

DEVELOPMENT OF ORIGINAL UNIT

A *unit plan* is a blueprint used to clarify an organized group of lesson plans that will be taught over a period of time. The unit may be subject based, interdisciplinary, or thematic and usually includes an introduction, various intermediate activities, and a culminating activity. Units generally focus on overall themes or concepts to be learned through individual lessons and may be as brief as a week or extend through an entire semester. A unit plan will provide a general overview or a plan for implementation while daily lessons plans provide the detail necessary for actual instruction.

The Student Teacher is expected to develop at least one original unit with a minimum of five daily lessons. In some cases the Student Teacher may be asked to augment/expand on curriculum already in place. When planning the unit the Student Teacher should check with his/her Cooperating Teacher to determine if the district has a preferred approach for unit development. Regardless of the approach used, it is imperative to consider depth and breadth when developing units. In more simplistic terms, remember, “*less is more.*” Good teachers cover less material but provide students more opportunities to learn specifics and activities to reinforce what has been learned.

The following list of questions is designed to help the Student Teacher get started.

- What is the purpose?
- How much time will be needed?
- How many lessons will the unit involve?
- What do students already know about the topic?
- What would students like to learn or know?
- How will the unit be introduced?
- What are the key questions that need to be answered?
- Will the unit have a theme?
- Are there opportunities for interdisciplinary instruction & activities?
- What special materials, field trips, or guest speakers could be incorporated into the unit?

After the questions above have been considered, the following suggestions may be used to address the details of putting the unit together.

1. Indicate the grade level, subject, and length of time for the unit.
2. Outline the unit around a general theme or idea and provide a title.
3. Identify general goals, objectives, problems, or topics to be included. Each goal, objective, or topic should correspond to a specific lesson plan or plans.
4. Include one or more of the following: a) content and activities, b) cognitive processes and skills, c) psychomotor skills, and d) attitudes and values
5. Identify methods for assessing the outcomes of the unit.
6. Identify additional resources, materials, or technology used.
7. Plan an effective, motivating method for introducing the unit.
8. Include strategies for addressing the varying types of learners.
9. Develop an interesting culminating activity or related field trip or guest speaker.
10. Develop at least five individual lesson plans.
11. Upon completion, write a reflective narrative describing implementation success and procedures and management strategies used.