or revision they need help on.

Example Two:

[Gradebook Online](#) (Username: progress / Password: successful)

All student grades are posted on my class website. Each student is given a number and the username and password. I post at least once per week (usually more though). All parents are informed and provided access as well. I consistently get parent emails and student emails about missing work or questions on grades. This allows my students to know where they stand in my class at all times.

2e, 2g - Using Formative Assessment to Adjust Instruction:

Example One:

Lesson – [Creating a Mandala of Hindu Beliefs](#) (See Graphic Organizer: Basic Hindu Beliefs Chart on the lesson page.)

Students are to create their own mandala, but first they have to research Hindu beliefs using the graphic organizer. It is modeled first then gradually released to the students. I collect the graphic organizer prior to the next part of the lesson, assessing that they truly understand the concepts needed for the next part. In this case, I assess their progress and make sure they are ready to begin the next part of the lesson.

Example Two:

Lesson – [Creating Illustrated Relief Maps of China](#) (See directions and stages)

After using Google Earth and other maps of China, students work in groups to complete their maps. I have them call to me as a group after each elevation level is placed on their maps. In this way, I can quiz them with questions and measure their progress and understanding as the activity progresses. This assessment is not graded. The critical thinking questions that follow are graded and students have to use the content covered in the mapping activity.

In all of the lessons I cover, I use formative assessment. At times, I have students simply summarize what we've covered that class period. Most of the time, I am able to view student work to assess their progress or understanding of what we are covering each day, so that I can modify how I approach the next topic/concept the following day.

2c, 2f - Writing in All Content Areas:

Example One:

Quote Sandwich Activity - [Neolithic Social Organization: Hierarchical or Egalitarian?](#) (Uses ELA graphic organizer and [rubric](#) – View the student exemplar explained at bottom of lesson page)

I have worked with Mary Lou Bettez to utilize the ELA's Quote Sandwich strategy in covering topics in World History. The lesson above was the first one I did with my students this year. They had already completed a quote sandwich in ELA class on literature, so it was a smooth transition to informational text.

Example Two:

Persuasive Essay Unit – [Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#) (See the persuasive graphic organizers at bottom of the project web page.)

I worked with Mary Lou Bettez so that students could go through the persuasive writing process using World History content. We created graphic organizers to support this process and use the ELA rubric as well.

Domain Three: Professional Responsibilities

3d - Integration of Professional Development:

Example One:

[Five College Center for East Asian Studies Study Tours and Seminars](#) (This site only covers the latest study tour I went on.)

I have used the content and experiences I've received from the winter seminar, weekend orientations and disseminations, etc. in my classroom and on the department website. I have designed instructional units of study, supplemented department lessons, and have presented to the department and faculty on Asia. (See [Presentations](#), [Example Unit of Study](#))

Example Two:

[Social Studies Professional Development Website](#)

I created this website to promote the understanding and use of various topics/strategies we've covered in our Department meetings. While I have not published many videos (I still need to edit, get more footage, etc.), this has worked to offer teachers the ability to review PD discussions and implement them in their own classrooms. I have learned much from my colleagues and continue to experiment in my own classroom.

3b - Effective Communication with Families:

Example One:

[Class Website](#) and [School Website](#)

I consistently update (almost daily) the content on my class and school website so that families may have access to school events, curriculum, and helpful content online. Over 95% of the families on my team have Internet access at home, and those that don't have access via the library and at the parents' workplace. In addition, I also email and call parents frequently about assignments, grades, positive feedback, etc. (See [Parent Contact Log](#))

Example Two:

[World History Curriculum Online](#)

Currently, every single unit of study, including supplemental links, videos, and other content are now available online. This took an unbelievable amount of time, but is very useful to parents and students at home, given they can access the content, print out handouts, and see what has been introduced in the classroom at school.

3d - Evidence of Life-Long Learning:

Example One:

Reading to Learn

When I'm not working on the computer for school, I'm reading texts on history, current events, educational policy, educational philosophy, etc. Some of the books I've read within the past year include: [Korea's Place in the Sun](#) by Bruce Cumings, [The Passion of the Western Mind](#) by Richard Tarnas, [The Long Walk: The True Story of a Trek to Freedom](#) by Slavomir Rawics, [China Shakes the World](#) by James Kynge, [Tough Liberal: Albert Shanker](#) by Richard D. Kahlenberg, [Stones to Schools](#) by Greg Mortenson, etc. I also read the Twilight series given that many of my students have or are reading them. Not the most educating experience, but it helps me connect to them on different levels.

Example Two:

[Web Design Tutorials](#)

Everything I know and have done, I've taught myself through experimenting, problem solving, and reading content online. While I do spend an inordinate amount of time keeping abreast of technology, I have worked hard to make it accessible to all faculty. This task hasn't been easy, but I believe it has made our school more successful.

3c - Active School Community Member Volunteering:

Example One:

School Improvement Action Team – Family Engagement Member (Example work: [Three for Me Website](#), [PTSA Workshop Website](#))

I have been a member of this Action Team since its inception at this school. I have also served on the School Improvement Team since I've been at the Middle School. As part of this Action Team, I have created the Three for Me website and have updated when the Administration has created new content and policy. In addition, I've created the PTSA Workshop website so that all parents have access to the PowerPoints and presentation content provided during the PTSA meetings. Furthermore, I've worked to help the PTSA member who takes over their website, so that they can effectively post content related to this organization.

Example Two:

Technology Support

You need to ask a sample of teachers in this building as to how I've helped them with technology, like video editing, setting up a computer (personal laptops, especially), web design, etc. Not a day goes by without a question or task. Much of my time is spent helping others do their job better.

3e - Building Positive Relationships with Students:

Example One:

Teacher/Student Lunches

Almost every day I have many students join me for lunch in my room. They come in for extra help, to socialize with their friends and me, to work on supplemental projects like the Orientation Video, etc. I find that providing this time for students builds positive and stronger relationships with my students. I also get to see them in a different persona. I enjoy this time immensely.

Example Two:

My Audio-Visual Club (Impromptu)

Given my affinity for technology, I have worked to include and teach various students who want to learn about web design, video editing and production, digital photography and more. The students have worked to create school sports websites (ex: [Girls' Basketball Site](#)), [Orientation Videos](#), a [Digital Yearbook](#), web slideshows, and more. As I learn more, I'll teach them to do more. Each year, the final products they produce become more refined.

3a - Reflection on Teaching Practices:

Focus Questions:

1. In review of the Literacy Walk Report observations and recommendations, reflect on your efforts to implement a recommendation(s). Be specific regarding your progress and your continued efforts.

Literacy Walk Report:

Teachers engage students in purposeful, social interaction (Accountable Talk) to challenge students to think critically and extend their learning – The team I work with has embraced Accountable Talk, so it has made my job easier in my classroom. Our students consistently use the terminology and interact with one another in class and group discussions using Accountable Talk. As the year progresses, it becomes easier to allow these thoughtful exchanges between students as they govern their verbal exchanges using this protocol. By fostering these interactions with thoughtful questions and lesson formats, my students use Accountable Talk on a daily basis. The most challenging task for me is to persuade/encourage the more reticent students to engage in Accountable Talk more frequently. Fortunately, I see written evidence of this in their work when they use Accountable Talk in journal prompt answers, citing student comments and discussion content. I need to use more strategies like this to foster these skills in these introverted students.

Use of questioning strategies enhance student engagement and critical thinking – It has been immensely helpful that my Department has created Essential Questions that guide all of our instruction. This has fostered the continuous use of thought provoking questions in my classroom. For example, each lesson I conduct with my students focuses on one or two of these Essential Questions, which are higher level questions. This has helped me to encourage students to think critically and synthesize the content in the World History curriculum by answering these higher level questions. On the other hand, I do frequently have to remind myself to provide more wait time for students to respond to complicated questions. More specifically, I work to foster responses from the more reserved students by coaxing them to respond in class orally and in writing.

Teachers use formative assessment and reference tools to support student learning at all levels – Most of the formative assessment used in my classroom is informally done through class and group questioning. As we move through the lesson, it is easy to ask questions of a sample of students to gauge where they are in their understanding. In addition, by walking around and witnessing group work and group discussions, it becomes evident whether students are understanding the concepts covered in the lesson. More specifically, History Alive! lessons frequently use various forms of graphic organizers that work to help students research information. The student responses on these organizers are very helpful in determining the student progress and knowledge.

Daily lesson structure with evidence of gradual release of responsibility – The workshop model has been helpful to me in the way I design the larger lessons within the World History curriculum. It has forced me to divide these lessons into manageable sections, so that students can progress more successfully. Where I have problems, is working to shorten the beginning or modeling section of this model and progress to the gradual release stage. Many times, I find that there are too many student questions or it is difficult to introduce a concept or content piece within the time frame allocated in a 60-minute lesson. While I have gotten better at this over time, I still need to perfect this.

2. How would you describe your interactions with the families of the students you teach? How do you effectively communicate with families on a regular basis to keep them informed of student progress and team/school events? What opportunities have you created for parent volunteers in your classroom and/or on your team? Please support it with evidence (i.e. Flyers, emails, invitations, etc.) –

I believe that there needs to be a partnership between the student, parent(s), and teacher in order to effectively educate a child. To foster this partnership, I make all I do in school with my students as transparent as possible. For example, I post the [Weekly Agenda](#) on my [class website](#), which includes links to the assignments I'm covering (all handouts, videos, etc. included) and their respective due dates. In addition, all grades are online as well, so that each parent may see their child's progress. To foster consistent communication, I regularly email and call parents for positive and negative reasons ([Parent Contact Log](#)), keeping them abreast of issues involving their children. My weakness though is figuring out ways to entice parents to help out in regular classroom activities. On the other hand, my team has successfully included many of our parents in portfolio breakfasts, [student led conferences](#), [Open House](#), and field trips.

3. How have you strategically planned to align your advisory program with the program goals outlined by the advisory committee? As a result, what specific activity(s) have you found to be successful? What recommendations do you have for the program?

Currently, my team is preparing for the Exchange City field trip in June. Much of our advisory is dedicated to this activity. This is the second time around, so we have learned how to adapt this program, eliminating some lessons and adding on to others. Not only have my students learned much about economics, they have also learned much about creating a viable community and how to maintain it. Prior to this we used time in Advisory to prepare for Student Led Conferences. The students reflected on their portfolios of work and designed goals to work towards in the future. Since the beginning of the year, our team worked with the FISH program (endorsed by the Advisory Committee), created mission statements, team rules and norms, learned about bullying, etc. As a culminating event of the FISH unit, my students created videos that told a story about each of the facets of the program's philosophy. More importantly, I've taken time in each Advisory class to "check in" with students, listen to their pressing issues, share problems they face, and offer advice or a listening ear.

My main recommendation for the Advisory Committee is to make sure we don't prescribe one program for all teams and grade levels. I believe each teacher and team have their own style of conducting Advisory and certain programs or lessons work better with different teachers. If the committee works to keep a large arsenal of lessons and units available for teachers to choose from, then they have done their job successfully. Obviously, we need to consider redundancy and work to agree on what each grade has access to.