

Curriculum Design at a Glance

SOME DEFINITIONS

Curriculum—comes from a Latin root *currere*, meaning “racecourse” or “the course to be run.”

- what schools teach.
- a specific educational activity planned for a particular student at a particular point in time.
- all of the experiences the child has in school.
- what is taught to students; both intended and unintended information, skills, and attitudes.
- the standardized ground covered by students in their race toward the finish line.
- a plan for the education of learners.
- a field of study.
- a written plan which guides instruction.

Instruction—the action context within which formal teaching and learning behaviors take place.

- *delivery* of the curriculum to students by teaching agents.

Learning—a relatively permanent change in observable behavior which occurs as a result of reinforced practice (behavioral view).

- a change in one’s mental structures that allows for the expression of changes in behavior (cognitive view).

KEY QUESTIONS IN CURRICULUM DESIGN

Ralph Tyler suggests that curriculum development and evaluation centers around 4 key questions:

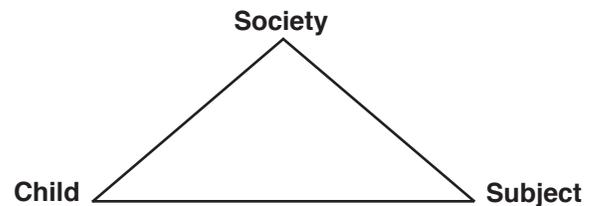
1. What educational purposes should the program seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

The most crucial step in this process the first since all the others proceed from and wait upon the statement of objectives.

If we are to study an educational program systematically and intelligently we must first be sure as to the educational objectives aimed at.

• **Ralph Tyler**

THREE CURRICULUM ORIENTATIONS



Society-Centered

1. Schools are seen as a social mechanism whereby the cultural heritage can be passed on.
2. Curriculum is seen as a vehicle for meeting social needs.
3. Examples in Art Education—Walter Smith’s Massachusetts Schools (1870s), The Owatonna Art Education Project (1930s).

Subject-Centered

1. Emphasis is placed upon the integrity of the subject matter, its uses in human experience and understanding and its intrinsic value.
2. The teacher is to emphasize the study of art for its own sake; he/she is to help the students learn to see and appreciate the work of art not primarily because it will be socially useful for him/her to do so, but because great products of the human mind and spirit are the proper objects for educational attention.
3. Examples in Art Education—Picture Study Movement (early 1900s), Disciplined-Centered Movement of the (1960s-90s).

Child-Centered

1. Educational programs are to be used to unlock the potential that each child possesses.
2. Educational content is instrumental to self-actualization.
3. The first responsibility of the teacher is to know the child well enough to help him/her develop his/her own interest and aptitudes.
4. Examples in Art Education—Progressive Education Movement (1920s-30s), Lowenfeld’s curriculum model (1940s-80s).

TYPES OF CURRICULUM

Explicit Curriculum – What the school teaches that is publicly stated in curriculum documents (e.g., reading, writing, social studies, etc.,)

Implicit Curriculum – The set of expectations taught that are often more powerful and long-lasting than what is intentionally taught (e.g., compliant behavior, competitiveness, etc.,)

Null Curriculum – What is neglected or absent from the curriculum through choice or emphasis.

A. **Intent** – What are the desired outcomes of the art curriculum? (K-6) (K-12) (Drawing)

1. **Aims** – Statements that describe expected life outcomes or long-range intentions of the program. What do you hope that your students when they become adults will know, value and/or be able do as a result of having spent x-number of years in art classes with you? Aims are generally not measurable.

- For example, do you expect your students to become *consumers* of art or *producers* of art?
- Do you expect your students to be able to talk about Art? To produce art during their leisure time? To earn a livelihood at making art?
- Do you expect your students to be able to make aesthetic decisions about *all* art forms or “fine art” forms only?

2. **Goals** – Statements that describe intermediate outcomes of the program. What are the expected outcomes at each grade level in the art curriculum? At the end of a unit? How do these goals relate to your overall aims and objectives? A goal can usually be measured to the extent of deciding if it is met or if one goal is met better than another.

- For example, what do you expect first grade students to know and be able to do before they reach the second grade?
- What do you expect students to know, value and be able to do as a result of a painting unit How do these goals relate to your goals for the year? To your aims for the art program? To your lesson objectives?

3. **Objectives** – Statements that describe immediate outcomes of classroom instruction or lessons. What are the specific outcomes of a lesson? How do these relate to your goals and aims? Objectives are stated specifically and can generally be observed or measured to the extent of deciding how much better one is met than another.

For example, what knowledge, skills and/or attitudes will students acquire (or engage) in during a particular lesson? What will they know as a result of the lesson that they did not know before the lesson? Some sample objectives include:

- The student will *use* the principle of emphasis to *create* a two-dimensional work of art that has a focal point.
- The student will *describe* how color affects mood in selected works of art.
- The student will *illustrate* a subject from an unusual point of view to *create* visual interest.

B. **Content** – What is the subject matter of the art program? Content is determined from statements of subject matter, learning experiences, media, and vocabulary. The primary standard for judging the merit of proposed learning experiences or content is how well it contributes to the attainment of your curriculum aims, goals and objectives. For example:

- If learners are suppose to develop an “appreciation for art” their learning activities should provide opportunities to respond a feeling level about the art they make and see.
- If learners are suppose to develop a knowledge of artists in relation to culture/society, their learning activities should provide opportunities to explore connections between artists and the time and place in which they lived.
- If learners are suppose to develop skills in using art tools and materials then their learning activities should provide them with the opportunity to work with art tools and materials in depth.

C. **Organization** – How is the content structured and presented to the students? Organization is determined by the horizontal and vertical structure of the curriculum. How does the content in art class relate to the content in math class? How does Art II build upon Art I?

1. *Horizontal Structure* – What is the relationship between what the students study in all of their classes at the same time?

- Integrated - concept learning, e.g., related-arts classes.
- Correlated - e.g., learning about a particular culture in art class and in social studies class.
- Fragmented - no relationships exist among classes.

2. *Vertical Structure* – What is the relationship between what the students studied, what they are studying and what they will study?

- Linear - e.g., in design class, start with line, then shape, value, etc.,
- Spiral - reviewing and reinforcing previous concepts learned each year.
- Hierarchical - e.g., Art I, Art II, Art III.

D. **Administration** – How is the curriculum managed? Administration refers to curricular arrangements and devices used. Do you go to the students or do they come to you?

1. *Curricular Arrangements* might include the use of heterogeneous groups or homogeneous groups, non-graded classrooms, teacher mobility, etc.,

2. *Curricular Devices* might include the use of independent study, modules, online courses, mini-courses, electives, requirements, majors/minors, etc.,

Curriculum Planning: A Four-Step Process.

Art Content Scope & Sequence

1. **Two- and Three-Dimensional Art** – Alternate between the two areas.
2. **Design Elements and Principles** – Begin with line, then shape, value, color, etc.,
3. **Art Media and Processes** – Start with drawing, then painting, printmaking, etc.,
4. **Art in Society or Workplace** – Units in advertising, industrial design, commercial arts, etc.,
5. **History of Art** – Sequence according to the major periods of art.
6. **Philosophical Concerns about Art** – Discussions and presentations centered around questions of aesthetics, e.g., Why does a work “feel” a certain way? What is art? What is the purpose of Art?
7. **Critical Aspects of Art** -- Dialogue centered around criticism and the art work itself, e.g., Is this a significant work of art? Why?
8. **Visual Culture** – Study of all aspects of culture that communicate through visual means including paintings, sculptures, movies, television, photographs, furniture, utensils, gardens, artifacts, toys, advertising, etc.,
9. **Contemporary Art** – Study of art produced at this present point in time or produced since World War II.

Art Content: Planning Matrix 1

Content Area	Activities for Consideration			
	Looking	Talking	Making	Reading
1. 2-D & 3-D Art				
2. Elements & Principles				
3. Art Media				
4. Art in Society				
5. History of Art				
6. Philosophy of Art				
7. Art Criticism				
8. Visual Culture				
9. Contemporary Art				