



Curriculum Planning Guide

KIPP King's Mission:

At KIPP King Collegiate we prepare our students to live inspired and ethical lives by developing within them extraordinary academic skills, a life-long passion for learning, and the resolve to change their own lives and the world around them through acts of excellence, justice, wisdom, humanity, and courage.

The school's mission should be at the core of each step of our curriculum planning and design process. Namely, the scope and sequence of the curriculum should be rooted in placing our students on a college preparatory track, as well as inspiring in them a passion for learning. Our long-term and daily plans should also incorporate, when appropriate, our school virtues of justice, wisdom, humanity, and courage.

The 2009-2010 School Year:

This year at KIPP King we will incorporate several philosophical shifts in how we approach teaching and learning. As a result of our experience over the first two years we have recognized the strengths and weaknesses of certain approaches. This year we will center our development focus on certain “Universal Truths” of teaching that we will all strive to uphold in order to maximize student growth and achievement. These Universal Truths are elements of good teaching that ALL strong teachers exhibit whether in planning or instruction. As professionals we will consider how well we uphold these Universal Truths and engage in conversation about areas of growth throughout the year.

By focusing on Universal Truths of strong teaching we hope to clearly leave space for teachers to bring their own style, experience, philosophy, and method to their practice. For example, we should all be empowered to choose how we engage and invest students in our lessons, units, and course by using strategies that align with our individual personalities and styles. However, it will be an expectation that we *all* make these attempts to engage and invest our students in learning by attempting to target a variety of learning modalities while teaching.

The following long-term planning guide walks through some helpful elements of curriculum planning and design. The purpose of the curriculum planning guide is to help you plan for the year and to set your own clear expectations about your course goals. At the end of the day, we are all also striving for a common goal: that our students make remarkable growth that will lead them closer to academic and social success in college. While we will undoubtedly make changes over time to our plans, the curriculum development work we do this year will serve as the foundation of our curriculum every year moving forward. Therefore, extensive and thoughtful planning, as well as documentation, is central to establishing a strong foundation for our school.

The KIPP King Curriculum Planning Guide will contain the following:

- I. KIPP King Universal Truths regarding Long-Term Planning and Planning for Assessment
- II. Overview and Guidance on creating a Scope and Sequence
- III. Overview and Guidance on creating a Unit Plan
- IV. Supplementary Resources

“To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you’re going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.”

– Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Long Term Planning Universal Truths

Introduction:

Each teacher brings experience, philosophy, and practice that are unique and valuable. Teachers choose to plan and instruct in ways that fit their style and persona. At the same time, King Teachers must be committed to upholding certain Universal Truths about instruction. These are practices exemplified by all successful teachers regardless of style or method. In this list below, and others to follow, you will find King’s Universal Truths regarding long-term planning and planning for assessment. Keep in mind that these tenets are “truths” of strong teaching rather than specific structures in which one must teach or methods one must use. However, the grandest of all universal teaching truths will be upheld at King: That all strong educators continually strive to improve their practice in order to improve student learning.

CURRICULUM PLANNING:

Overarching Truth: Strong teachers **backwards-plan** their year and units to achieve their **big goal**.

Truth 1: Strong teachers set **big goals** for their students.

Big goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. In other words, this goal should be one in which progress can be quantified, it can be achieved in the course of the year (but is challenging for all students) and all students can articulate the goal and their progress towards it.

Example: All students will achieve 85% mastery of grade level content objectives.

All students will compose a portfolio of 7 art projects with written, graded reflections.

Truth 2: Strong teachers create logical groupings of standards-aligned learning goals into units and long-term plans. Strong teachers also create logical groupings of objectives within a unit.

Strong teachers logically group and clearly organize relevant standards-aligned learning goals into units (coupled with assessments) that build upon one another conceptually and that identify clear, measurable, student-centered, and rigorous objectives to be taught in each unit, creating a long-term plan that leads to achievement of unit goals and year-long academic goals. Not only are unit plans internally logical, but the unit plans’ relation to each other makes intuitive sense, and subsequent units build upon, spiral, and deepen, key learning objectives and goals. . Teacher and students can articulate the purpose behind the over-arching arc of unit plans that make up the long-term plan, which leads students to accomplishing the course’s big goal. The teacher has a clear vision and rationale of when and why particular objectives are taught throughout the entire year.

Truth 3: Strong teachers logically plan the timing and pacing of their long-term and unit planning.

Strong teachers schedule their plans (units from their long term plan, daily objectives from their unit plan) on a calendar ahead of time, allocate time appropriately based on the content to be taught, and plan for contingencies, remediation and enrichment. The long-term plan allocates an appropriate amount of time for each unit, and the units themselves may allow enough time and space for teacher's adjustments to student needs, including time for necessary re-teaching.

Truth 4: Strong teachers carefully consider the relationship of their planning to the larger school community – including being attentive to grade-level, department-level, or school-wide initiatives

Strong teachers effectively tailor plans after engaging deeply with multiple sources, including diagnostic data. Strong teachers also make an effort to align plans at the school level (e.g., across grade levels, across subjects). They draw on other teachers and school leaders to seek guidance through collaborating and communicating. Strong teachers also incorporate grade-level, department-level, or school-wide initiatives. For example, at KIPP King we all strive to incorporate the teaching of critical thinking skills and inquiry, as well as other areas of focus that transcend content area

PLANNING FOR ASSESSMENT:

Overarching Truth: Strong Teachers create and use reliable and varied forms of assessment throughout the year to measure student learning, reflect upon their teaching and student understanding; and, consequently, strengthen their instruction.

Truth 1: Strong teachers use assessments to determine student/class progress and make pacing adjustments in order to reach their big goal and ensure students are progressing.

Strong teachers create and use **diagnostics** that provide detailed information about the extent of readiness of each student, **formative assessments** (as well as lesson assessments) that, when appropriate, scaffold questions to discern the extent of mastery of each learning goal taught, and **summative assessments** that measure mastery of each learning goal taught.

Truth 2: Strong teachers create reliable **formal assessments** that may take multiple forms These assessments are reliable in so far as they align to the objectives that were taught.

Strong teachers use a variety of question forms that align to the same objective (e.g., multiple-choice, short answer, essay, etc.) so that the assessment gives a more accurate picture of what students can and cannot do. Teachers assess students using multiple tools to access and vary the modalities in which students demonstrate mastery/competency of the objectives. Teachers can reference data not only on what objectives individual students have mastered but also on the degree to which the entire class has learned the objectives.

Truth 3: Strong teachers create reliable and efficient **grading** practices and criteria.

Strong teachers use grading systems that are consistent and provide a detailed, increasingly reliable picture of student performance against goals to guide future planning. Strong teachers can accurately articulate what success looks like on assessment items and students in those classrooms

can do the same. Rubrics and/or scoring criteria, when needed, are clearly designed and understandable to students.

Truth 4: Strong teachers develop a system and employ multiple methods for measuring individual student progress.

Strong teachers develop systems that report individual and class progress toward big goals and highlight where individual students need improvement on particular objectives. By looking at student performance results, strong teachers can explain which students need support on which objectives. By doing so, strong teachers also break down objectives to their smallest components in order to give themselves the most information about where exactly students are struggling (or excelling).

Long Term Planning: Advice for Creating a SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

It is often our urge to jump into the daily art of teaching – the perfect lesson, the creative project. However, no matter how beautifully conceived the individual acts are, unless we have determined what our students must learn and the right way for them to learn, we will be shortchanging them from having a unified learning experience. Developing a year-long plan is critical to ensuring that we are the most effective teachers possible.

A **scope and sequence** is simply a layout of your course across the year. This includes the following, among other features you may want to add: **Your course enduring understandings, unit themes/topics, unit timing, incorporated standards, unit enduring understandings and essential questions, and unit assessments.** The scope and sequence need not offer too much fine detail. However, it is a living document that changes over time, and continually guides teachers to pace their courses with the flow of the year.

Elements of a Long-Term Scope and Sequence

I. Enduring Understandings:

- A. What are the key themes, concepts and understandings that link together the individual units of the year in your course?

Generating “Enduring Understandings” can be difficult. Some examples include:

- *History tells the story of oppression in different forms throughout time.*
- *Literature is a mirror of society.*
- *Societies fail or flourish as a result of the will and skill of its leaders.*

Enduring understandings are like the morals of the story. They are the multi-layered, in-depth concepts that your students should unpack from the discrete skills and content that you teach them. You may have one core unifying concept that spans all of your units or perhaps there are two or three themes. Creating enduring understandings that mesh with your passion and style will inevitably help you map out your course on the unit level:

II. Mapping Your Course: Plotting the Scope and Sequence

- A. What units will you teach and how will they be sequenced?

- B. In addition to the required California state standards, what additional curriculum standards are embedded in your course (SAT, National Standards, AP, etc) ?
- C. What are the enduring understandings that students should know for each unit?
- D. Which content knowledge will be incorporated in the teaching of each unit?
- E. How will you know that students have achieved the desired results? What assessment will you use? Are you using a variety of assessments throughout the year?

The row for each unit, including assessment and enduring understandings, will be further developed and

Unit Length	Unit of Study	State Standards	Enduring Understandings	Topics Covered	Product/ Assessment

expanded as you design your unit plans. However, **sequencing your enduring understandings and standards will help you balance your instruction meaningfully.** For many people, it is after the sequencing, moving, deleting and inserting, that writing the course description makes sense. For others, the big picture clearly leads to the detail. The templates attached may help you plan. Also attached you will find a sample complete scope and sequence for reference.

Long-Term Planning: Creating the UNIT PLAN

One helpful and dynamic method of **unit planning** is following a process of “backwards planning.” This method refers to a structured model from a curriculum guide titled *Understanding By Design* (Wiggins and McTighe). Backwards Planning simply asks us to consider what we want our students to know and be able to do at the end of a unit. Then we use that knowledge to create appropriate assessments for those ending points. Lastly, we consider the learning plan and process in order to plan on a daily level.

This method hopes to avoid having instructors plod through a unit without a clear vision of an end point, goals, or assessments. It is unacceptable for teachers to “fly by the seat of their pants” as they teach through units. This does not mean our unit plans will not change as we move through them, or we will not respond to student needs by adapting and modifying. However, we will lay out thoughtful and purposeful plans before a unit begins, despite the changes that will be made later.

Backwards Planning: Three Stages

Stage 1: Identifying Desired Results: What do students need to know?

- Establishing Goals and Standards
- What are your Unit’s Enduring Understandings
- What are your Unit’s Essential Questions
- What Students Will Know and Know How to Do... (Content and Skills)

Stage 2: Determining Acceptable Evidence: What evidence will convince you that your students know what they need to?

- Plan Performance Tasks: Such as projects, presentations, etc.
- Plan Other Assessment Evidence: Such as standardized exams, essays, etc.

Stage 3: Learning Experiences and Instruction: What learning experiences will prepare them with the understandings they need?

- Create Daily Learning Activities and Objectives
- Consider Differentiation that meets the needs of both struggling and high level learners
- Consider Timing/Pacing/The Flow from one day to the next
- Consider the varied learning modalities and learning styles of your students

Additional Components

- Interdisciplinary Connections:
 - This year we will make stronger interdisciplinary planning one focus of our development

(The following pages contain scanned resources from *Understanding By Design* materials that may be helpful in explaining the concepts of “Essential Questions” and “Enduring Understandings.” Also, there are unit plan templates attached that may help you plan. In addition, you will find a sample complete unit plan for reference.)



Essential Questions

(description)

Have no simple “right” answer; they are meant to be argued.

Essential Questions yield inquiry and argument—a variety of plausible (and arguable) responses, not straightforward facts that end the matter. They serve as doorways into focused yet lively inquiry and research. They should *uncover* rather than cover the subject’s controversies, puzzles, and perspectives. They are intended to result in conclusions drawn by the learner, not recited facts. For example, Does art reflect culture or help shape it? Can we look but not see? Why do “seers” see what the rest of us don’t? Does the artist see more clearly or look elsewhere?

Are designed to provoke and sustain student inquiry, while focusing learning and final performances.

Essential Questions work best when they are designed and edited to be thought provoking to students, engaging them in sustained, focused inquiries that culminate in important performance. Such questions often involve the counterintuitive, the visceral, the whimsical, the controversial, the provocative. For example, Is the Internet dangerous for kids? Are censorship and democracy compatible? Does food that is good for you have to taste bad? Why write? Students develop and deepen their understanding of important ideas as they explore these questions.

Often address the conceptual or philosophical foundations of a discipline.

Essential Questions reflect the most historically important issues, problems, and debates in a field of study. For example, Is history inevitably biased? What is a proof? Nature or nurture? By examining such questions, students are engaged in thinking like an expert.

Raise other important questions.

Thought-provoking Essential Questions are naturally generative. They lead to other important questions within, and sometimes across, subject boundaries. For example, In nature, do only the strong survive? leads to What do we mean by “strong”? Are insects strong (since they are survivors)? What does it mean to be psychologically strong? Inquiries into human biology and the physics of physiology also follow.

Naturally and appropriately recur.

The same important questions are asked and asked again throughout one’s learning and in the history of the field. For example, What makes a great book great? Are the Harry Potter novels great books? These questions can be productively examined and reexamined by 1st graders as well as college students. Over time, student responses become more sophisticated, nuanced, well-reasoned and supported as their understandings deepen.

Stimulate vital, ongoing rethinking of big ideas, assumptions, and prior lessons.

Essential questions challenge our unexamined assumptions, the inevitable simplification of our earlier learning, and the arguments we may unthinkingly take for granted. They force us to ask deep questions about the nature, origin, and extent of our understanding. For example, In light of fractions, place value, irrationals, and negative square roots—what is a number? Is it “democratic” to have an electoral college? What IS a friend? Can the enemy of my enemy be my friend? What is a story, if a story has no clear plot or moral? Is history more of a story than a science? What are the implications for studying history, if so?

Essential Questions—Samples**Arithmetic (numeration)**

- What is a number? Why do we have numbers? What if we didn't have numbers?
- Can everything be quantified?

Arts (visual and performing)

- Where do artists get their ideas?
- How does art reflect, as well as shape, culture?

Culinary Arts

- When is it ok to deviate from the recipe?
- What makes a safe kitchen?

Dance

- How and what can we communicate through the language of dance?
- In what ways can motion evoke emotion?

Economics

- What determines value?
- Can macroeconomics inform microeconomics (and vice versa)?

Foreign Language

- What distinguishes a fluent foreigner from a native speaker?
- What can we learn about our own language and culture from studying another?

Geography

- What makes places unique and different?
- How does where we live influence how we live?

Government

- Who should decide?
- How should we balance the rights of individuals with the common good?

Health

- What is healthful living?
- How can a diet be healthy for one person and not another?

Appendix G

Essential Questions—Samples (continued)

Templates

Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

Peer review

Exercises

Process sheets

Glossary

History

- Whose story is it? Is history the story told by the winners?
- What can we learn from the past?

Literature

- What makes a great book?
- Can fiction reveal truth? Should a story teach you something?

Mathematics

- When is the “correct” answer not the best solution?
- What are the limits of mathematical representation and modeling?

Music

- How are sounds and silence organized in various musical forms?
- What roles does music play in the world?

Physical Education and Athletics

- Who is a winner?
- Is pain necessary for progress in athletics? (“No pain, no gain”)

Reading and Language Arts

- What makes a great story?
- How do you read between the lines?
- Why do we punctuate? What if we didn’t have punctuation marks?

Science

- To what extent are science and common sense related?
- How are “form” and “function” related in biology?

Technology

- In what ways can technology enhance expression and communication? In what ways might technology hinder it?
- What are the pros and cons of technological progress?

Writing

- Why write?
- How do effective writers hook and hold their readers?
- What is a complete thought?

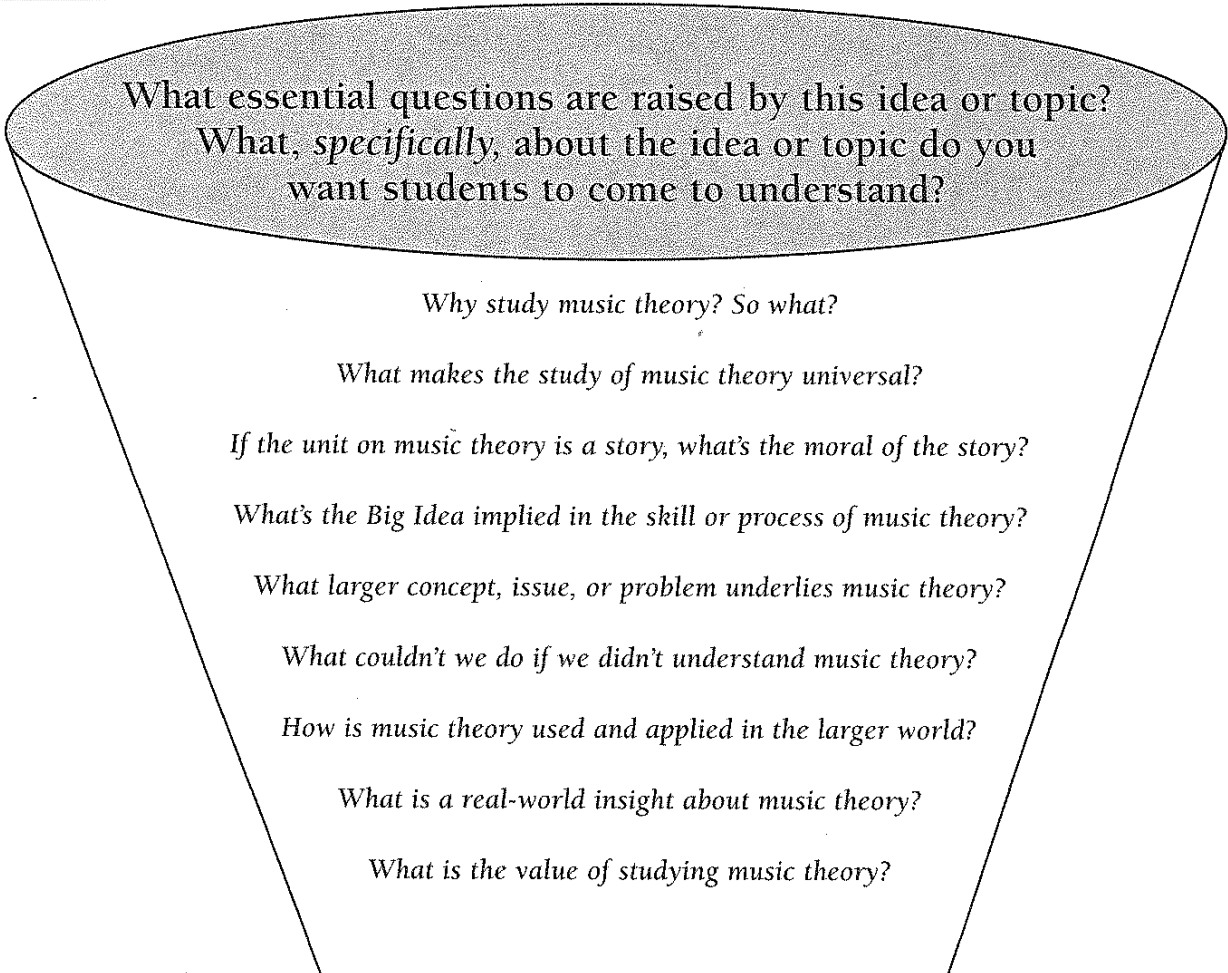
Appendix H

Identifying Essential Questions and Understandings Music

Use one or more of the following questions to filter topics or big ideas to identify possible essential questions and desired understandings.

Topics and Big Ideas:

Music Theory



Essential Questions:

- What makes music engaging?
- How does music convey feeling and evoke emotion?



Understandings:

- Carefully placed intervals of silence make music more dramatic.
- Surprises within familiar melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and progressions are at the heart of creativity in music.



Templates
 Stage 1
 Stage 2
 Stage 3
 Peer review
 Exercises
 Process sheets
 Glossary

Identifying Essential Questions and Understandings

Design Tool with Prompts

Use one or more of the following questions to filter topics or big ideas to identify possible essential questions and desired understandings.

Topics and Big Ideas:

What essential questions are raised by this idea or topic?
What, specifically, about the idea or topic do you want students to come to understand?

Why study _____? So what?

What makes the study of _____ universal?

If the unit on _____ is a story, what's the moral of the story?

What's the Big Idea implied in the skill or process of _____?

What larger concept, issue, or problem underlies _____?

What couldn't we do if we didn't understand _____?

How is _____ used and applied in the larger world?

What is a real-world insight about _____?

What is the value of studying _____?

Essential Questions:

Q

Understandings:

U

An Enduring Understanding . . .

(description)



Involves the Big Ideas that give meaning and importance to facts.

Enduring understandings are made up of the concepts, principles, and theories that weave many facts into revealing and useful patterns. They involve the (few) organizing priority ideas that enable us to make sense of past lessons, conduct current inquiry, and create new knowledge.

Can transfer to other topics, fields, and adult life.

Such understandings endure in that they enable us to make vital and informative connections in our learning—as students and as adults. For example, the idea that “might does not make right” applies to both playground disputes and international diplomacy.

Is usually not obvious, often counterintuitive, and easily misunderstood.

An understanding is an inference, not a fact. It is an insight derived from inquiry. Key understandings in intellectual fields (e.g., in physics: *Objects remain in motion at a constant velocity if no force acts on them*) often violate common sense and conventional wisdom. They are thus often prone to misunderstanding by students. These understandings therefore cannot be covered; they must be uncovered.

May provide a conceptual foundation for basic skills.

Though skill-based teaching in mathematics, foreign language, and physical education does not seem to deal with “understandings” in most units, all skills derive their value from the strategic principles that help us know when and how to use the skill. The understandings also justify the use of a skill (e.g., the student who can explain why you should use a bent-arm pull in swimming freestyle) and enable the student to extend the use of the skill to new situations (e.g., the use of bent-arm pull in backstroke).

Is deliberately framed as a generalization—the “moral of the story.”

An understanding is a generalization derived from inquiry. It is the specific insight that should be inferred from study of the topic (not just the stating of the topic)—what we want the student leaving the study to realize. Note: The enduring understanding of a unit might be that there is no single agreed-upon understanding, or that people disagree about how the issues, facts, text should be understood.