INTRODUCTION  
*There are many ways to plan a unit of work. Our aim is to develop a unit that reflects rigor, team focus, allows teacher input, achieves common goals and deepens understanding. This document is a planner to follow that is aimed to assist teachers to achieve these goals. All the steps should be followed in order, developed collaboratively, and can be completed over more than one meeting.*

1. SCHOOL NAME, GRADE LEVEL, UNIT TITLE, SUGGESTED LENGTH OF UNIT, CREATION DATE, and UNIT TEAM MEMBERS

Units will always be in revision because of the growing understanding of our students, standards, and changing resources. This section captures the essentials of the unit. Name of the unit can be thematic, or based on specific literacy skills and literacy elements. In elementary school the unit will be interdisciplinary, but the name of the unit need not reflect this. E.g. *Animals are Characters Too!, Writing Our Opinions, Why Critical Thinking is Important.*

2. DRAW THE UNIT

Use a graphic organizer (an outline, bulleted list, concept map, or chart). This will help you visualize the direction the unit is headed and also assist in creating the learning experiences. Make the drawing based on feedback from all of the members. What are all the pieces that will be covered? Just draw your ideas about the unit. Sometimes you might talk about some resources just because they naturally fit, or you know they work here. Make mistakes, scribble, list and chart.

3. WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

What is the reason we have chosen to do this unit? What is the "pay-off" for all students at this age, grade, learning level by doing this unit? Why is it important? What will the students learn that will be enduring? Just jot down your thinking.

4. CONTENT DETAIL/UNIT OVERVIEW

This is a description of the content of the unit, what is going to happen, the major concepts to be covered. This will come from your drawing. *In this 5 week unit…* What will the students need to KNOW and BE ABLE TO DO? What will happen as it progresses? What are the different components of the unit? The overview includes specific outcomes, activities, processes, learning experiences that the students will experience during the unit.

This should show what is actually going to happen in the unit. The overview includes specific outcomes, activities, processes, learning experiences that the students will experience during the unit. This can be a narrative, list, or series of sequential ideas based on the drawing or unit.

5. BIG IDEAS/ ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

(See **APPENDIX A** for sample THEMES, BIG IDEAS, AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS)

Big Ideas are the conceptual framework that allows the learner to explore answers to the Essential Question. Essential Questions are the overarching focus of the unit. It’s reason for being. Essential questions help learners see patterns and fit the pieces of the unit together. It also helps us to focus our unit…allows us to ask the question…DOES THIS WORK ASSIST IN ANSWERING OUR ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS?

6. FOCUS STANDARDS

Identify the focus standards that you want your students to master during this unit. These should be the *laser like* standards that have been identified as integral to the unit. If you feel that there are other significant standards also embedded into the unit these can be identified as on-going or minor focus standards.

7. COMMON OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

(See **APPENDIX B**- LEARNING OBJECTIVE EXAMPLES)

Skills identify exactly what the students will be able to show us during and after the unit. These should be precise but don’t need to be completely exhaustive. These are the common skills, written in behavioral terms, telling us WHAT they will do and HOW they will show it. Choose all of the objectives/outcomes that ALL students will do…these are the common assessments. You may have too many, that's fine, these can be optional for teachers to strengthen or extend student thinking.

8. ASSESSMENTS

(See **APPENDIX C**- TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS)

What forms of assessment will be used in the unit? There should be a mixture of both summative (performance task) and formative assessments during the unit that will aid our instruction and help as a *check for understanding* as the unit develops. These will match the common objectives/outcomes that you identified in section 7 and be related to the laser-like focus standards.

9. PERFORMANCE TASK

This is the one major piece of common assessment that will be embedded in the unit. This performance task enables educators to teach the focus and supporting standards through inquiry and problem solving. Performance task provide a *window* into student understanding enabling students to construct their own understanding of the standards. A performance task can take many forms- see PERFORMANCE TASK ASSESSMENT sheet. It is not necessary to write a complete performance task right now, but consider and discuss the how this will be used, where it fits into the unit, and how it will be assessed.

10. PERFORMANCE TASK REVIEW

(See **APPENDIX D**– Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and **APPENDIX E**- UDL Reference Sheet)

When designing a performance task one must consider the following options: How is the performance task assessed, how rigorous is the task (DOK), and what barriers to learning do I remove for my ELL and IEP students?

11. MATERIALS AND RESOURCES-TEXT

(See **APPENDIX F**- Text complexity rubric K-2, **APPENDIX G**- Text complexity Rubric 3-5, **APPENDIX H**- Text Complexity Rubric- Literary 6-12, **APPENDIX I**- Text Complexity Rubric- Informational 6-12)

Why did you choose the text? Do you have a mixture of genres? Do you have text of various levels? Analyze the text you have chosen using the text complexity rubrics. Why are the complex features of the text? What makes it complex?

12. OTHER RESOURCES

What's available for teaching this topic/unit? What do you have in your room? What might you borrow from other teachers? How will libraries help? What can you get from the Internet? Are there free materials available? What people (parents, community members, and other teachers) might visit and contribute to a discussion with your class? What graphic organizers will the unit need? Useful websites? What extras will you have to get?

13. ACADEMIC VOCABULARY/TERMS

Identify the specific words or concepts that the students will need to know as they progress through the unit. These words will assist in understanding as the unit progresses. These words should be a mixture of Tier 2 (general academic words) and Tier 3 (domain specific) words. What will students do with the words (learn spelling and definitions, use in writing and speaking)?

14. TEACHING- INTRODUCTORY AND CULMINATING SESSION(S)

This should be motivating and grab your students' interest. There are a hundred more exciting ways to begin a new unit than to say, "We're beginning a new unit today. Open your books to page..." Actively involve students in a direct experience. Establish connections to prior and subsequent learning. Use strategies such as; KWL, pretests, brainstorming, hands on objects, intriguing questions, songs, artifacts, what-if scenarios, demonstrations, etc.

CULMINATING- This is a great way to wrap up the unit and bring the learning together. A "Jeopardy!" game is always a good choice. Do individual or group projects. Put on a program for other classes or for parents. Draw together the unit learning experiences. Allow students options for completing the tasks.

15. WEEKLY, DAILY LESSON PROGRESSION

Consider level abilities of students. Include variety to meet multiple intelligences and right brain/left brain preferences. Give special attention to planning lesson discussions and choosing worksheets and activities that are both appropriate and motivating. Indicate how the performance indicators will be taught, including options for differentiation, remediation and enrichment. Involve continuous assessment and feedback. What’s happening day to day. Use a planning calendar if you wish, or weekly expectations. When will your common objectives/outcomes be finished? When are you going to administer your common performance task.