

Preparing Your Unit of Study

A unit of study is a particular way of organizing for instruction, which seeks to integrate as many of the subject areas in the curriculum as advisable. Many teachers use thematic teaching units as the core of their curriculum, matching activities to the school district's curriculum guides. In other classrooms units are designed as means of expanding and enriching concepts, especially in social studies or science. By this point in your professional development, you have designed a variety of units and should have been exposed (through field experience) to the different classroom models. If you have any questions regarding unit development you should speak with your supervisor and take time to refer back to class notes and textbooks from previous courses.

Any unit being planned for your assignment should include interactive materials and activities. In some classrooms the materials will span every curriculum area, with game or material on many shelves. In others the material may be limited to learning centers. This may be determined by both teacher philosophy and available physical space. You may be asked to work on the development of numerous units in your student teaching experience, but only one must be written up for submission to your university supervisor.

The written unit should provide the following information:

1. A cover sheet, which provides the title and general purpose, as well as the estimated duration.
2. A list of broad learning goals for the unit, as well as curricular areas spanned. Specific objectives will be detailed in lesson plans.
3. A section which describes the materials, learning centers, and activities that will be used or take place. Technology usage may be included here.
4. A briefly annotated bibliography that lists books and resource materials.
5. A calendar which provides objectives for each lesson and materials (such as borrowed videos, props, or CD5) that will be needed on the particular day, homework assignments, tests or cooperative learning projects.
6. An evaluation section that describes planned assessment techniques.
7. A self-evaluation of the unit from your perspective.

After you and your cooperating teacher have decided on the timetable for your unit, you and your supervisor will be able to determine submission dates for your written unit.