

15th May 2020

Dear all,

Over the past few weeks, much of the professional learning I've been signposting has been intended to help you with the work you are doing on curriculum review. To support you a bit more with this, you will find below a framework for the curriculum discussions that may take place within your team/department (if you are lucky enough to have one) and with your line manager. I'm very conscious that you are all at different stages with your planning and have varied priorities, so a one size fits all approach will not work. Therefore, the idea of the framework is to start at Aim 1 and, if you are satisfied you can answer the questions in Aim 1 you skip ahead to Aim 2 and so on. Please note, the idea isn't that you would work through all the aims to the end in one session – remember this is an ongoing process and something that you will work through and come back to over time.

Please take the time to read through the questions and then have a look at the blog I've linked in the reading section below, which models exactly this kind of thinking process with an example of curriculum planning in history.

I hope this is useful. As always, if you have any questions or feedback, or feel something doesn't quite work for your subject, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Have a lovely, relaxing weekend!

Best wishes,

Sallie

FRAMEWORK FOR CURRICULUM DISCUSSIONS

Different subjects will start from different points. Subject leaders will need to establish the most appropriate starting point for them, and work from there:

Aim 1: To share an understanding of the long term aims of the curriculum in your subject. This will mean you can answer the questions below:

- What do students need to know by the age of 14, accepting that some will “drop” a subject at this age, and for the rest we allow the specification to dictate the curriculum to an extent?
- What do they need to know to be well prepared for the next stage in their education, e.g by the end of year 6 (primary) and year 11 (secondary)?
- What do they already know by the time they reach your stage of education? I.e. if you are secondary, do you know what they are coming from KS2 with; if you are KS2 what do you know about their KS1 curriculum?
- Why do students need to know the content you have identified? What purpose does it serve now, and later?

If we know the answers to the questions above, we can move to Aim 2 below. If we don't, the above must be the focus of discussion and planning.

Aim 2: To break down and sequence your aims into a coherent curriculum

- Have we broken the long-term curricular aims down into what pupils will know, have experienced and can do each year that we teach them?
- Have we broken this down into aims for what pupils will be taught each term?
- Do we know why we have rejected or moved things? If we haven't rejected anything, we might take this as an indication we may not have wrestled with the curriculum sufficiently
- Why is this the right place to cover the content we have identified?

- In this subject is *how* pupils do things important (e.g. method in maths) and have we selected our method that everyone will use?
- Are we able to identify what knowledge pupils will use week-by-week?
- Stepping back, does the week-by-week schedule convince you we are addressing what we think we want to achieve in the long term?
- Is there a debate around the pedagogy necessary to teach this subject, i.e the balance of practical v theoretical in PE or science, or the enquiry-based v DI balance in history?

If we are comfortable with the questions above, we should turn our attention to resourcing lessons

Aim 3: To resource your curriculum effectively

- What resources do we need to deliver this curriculum? For example, knowledge organisers, vocabulary lists, booklets, PowerPoints, scripted explanations, other? Why do we need them and how will they help pupil learning?
- What development do teachers need to develop their subject knowledge in order to teach their lessons effectively?
- What preparation is expected of teachers in order to use the resources effectively?
- Who is responsible for each aspect of curriculum resourcing and who is responsible for quality assuring the components and the cohesive whole?

Aim 4: To make preparations for the assessment of your curriculum

- What knowledge do we need to assess at which point of our curriculum delivery?
- How will we assess what has been covered is retained long term?
- What are the best methods to use to assess our curriculum content?
- Who will take responsibility for writing assessments? How will we ensure they are cohesive and meet our curricular Aims?
- Do our assessments allow students to apply their knowledge to generate independent, ambitious responses?

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS



[READ: Richard Kennet on Why This? Why Now?](#)

This blogpost is unashamedly about curriculum and exemplifies how we can approach thinking about some of the questions posed above. Kennet focuses on the simplicity of asking why this? And why now? to review curricular choices.



[WATCH: Professor Rob Coe on Shining A Light On Great Teaching](#)

Since the publication of the 'What makes great teaching?' report in 2014, the evidence has continued to build about what great teaching is and how we can recognise and promote it. About a year ago, a team at Evidence Based Education began to think about updating the report, but it grew into a more ambitious project: to develop a set of tools to help teachers. In this session, Rob explains the development of the toolkit and considers how teachers can use it to improve the effectiveness of their teaching.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEXT WEEK



There are a number of great sessions coming up on Research EdHome next week, including Daisy Christodoulou on memory and Peps McCrea and Caroline Spalding on motivation. As always, I'll provide links to some of the best sessions next week.

[Click here for the full Research EdHome schedule](#)



Sign up! The confederation of school trusts are working with NTA to put together some online CPD and there are some really impressive speakers lined up for school leaders and new/early career teachers. However, I think some of the sessions aimed at new/early career teachers would be useful to all of us and on Wednesday at 11am you can catch Professor Rob Coe again, this time talking about planning and teaching well-structured lessons.