



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

Introduction to the Framework:  
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## Focus Statement

Students have the opportunity to connect the concept 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 learning experience. 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
- Introduction to Curriculum
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Teaching a Diverse Society
- Practicum-Field Experience

## Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Creation of a visual representation
- Pairs or small groups
- Personal reflection
- Reflective discussion

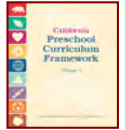
## California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

The Faculty Initiative Project will undertake a comprehensive process in the future to map the content of the instructional guides to the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support 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 learning experiences.

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



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

## Getting Ready for the Unit

This instructional guide for the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* is similar to the instructional guides for the first two volumes of the curriculum framework because it also provides flexibility for faculty as decision makers in their work with students and course content. Unit 1 contains three key topics in addition to this “Getting Ready for the Unit and Connecting to Experience” topic.

**Key Topic 1, “Getting to Know the Organization of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*”:** This key topic is recommended if instructors have limited opportunity to explore the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* in depth. The content of this key topic will give students an overview of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* and provide enough information for students to 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 all three volumes of the curriculum framework are not addressed 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 Process”:** This third key topic is intended to familiarize students with the cycle of curriculum planning that is presented in the first chapter of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*.

A review of these three key topics in Unit 1 is suggested as it can (1) help faculty identify what will be most important for the particular needs of their students and course content and (2) inform faculty’s flexible use of the instructional guide. Unit 1 is designed to be used in a variety of ways. The following approaches are some options:

- Use Unit 1 as the beginning of a full exploration of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*.
- Use only Unit 1 as a way to introduce students to this curriculum framework.



- Use Unit 1 to focus on the organizational structure or organization of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* and then extend students' understanding by exploring the key topics regarding the organization and rationale of the two domain units—history–social science and science.
- Focus on Unit 1 and Unit 4 as a way to connect students to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* through its organization and value as a resource for integrating curriculum across domains.

These options are presented as an illustration of how Unit 1 of this instructional guide, which is an introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*, 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” in this unit is the same one that is presented in Unit 1 of both Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Curriculum Framework*. It is designed to support students' understanding of a framework by connecting students' experience of framing something, such as a photograph or piece of artwork, to the concept of a framework for curriculum. This Unit 1 motivator does not address the specific content of the domains in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*. Further work can be done to connect students to their experiences with the history–social science and science learning and development domains. Each of the two domain units, Unit 2 and Unit 3, 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 3* are designed to connect students to the content of the domains. This guide can be found on the Faculty Initiative Project Web site at <http://facultyinitiative.wested.org/PLFv3/>. Because the domains of the foundations in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 3* parallel the curriculum domains in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*, 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 3*.

### **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 the 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. 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, experiences, and priorities.

The active learning segments describe creating and showing a visual representation of a curriculum framework. It will be helpful to provide blank sheets of paper and/or large sheets of chart paper for the students.

### Information Delivery

Information from the following pages of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* is suggested reading for this key topic:

- Introductory material about the preschool curriculum framework (pp. 2–3)
- Curriculum Planning (pp. 15–24)
- The Daily Schedule (pp. 24–29)

### Active Learning



Slides 2-3

#### Getting it started

Begin this learning experience by asking students to think of a picture that is very important to them that is in a frame. This framed picture can be of anything—person, place, animal, object, event, etc. Students can do this silently and individually, but it will be important to ask for descriptions of a few examples.

After several students have described their examples, ask the following question: “What does a frame do for a picture?”

Chart the students’ responses, which might include some of the following ideas:

- Makes it possible to see the picture 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 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:

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

### Keeping it going

Ask students to read the definition of curriculum framework in the introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3* at the bottom of the first column on page 3.



Slides 4-5

“ . . . a curriculum framework provides general guidance on planning learning environments and experiences for young children. Thus, as a curriculum framework, this document provides:

1. principles . . . ;
2. an overview of key components of curriculum planning for young children, including observation, documentation, and reflection;
3. descriptions of routines, environments, and materials . . . :
4. sample strategies for building on children’s knowledge, skills, and interests . . . .”

Ask students to develop a visual image of these four elements as a framework. Ask students to draw a frame on a blank sheet of paper. The frame should be approximately two inches deep around the edges. Many shapes will work, but a rectangle will provide one side for each of the four elements. Students can draw their frames individually, or a frame can be drawn on chart paper or other large surface where all students can see it.

After the frame is drawn, ask the students to place these four elements of a curriculum framework into the frame. This can be done by writing the four phrases inside the frame, one on each side.



### Taking it further

On pages 15–29 of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 3*, there are several topics related to curriculum planning:



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

Ask students to review these pages for additional curriculum components and add them to the four topics. 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, but providing some examples might help them work with the questions in the following segment.

#### Online Options

Instead of creating their visual representations of a framework in class, students could develop these outside class and post photographs or scanned images online. Students could then review their classmates' postings in preparation for an instructor facilitated discussion in class or online.

### Putting it together

Instructors may choose to ask students to discuss these questions as a whole group or in pairs or groups of three:



Slides 7-9

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

Plan a time for students to share their ideas. Some possible responses 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

### Online Options

If there is online-discussion capability, the instructor could facilitate an online discussion of the questions in the “Putting it Together” section.

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

## Reflection

The following questions can be used to support students in reflecting on this motivator. Students can respond individually in a journaling exercise or through a class discussion:



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- What new ideas, concepts, or insights do you have from this learning experience?
- What are some continuing challenges with the concept of a curriculum framework?
- What additional information would you like to know about the concept of a curriculum framework?
- What are some steps you can take to obtain that information?