



Unit 1 – Introduction to the Framework: Getting Ready for the Unit and Connecting to Experience

Focus of Getting Ready for Unit 1

Students have an opportunity to connect the idea of a framework to their personal experience.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project's (CAP) lower division eight courses and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide key topic. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Child, Family, and Community
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Introduction to Curriculum
- Observation and Assessment
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Teaching in a Diverse Society
- Practicum-Field Experience

Instructional Methodologies

- Reflection—personal
- Class discussion
- Creation of a visual representation
- Pairs work and discussion in pairs
- Small group work
- Reflection—individual



California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

The Faculty Initiative Project will be undertaking a comprehensive process in the future to map the content of the instructional guides to the California Department of Education, Child Development Division's California Early Childhood Educator Competencies. The "Competency Areas to Consider" below are listed in this instructional guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these key topics.

- Child Development and Learning
- Culture, Diversity, and Equity
- Family and Community Engagement
- Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation
- Learning Environments and Curriculum
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Professionalism



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Getting Ready for the Unit

The instructional guide is designed to provide flexibility to faculty as decision makers in their work with students and course content. Unit 1 is designed to be used in a variety of ways. There is a flow to the sequence of key topics in this unit, but each key topic can also be used independently of the others.

Key Topic 1, “Getting to Know the Organization of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*”: This key topic is recommended if instructors have limited opportunity to explore the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2* in depth. This will give students an overview of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, and provide enough information that students will understand how to use this curriculum framework as a resource in their work.

Key Topic 2, “Getting to Know the Eight Overarching Principles”: Because the eight overarching principles that guided the development of the curriculum framework are not addressed in depth anywhere else in the framework, students are given an opportunity to become well acquainted with them in this key topic.

Key Topic 3, “Getting to Know the Curriculum-Planning Cycle”: This key topic is intended to familiarize students with what is in the first chapter of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, regarding the cycle of curriculum planning. It is addressed in more depth in Unit 5 of this instructional guide, where the planning process is used to plan integrated learning across the three domains of this curriculum framework.

For flexible use of the instructional guide, a review of the key topics in Unit 1 is suggested for faculty to find what will be most important for the particular needs of students and course content.

The following approaches are some examples of available options:

- Use Unit 1 as the beginning of a full exploration of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*.
- Use only Unit 1 as a way to introduce students to this curriculum framework.
- Use Unit 1 to focus on the organization of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, and then expand beyond this by exploring the key topic regarding organization and rationale for each of the following domain units in the instructional guide.



- Focus on Unit 1 and Unit 5 as a means of connecting students to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2* through its overall organization and value as a resource for integrating curriculum across domains.

These examples are provided as an illustration of how Unit 1 of the instructional guide, as an introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, can be used in a variety of ways to support program and course outlines, as well as individual teaching and student contexts.

The Motivator and Connection to Experience that follows is the same as found in Unit 1 of the *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*. It is designed to support students in understanding a framework. It connects students' experience of framing something, such as a photograph or piece of artwork, to the concept of a framework for curriculum. It does not address specifically the content of the domains in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. Further work can be done to connect students to their experiences with each of the learning and development domains of this curriculum framework: visual and performing arts, physical development, and health. Each domain unit (Units 2, 3, and 4) in this instructional guide begins with a way for students to connect to the content of the domain.

In addition, the first two learning experiences of each domain in the *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 2* are designed to connect students to their experiences with the content of the domains. These learning experiences can be found on the Faculty Initiative Project Web site at <http://www.wested.org/facultyinitiative/PLFv2/>. Because the domains of the foundations in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 2* parallel the curriculum domains in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, reviewing those learning experiences can give some choices regarding what might be most appropriate for students in becoming acquainted with the domains in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*.

Motivator and Connection to Experience

Before You Start

This motivator is designed to connect students' own experiences to the idea of a framework. The motivator includes working with content regarding curriculum from Chapter 1 of the curriculum framework, and not all students will be equally familiar with the curriculum components that are referenced. However, it might be a means of building familiarity with them, and these curriculum components are addressed in greater depth throughout the framework. Use of the curriculum framework as a resource for planning and use of the eight overarching principles for reviewing curriculum are specifically addressed in Unit 5 of this instructional guide. There is an opportunity to alert students to the cultural content in many of the decisions we make as family members and as practitioners by pointing out that what we put into frames is shaped by our preferences and priorities.



Active Learning



Slides 2-3

Getting it started

First, ask students to think of a picture in a frame that is very important to them. It can be of anything—person, place, animal, object, event, etc. They can do this silently and individually, but it will be important to ask for descriptions of a few examples. Once several students have shared their descriptive examples, then ask the following: “What does a frame do for a picture?”

Chart their responses, which might include some of the following examples:

- Makes it possible to see it and think about it often
- Gives it importance
- Keeps it clean
- Keeps it separate from other things—makes it unique

Ask for additional examples of something that is framed that is important for them to have in a frame. Be sure to explore similarities and differences in the examples that are given. The following questions may be used:

- Do differences in what we choose to frame or display reflect choices based on individual preferences?
- On family priorities?
- On cultural values?

Keeping it going

Ask students to turn to the definition of curriculum framework in the introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2* at the bottom of the first column on page 3. The paragraph states that, as a curriculum framework, this document provides

- principles;
- key components of curriculum planning;
- descriptions of routines, environments, and materials; and
- strategies for building on children’s knowledge, skills, and interests.

Ask students to develop a visual image of these four topics as a framework. Using a blank sheet of paper, ask students to draw a frame.

Online Options

Instead of creating their visual representations in class, students could develop these outside class and post photographs of their frames online for the instructor’s review. Upon instructor’s recommendation, students could then review their classmates’ postings and note similarities and differences.



Slide 4



Many shapes will work, but a rectangle will provide one side for each of the four topics above. Students can do this individually, or a frame can be drawn on chart paper or some large surface where all students can see it.

After the students have drawn this frame, ask them to place these four segments of a curriculum framework into the frame they have just drawn. They can do this by writing the four phrases inside the frame, one on each side

Taking it further

On pages 17–25 of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, there are several topics relating to curriculum planning:



Slide 5

- Arranging the environment and materials into interest areas for self-initiated play
- Using a variety of activities that are indoor and outdoor
- Using a variety of activities that are teacher guided in small or large groups
- Organizing daily routines as contexts for learning

Ask students to review pages 17–25 for additional curriculum components and add to the four topics listed previously. These could be written into the center of the sheet of paper—the center of the frame. Remember that students are not looking for examples here, but some examples might help them work with the following questions.

Putting it together

Ask students to discuss these questions as a whole group or in pairs or groups of three:

- What does a framework provide when these components of curriculum are considered in curriculum planning and put into practice?
- What would the eight overarching principles provide?
- What would a consistent planning process provide?
- What would consideration of materials and environments provide?

Online Options

Students could write responses to the “Putting it together” questions and post them for an online discussion or submit them to the instructor.



Slides 6-8

- What would consideration of interactions and strategies provide?

Plan a time for students to share their thinking. Some possible thoughts might include these points:

- Provides coherence by holding together the pieces that would just be separate activities without it
- Supports quality by providing guidance for maintaining quality in what is done
- Supports comprehensive curriculum by providing guidance for considering a broad range of needs in planning for children and families
- Supports consistency across domains

Suggest to students that they will become more comfortable with the concept of a framework for curriculum as distinct from curriculum as they work through more key topics in this instructional guide. There will be more exposure to this concept specifically in Unit 5 of this instructional guide.

Reflection



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The following questions can be used to support reflection on this motivator. These can be done as a journaling exercise online or as a class discussion.

- Where were new insights for you in this exercise?
- What are some continuing challenges with the idea of a curriculum framework?
- What additional information would you like to know that relates to the idea of a curriculum framework?
- What would you need to do to get that information?