**Weeks 11 & 12 - Nov 15 to Nov 28**

I will post work for the next two weeks. Most of you are getting close to completing the main sections of your units, and I do not want to hold you up by not posting directions you need in order to keep moving. Below you will also find the schedule for the remainder of the semester so you can plan ahead. I know these weeks will fly!

For the next two weeks we will focus on these questions:

1. **How do we help students take the driver’s seat?**

2. **How will technology meet the needs of all learners?**

1. **How do we help students take the driver’s seat? How will you help students find the answers and how will you know if they are headed in the right direction?**

**Instructional Sequence Directions:**

Your answer to these questions will evolve as you build the instructional sequence for your unit. I am actually looking for more of a detailed timeline than a series of lesson plans. I realize that lesson plans will emerge as you teach, and that any set of lesson plans will need to continually change to meet the realities of day-
to-day work with students. With that in mind, what I am looking for is your road map. You will list the steps that you and your students will take as you search for answers to the essential questions. Please take another look at some of those ARCTIC units in the Webliography and Bibliography for a concrete visual of what this might look like. You will note that some of those unit designers used much more detail than others. You also will note that they included, as separate documents, lesson plans to accompany their timelines. To repeat and emphasize: I am not requiring you to write separate lesson plans! The ARCTIC folks had much more time to work on these units than we have this semester. The timeline will need to include the following:

1. An estimation of the number of days or class periods required for each step
2. A very brief description of the focus for each step
3. Strategies you will use for that step, to include technology use, groupings, etc. Basically, how you think you will structure this step.

I have found this stage of unit design most helpful when I continue to work in a backward mode. I start at the END of my timeline. I write in the target end-date and the final task first (If you do not know when you will teach this unit, you do not have to use actual dates. You may just label each step or phase with terms like, week 1, day 2.) From there, I continue backward, working to fit in all of the steps, in the correct sequence. I find that this way I am more likely to allow enough time for each stage of the unit.

I need enough information in your timelines so that I can see how this unit will actually unfold. I should see all the items on your Know and Do Lists represented in your timeline. They should be taught in a scaffolded sequence that enables students to gain the enduring understandings and complete the culminating task(s) successfully. Chapter 10 in Understanding By Design will help you think through strategies selection in terms of which might be most effective for particular steps in your unit.
Looking at the timelines in these ARCTIC units may help:
Rain, Rain Go Away
Forces That Change the Earth
Solar System
Planning and Mapping a School Garden

You will see that some of these teachers used their unit questions as the base for each step in their instructional sequences. That works if you choose to go that route.

Some key elements to consider when designing an effective learning plan can be summarized in the acronym WHERETO. WHERETO comes from Wiggins and McTighe and is summarized in the WHERETO handout in the Resources section. Please take a look at this for help in developing your learning plan. It will be a useful tool for you to use with your response partner next week when giving feedback as well.

**Dipstick (formative assessment) Instructions:**
Dipstick is not a Grant Wiggins term! Helena Fagan and Les Morse (who modified the Wiggins/McTighe unit template) coined the term a few years ago as a metaphorical reference to the process of checking where students are in terms of gaining understandings, knowledge and skills. A bit like checking the oil level in the car. If you do not stop and use the dipstick, you might end up with a frozen engine!

Again, you might want to look at the ARCTIC units for examples.

Your dipstick list should share strategies and methods you will use to check for understanding as you move through the unit with your students. How will you know if they understand? If they are gaining the knowledge and skills they need? These dipsticks might look like traditional assessment (paper/pencil quizzes or tests, essay tests, etc.), or they may be less traditional types of
assessment (authentic tasks like teaching somebody else something they have learned), or they might be quick checks for understandings (like handing out index cards and having students write one idea that they really understand on one side and an idea that is unclear or a question they have on the other side). You can find a great list of ideas for checking understanding in Understanding By Design on pages 66 and 67. That entire chapter, Implications for Teaching, may help you think through your formative assessment.

Many of you have already written some dipstick assessments. Please be sure to go through them again per the above instructions.

**Student Self-assessment Instructions:**
You will also find a section in the unit template for student self-assessment. The dipsticks and the self-assessments might very well do some crossing over. Reviewing student self-assessments is a very good way to check for understanding. Do list, though, ways in which you plan to have students self-assess. You will find much discussion of ongoing assessment in your text. You may also want to insert your dipsticks and self-assessment ideas into your instructional sequence, so they don’t get left in the dust during actual instruction.

**2. How will technology help meet the needs of all learners?**

This information should help you with the Accommodations section in the unit template. I know most classes, if not all, include a wide range of student abilities and interests. In this section, tell us how your use of technology in this unit might be steered to help you meet the variety of student needs. This may range from using different levels of text available online to the use of Type II
programs that allow for advanced students to work on a higher level, to fostering communication and support between students and community members or other students through online communication, etc. Accommodations may also include how you will group students to most effectively use technology.

To help your thinking about this type of accommodation, I am posting an article in the Resources section from the October 2003 edition of *Educational Leadership*, “Universal Design Accessibility for All Learners,” by Cynthia Curry. I realize you will not likely have access to much of the technology that is shared in this article, but I think the ideas underlying the technology use will spur you on to new ways of thinking. Also, the article includes a great resources list.

*And ...* If you want any additional feedback from me before the final partner review, it is your responsibility to email your unit to me *before* November 27. Please tell me what kind of feedback you are looking for; tell me what you are feeling confident about and which pieces you would like me to look at most carefully and why. Revisit the unit scoring guide. It will help you think about areas that need more work. I realize that this work is a process. I am watching your units grow stronger. Some of you may be at the point where you do not need feedback for a while. That’s fine…do not feel you need to get approval from me constantly.
**Coming up...**

**Week 13:** Are we there yet? You will be assigned a partner who has probably not yet seen your work. You will provide feedback to one another.

**Week 14:** Work Week. Using partner feedback, you’ll revise your unit. You will also complete final self-assessments and a final piece of reflective writing.

**December 13. All work is due December 13.**