

# Curriculum Mapping

(from *Mapping the Big Picture*, by Heidi Hayes Jacobs)

<https://sabes.org/pd-center/ela>, 10/4/21

## What Is It, and What Is It For?

Curriculum mapping is a process that can be used:

- ✓ to notice patterns in what has been taught over the preceding months
- ✓ as a first step in developing a Scope & Sequence (S&S), to build on what the program is already doing effectively
- ✓ to review a S&S, highlighting areas for examination and possible revision.

*"The purpose is to collect authentic data about the classroom and genuine information about what students actually experience—not what others think they are supposed to be studying."*  
(Hayes Jacobs, pg.9)

Curriculum mapping is not for teacher evaluation.

## Stage 1: Gather the Information

In the initial stage, a curriculum map is a proto-S&S of what *did* happen, rather than what one plans to happen. It answers this question: *If your students were in every class, what might they say about what the classes were on, what they did, and what they learned?*

To start, individual teachers create a rough outline of their own class instruction. We suggest using these categories, organized over the course of the past year:

1. Topics / Essential Questions: What topics were these classes about? What were students exploring?
2. Major Activities: What did students do?
3. Skills / Standards: What skills were students learning or practicing how to do?
4. Products / Assessments: How (if at all) did students show or use what they had learned?

It may be helpful to add an overall comment space for Challenges and Successes—or save that for the reflection stage (see below).

## Stage 2: Reflect and Move Forward (and Repeat)

A program's teachers compare and contrast their maps, noticing and wondering about patterns, gaps, and opportunities. An overarching curriculum map, comprised of common units, activities, and assessments, turns into what we think of as a S&S. Ideally, the resulting S&S is reviewed annually: In what ways did this plan happen? What changes or deviations from the plan were for the better? What needs to be added in, or revised for the future?

*"Curriculum planning is continuous and dynamic... There (won't) be a final document from this practice that cements the curriculum."*  
(ASCD, [Using Maps to Jumpstart Collaboration](#))



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