Newtown Public Schools

BOE C&I Sub Committee Meeting * SPECIAL MEETING*
May 5, 2026

Newtown High School
12 Berkshire Road

Sandy Hook, CT 06482
12:30 PM

As citizens of our community, we will conduct ourselves in accordance with Newtown's Core Character Attributes as displayed in our character tree. We will be responsible for our actions and show respect for each other. We will interact peacefully, productively, and politely. We will be trustworthy and honest and show compassion toward others. Newtown's continued success is contingent upon our ability to persevere, to follow through with our commitments, and to stay focused on the greater good.

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
4. **NEW BUSINESS**
   A. Review and possible action on the following high school curricula: Mixed Media & Philosophy
5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

BOE C&I Sub Committee Meeting
February 18, 2026

BOE Conference Room
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT 06470

MINUTES

In attendance:
Frank Purcaro, Assistant Superintendent
Don Ramsey, C&I Chair
Chris Gilson, Board member
Sarah Connell, Clerk
Susan Musco
Jennifer Betesh
Jim Ross
1 Public

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
    a. Mr. Ramsey called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm
2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
    a. None
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION: *Mr. Gilson moved to approve the minutes of February , 2026. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion*

4. **NEW BUSINESS**
    a. Review and possible action on the 7th Middle School Science Curriculum
        i. NMS's 7th grade science teacher, Susan Lang, provided an overview of the Grade 7 Science curriculum, which is organized around the unifying theme of energy flow and interconnectedness between Earth systems and living organisms.
        ii. Ms. Lang emphasized that this course interconnects Earth systems and life. There are hands-on labs and investigations (weathering, osmosis, heart rate experiments and other activities such as "Adventures of the Red Blood Cell" and digestive system board games.
        iii. This course also has strong vertical alignment with the NGSS standard (grades 6-8).
            1. The committee provided positive feedback on the curriculum coherence and student engagement.
            2. The committee also asked about instructional materials and equipment needs that would be beneficial for the classroom. Ms.

Lang enthusiastically spoke about the need for microscopes but there are obstacles out of their control to obtain them and have the students use them.

b. Review and possible action on the 8th Middle School Science Curriculum
    i. NMS's 8th grade science teacher, Jennifer Betesh, presented the 8th grade science curriculum which includes three core areas: Biology, Physics, and Astronomy, with a primary focus on Biology.
    ii. Ms. Beteth emphasizes the importance of hands-on labs and cooperative learning. There is a strong vertical alignment with high school expectations.
        1. The committee praised Ms. Betesh for the continued alignment with NGSS standards and the teacher collaboration and curriculum refinement over multiple years.

MOTION: Mr. Ramsey moved to approve the 7th and 8th grade Middle School Science Curriculum and send to the full Board for approval. Mr. Gilson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a. Aidan Music, 16 Housatonic Drive, Sandy Hook, CT spoke about his concern that the school curriculum is getting too "activity based" and hopes to see more old school learning come back.

6. ADJOURNMENT

a. Mr. Gilson moved to adjourn. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.

Grade 7 Science Curriculum Summarized

Presented by Susan Musco

Earth is made up of interacting systems that are shaped by the flow of energy from both external and internal sources. Energy from the Sun drives *weather* and *erosion*, while Earth's internal heat powers *plate tectonics*, *volcanoes*, and *mountain building*, creating *landforms* and *natural resources*. These processes create the conditions necessary for life, and human body systems are adapted to survive in this environment by using oxygen from the atmosphere, water from the hydrosphere, and nutrients from the geosphere. Systems such as the *respiratory, circulatory, digestive, and nervous systems* work together to acquire raw materials (*protein synthesis*), *process energy*, respond to environmental changes, and *maintain homeostasis,* allowing humans to live and thrive on Earth.

UNIT 1

Developing Scientific Inquiry and Engineering Skills

Purpose

- To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Lens

- Communication

Concepts

- data collection
- analysis
- evidence
- reasoning
- variables
- observations
- inferences
- predictions
- scientific questions.

Activities

- Identifying Variables and Writing Hypotheses
- Qualitative / Quantitative Me Assignment
- Gro-Dino Scientific Method Lab
- Creating Data Tables and Graphs
- Writing Claim, Evidence and Reasoning Paragraphs

Unit 1 Generaliztions

- Scientific inquiry drives the development of knowledge through observation and investigation

- Scientific inquiry relies on qualitative and quantitative observations by using them to make inferences and/or predictions which facilitates problem solving.

- Formulating measurable and observable relationships among factors supports the systematic investigation needed to generate explanations and address scientific inquiries.

- The scientific method allows for collection and organization of data into appropriately constructed tables and graphs in order to evaluate, interpret and communicate results.

- The examination and interpretation of information enable the recognition of patterns and the formation of meaningful insights, which support effective problem-solving

UNIT 2

Earth’s Energy/ Systems

Purpose

- Understand how Earth's energy systems and geological processes shape our planet.

Lens

- Energy transfer and energy transformations.

Concepts

- Scale, Proportion & Quantity
- Patterns
- Stability & Change
- Geoscience processes
- energy transfer
- energy transformation
- thermal energy
- internal/external forces

Activities

- Far Flung Fossils
- Relative Dating
- Geological timescale
- Informational reading strategies
- Interactive Rock Cycle
- Weathering and Erosion Study Guide
- Plate Tectonics Study Guide

Unit 2 Generalizations

- A structured temporal framework categorizes Earth’s past into distinct intervals derived from identifiable patterns and changes over time.
- The flow of energy influences system balance and drives transformations within Earth’s surface processes over time.
- Changes in energy within Earth systems reveal patterns that reflect the movement of tectonic plates over time.
- External and internal energy sources power the continuous movement and transformation of materials within Earth’s systems.

Unit 3

Geoscience - Earth/Life Science Connections

Purpose

- Develop an understanding that humans rely on natural resources for survival.

Lens

- Stability and change

Concepts

- Natural Resources
- Sustainability
- Distribution
- Availability
- geoscience processes
- consumption

Activities

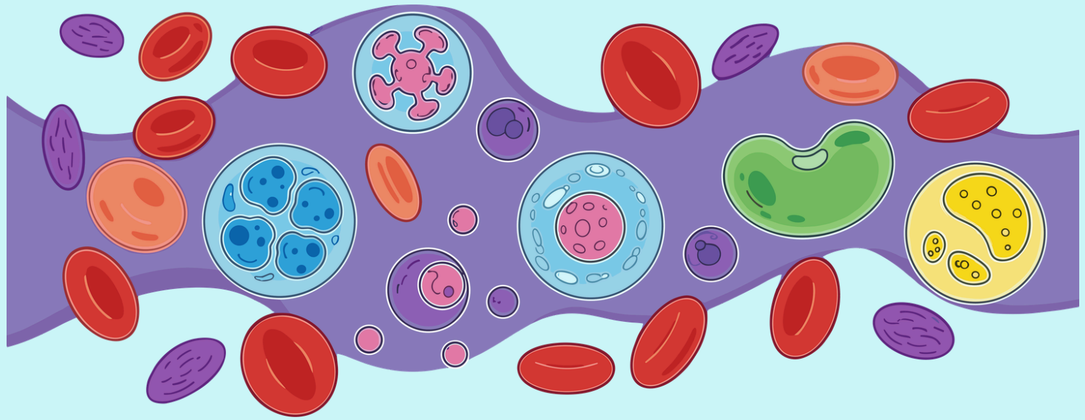
- Research using multiple sources, primarily Discovery Education (see resources for link), to compile information to execute the summative project at the end of the unit.
  - Written responses and map creation that shows locations of natural resources.
  - Description of geoscience processes that create the resources.
  - Draw conclusions about the relationship between population and resource availability.

Unit 3 Generalizations

- Earth's natural resources ensure the existence of life.
- Geoscience processes over time create natural resources.
- Resource availability and distribution impact human societies and ecosystems.
- Management of Earth's resources is crucial for sustainability.
- The increased consumption of natural resources significantly impacts the stability of Earth's systems.

Unit 4

Cells and Cell Processes



Purpose

- Explore how cells are the basic unit of life, with special structures responsible for specific functions, that utilize energy for survival.
- Explore the transfer of energy through the matter on earth and how it supports life.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Cells
- Organisms

Activities

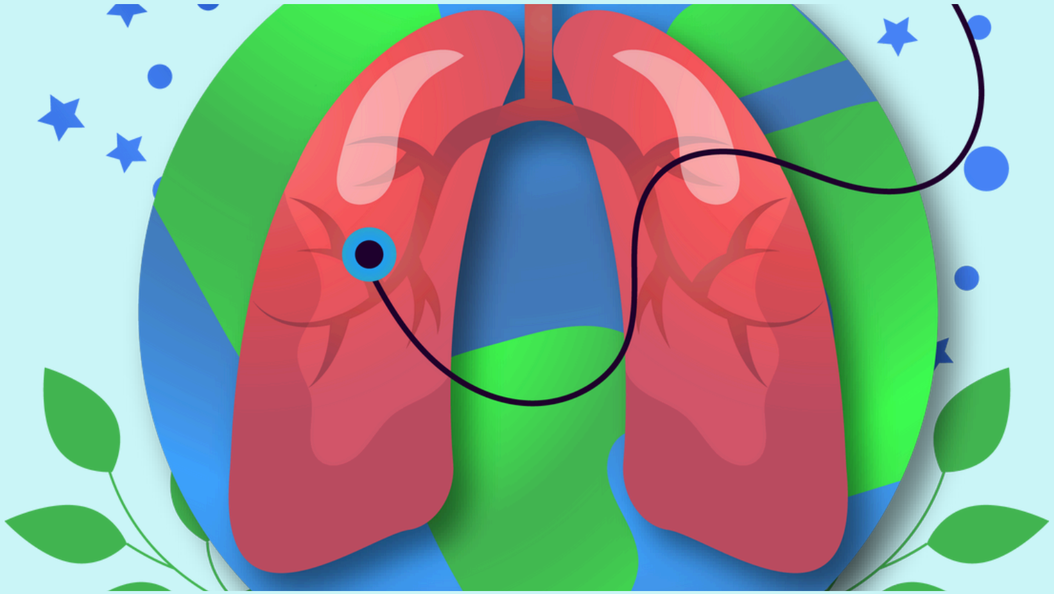
- Types of Cells - slide show and Venn diagram
- Cells, What do they do - Slide show and guided note taking.
- Inside a cell - Video (see resources for link) and guided note taking.
- Anatomy of The Cell
- How A Cell Operates
- Cell Analogy Project
- Cell Test Study Guide

Unit 4 Generaliztions

- Cells create the structure of all organisms.
- Specialized structures in cells perform different functions that support homeostasis
- Energy transformations convert energy from one form to another so it can be used for life processes.
- Cells can be organized into larger structures and organ systems that interact to maintain homeostasis.
- Organisms depend on energy transformation creating an interdependence among all life on earth.

Unit 5

Respiratory System



Purpose

- Explore how the respiratory system interacts with other systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Interdependence
- Respiratory System
- Energy Transformation
- Homeossasis.

Activities

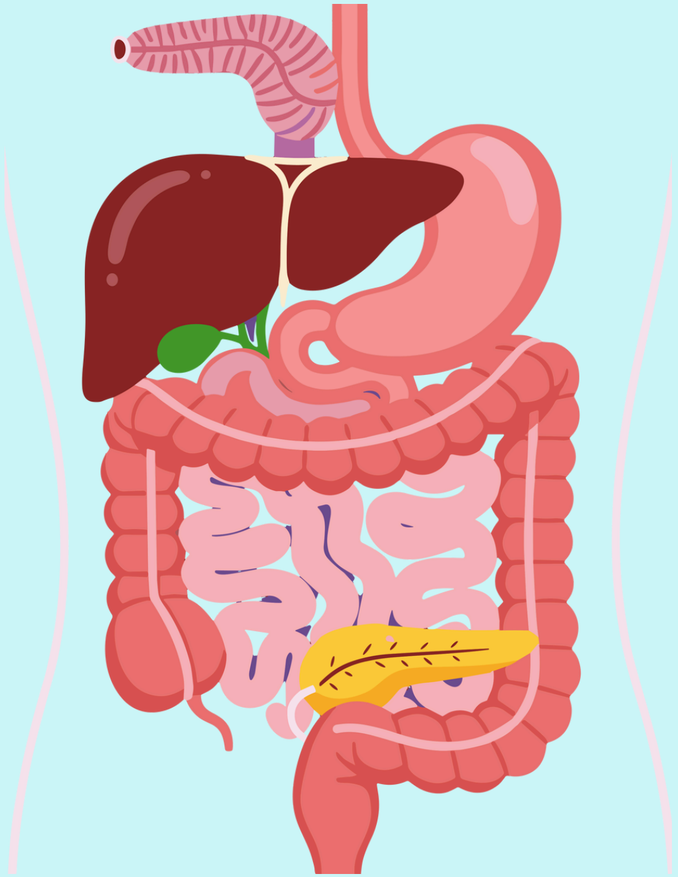
- The Breathing Process slide show and guided note taking
- The anatomy of the Respiratory System Project and Poster.
- Sequence for Respiration slide show and guided notes/worksheet
- Gas Exchange in the Alveoli packet.
- The Adventures of an Oxygen Molecule constructed writing response.

Unit 5 Generalizations

- Structures of the respiratory systems determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the respiratory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The respiratory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The respiratory system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 6

Digestive System



Purpose

- Explore how the digestive system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Digestion
- Digestive System
- Efficiency
- Energy Transformation

Activities

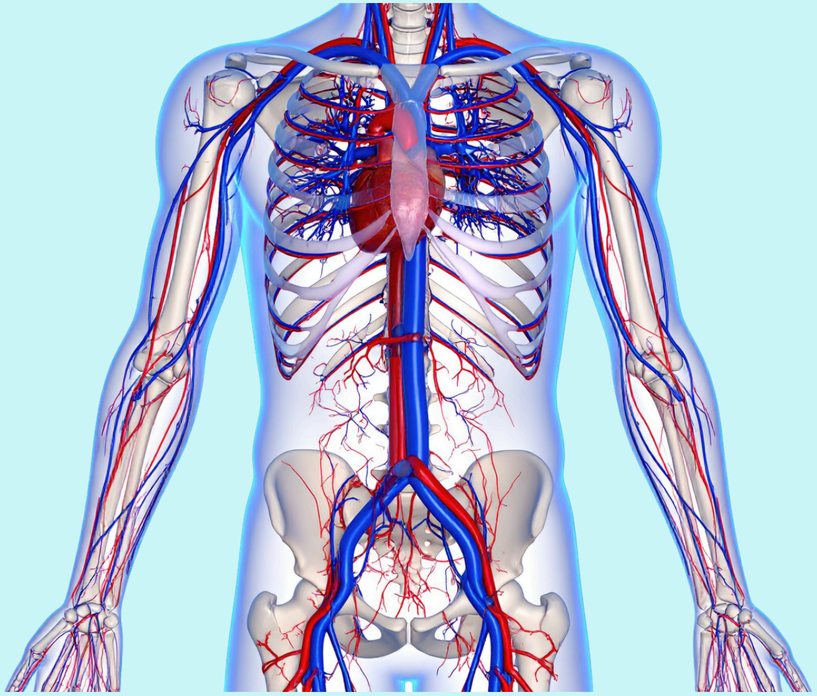
- Anatomy of the Digestive System Packet
- Digestive System - Structure and Function slide show and graphic organizer.
- Digestive System Study Guide
- Digestive System Video

Unit 6 Generalization

- Structures of digestive system determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the digestive system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The digestive system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The digestive system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 7

Circulatory System



Purpose

- Explore how the circulatory system interacts with other body systems to provide energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Interdependence
- Structure
- Function
- Systems
- Interactions
- Circulation

Activities

- Getting to Know the Circulatory System
- Human Circulatory System
- The Internal and External Anatomy of the Human Heart
- Heart Internal and External
- The Beat Goes On/ Labeling the Heart
- Blood Flow Through the Heart Slideshow and Video for Review
- Three Types of Blood Vessels Slideshow
- Blood Composition Slide
- Independent Heart Rate Lab Proposal and Checklist (Lab Safety Contract, attached)
- Circulatory System Study Guide

Unit 7 Generalizations

- Structures of the circulatory system determine function and efficiency.
- Functions of the circulatory system contribute to energy transformations in the human body.
- The circulatory system provides essential materials for energy production and transformation.
- The circulatory system optimizes homeostasis.
- The interdependence of organ systems promotes energy transformation and maintains homeostasis.

Unit 8

Nervous System

Purpose

- Explore how the nervous systems interacts with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis

Concepts

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence
- Communication
- Environment
- Memory

Activities

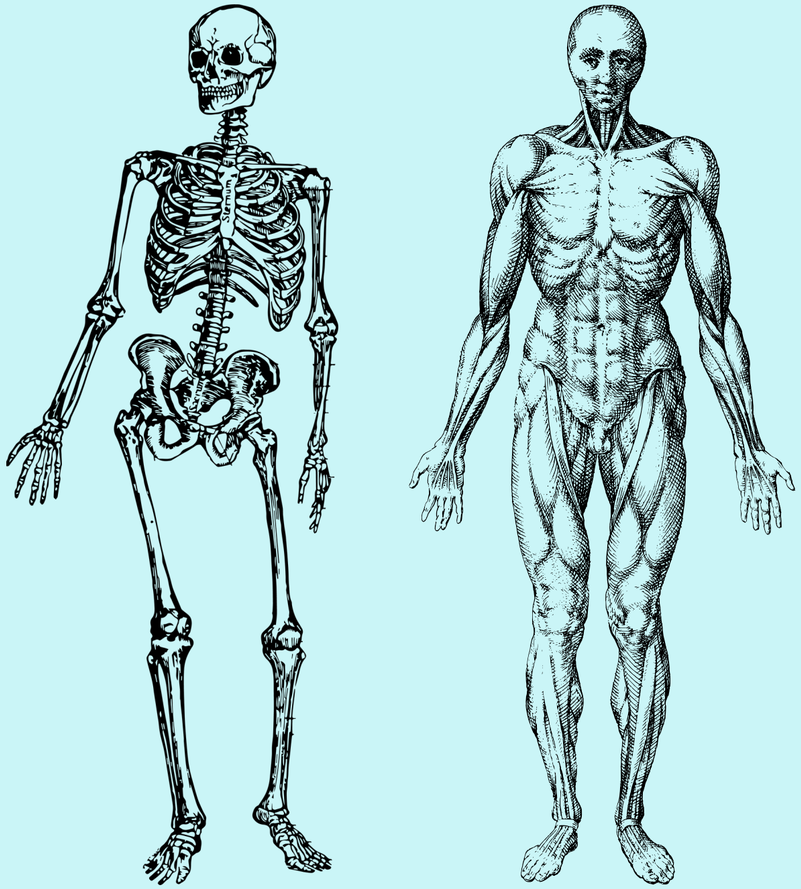
- Nervous System slide show and guided notes
- Nervous System Study Guide
- Discover Education - The Central Nervous System Studio Board (worksheet Lobes of the Brain)
- Diagraming a reflex arc
- Neural Processing Time Lab

Unit 8 Generalizations

- Structures of the nervous system function to respond to stimulus.
- Energy transformations at sensory receptors—such as mechanical pressure, chemical interactions, or light—enable the conversion of external stimuli into electrical signals.
- The central nervous system (CNS) and peripheral nervous system (PNS) interact to detect changes in the environment and produce an appropriate response.
- Memories formed through past experiences influence learned behaviors, and in what ways do these behaviors help the nervous and endocrine systems work together to maintain homeostasis in changing internal and external conditions.
- Communication through the nervous system coordinate the activities of multiple body systems, and the interdependence of these systems is essential for maintaining homeostasis when the body encounters internal or external changes.

Unit 9

Musculoskeletal System (Optional)



Purpose

- An OPTIONAL unit that explores how the skeletal and muscular systems interacts with other body systems to utilize energy and maintain homeostasis.

Lens

- Energy Transformation
- Homeostasis
- Movement, support and protection

Concepts

- Structure & Function
- Systems and Interactions
- Interdependence

Activities

- Muscle Types slide show and graphic organizer for guided notes
- Bones, Four parts of Human Bone slideshows and Bones, Joints and Ligaments guided notes.
- Muscle/Skeleton Review

Unit 9 Generalizations (Optional)

- Movement results from coordinated interactions among interdependent body systems
- Interdependent body systems interact to protect vital organs and maintain structural support.
- The musculoskeletal system relies on the interaction of various tissues and organs to support, protect and facilitate movement.
- The musculoskeletal system coordinates muscles, bones, and connective tissues to adjust strength, endurance, and flexibility, allowing the body to meet different physical demands and energy needs.

Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection

How has the curriculum improved from the original version to the this newly revised version?

This revised curriculum began to evolve in 2023 after conferring with the science department at Reed Intermediate School. As the NGSS is a framework, ours covering 6-8, it is important that all of the topics are covered to support the the next level. We decided which standards would be covered by each grade level then proceeded to create the current curriculum. This version is very cohesive. It truly follows one unifying idea throughout the year. All of the activities and skills derive from the idea that energy flows through matter and matter through energy which sustains life on our planet. This ensures that all of our student have shared experiences at Newtown Middle School.

Reflecting back on the process, what improvements to the curriculum do you look forward to implementing the most?

While the curriculum has been revised, it is something that we have been working on since the adoption of the NGSS standards in 2018. As a team, we are constantly reviewing it to insure that we are meeting the needs of our students. We have added a variety of activities that address different learning styles, like Adventures of a Red Blood Cell and Digestive System Game. We also have included many opportunities for the students to investigate, experiment and collect data on the natural process that we cover such as mechanical and chemical weathering, osmosis, and the effect of exercise on heart rate. These also help our students build the skills they need to be successful in the future. We are excited about this revised version because each unit relates and builds on the previous unit, uniting the major concepts. Our goal is that this will help our students learn how to apply new information to previous leaning. This will enable them to have valuable discourse about their learning and use this to solve problems.

The 7th Grade Team

Kathy Dye, Judy Cattanese, Susan Musco

Grade 8 Science

Curriculum Presentation 2026
Presented by: Jennifer Betesh

Grade 8 Science Curriculum Summarized

The Grade 8 Science curriculum is organized around three core disciplines: Biology, Physics, and Astronomy. Biology units emphasize how traits are inherited from parent to offspring, how sexual reproduction increases variation within a species, and how natural selection and adaptations drive evolutionary change over many generations. Instruction is grounded in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and emphasizes inquiry-based learning, where students ask questions, analyze evidence, and construct explanations. Students regularly engage in cooperative group work to investigate real-world phenomena, share ideas, and deepen their understanding through scientific discourse.

Unit 1: Scientific Inquiry

Purpose: To understand how scientific knowledge is created and communicated.

Lens: Lens: Communication, data collection and analysis, evidence, reasoning, fair tests, variables, independent and dependent variables, controlled variables, observations, inferences and predictions

Concepts: Analyze, Evidence, Reasoning, data collection, graphing, asking questions

Activities:

Observation, Inference Prediction Activity

Identifying Variables M&M Lab and Practice Worksheets

Collecting and Graphing Data Practice

Claim-Evidence-Reasoning Paragraphs

Unit 1 Generalizations

1. Scientists identify variables and constants in order to develop a testable hypothesis to find solutions to scientific questions.

2. Scientists present data in data table and graphs to help visualize information more clearly and identify trends.

3. The ability to control variables, identify sources of error and conduct multiple trials creates a fair and valid test.

Unit 2: Asexual Reproduction & Genetics

Purpose: To explore the basics of genetics and understand that asexual reproduction results in genetically identical organisms.

Lens: Structure and Function

Concepts: Cell division, reproductive strategies, genetic material, and characteristics

Activities:

- Reproductive strategies activity
- Tour of the Basics
- A Recipe for Traits (Dog DNA activity)
- Color a DNA molecule
- Strawberry DNA Extraction Lab (Partnership with Newtown High School)
- Summative Assessment

Unit 2: Generalizations

Topic Generalizations:

1. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
2. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction.
3. Asexual reproduction creates offspring with identical genetic information.
4. Genetic material is read and processed by a cell to fabricate proteins which are the building blocks of life.
5. Structures found in cells determine an organism's attributes.
6. Asexual reproductive processes have been adapted by multicellular organisms for other essential life functions.

Unit 3: Sexual Reproduction & Heredity

Purpose: To understand that reproduction is critical to the continuation of a species and that sexual reproduction allows for diversity in a species.

Lens: Stability and change

Concepts: sexual reproduction, diversity, mutations, animal behaviors and plant structures

Activities

- Reproductive Strategies Inquiry Activity
- QFT with “Twins” Phenomena
- Flower Dissection
- Design a Flower Model (optional)
- Heredity and the Environment
- Inventory of My Traits
- Punnett Squares
- Genetics with a Smile
- Monster Invasion

Unit 3: Generalizations

Topic generalizations:

1. Asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information compared to sexual reproduction which results in offspring with genetic variation.
2. Structural changes to genes (mutations) located on chromosomes may transform proteins and in turn, may result in harmful, beneficial, or neutral changes to the structure and function of the organism.
3. Characteristic animal behaviors ensure the probability of successful reproduction of animals.
4. Specialized plant structures ensure the probability of successful reproduction of plants.
5. Both environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.

Unit 4: Adaptations & Natural Selection

Purpose: To understand what is necessary for the continuation and survival of a species in its environment.

Lens: Change over time

Concepts:

- Structure & function
- Stability & change
- Mutations & adaptations
- Evidence for evolution
- Natural & artificial selection

Activities:

- Stick Bug Lab Activity
- Peppered Moth Lab Activity
- Create a Creature Adaptations Project
- X-Men Mutations Activity
- Evidence for Evolution Stations
- Artificial Selection (Jigsaw Style) Presentation Project

Extension: March Mammal Madness

Unit 4: Generalizations

1. Patterns in the fossil record that document the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth and provide evidence to show that species have changed over time.
2. Anatomical structures from different species, both current and past, provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
3. Observations of embryological development across multiple different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships (common ancestry).
4. Variations in genetic information from different species provide evidence for evolutionary relationships.
5. Genetic diversity within a species population esures the probability that some individuals will survive and reproduce in a specific environment.
6. Natural Selection may contribute to changes in the frequency of traits over time.
7. Humans use Artificial Selection to alter/design/change their environment to suit their needs.

Unit 5: Physics (Forces in Motion)

Purpose: -To explore and understand what makes objects move, stop moving or change directions.
-To explore and understand what causes changes in motion and how potential and kinetic energy are related to an object's motion.

Lens: Cause and effect

Concepts:

- Newton's laws of motion
- Gravity
- Inertia
- Forces
- Potential and Kinetic Energy

Activities:

- Speed CPO Ramps Lab
- Distance versus Time Graphing Activities
- Newton's Laws of Motion Stations
- Paper Roller Coaster Problem Based Learning Activity
- Physics Carnival

Unit 5: Generalizations

1. Newton's laws of motion explain what keeps objects at rest and what keeps objects in motion.
2. Use models to demonstrate the concepts of force, acceleration, and potential & kinetic energy.
3. Altering an object's mass and/or speed causes changes to the energy of an object.

Unit 6: Earth in Space

Purpose: To understand the predictable patterns of motion relative to the Earth, Sun, and Moon and how these movements cause the phases of the moon, eclipses, and seasons.

Lens: Patterns and systems

Concepts: eclipses, seasons, phases of the moon, gravity and inertia, orbits

Activities:

- Astronomy Word Sort
- Astronomy Stations - Scale, Orbits and Gravity
- PhET Lab: Gravity & Orbits
- Reason for the Seasons Exploration
- Phases of the moon modeling & webquest
- Astronomy Model Summative Task

Unit 6: Generalizations

1. The interaction/interplay between gravity and the inertia of an object creates the predictable motion of objects in the solar system.
2. The orbital pathways of the planets and moons and the position of the Sun lead to interactions that produce astronomical phenomena.
3. The relative positions of the Earth and the Sun produce climatic variability across the globe.

Curriculum Writing Self-Reflection

How has the curriculum improved from the original version to the this newly revised version?

This revised version of our curriculum has been updated to place the students at the center of their learning. Our new curriculum includes the NGSS standards, inquiry lessons, student-centered activities, as well as a major focus for the year of biology and ending with physics and astronomy. Our physics unit is focused around the idea of building a "paper-roller coaster" which is a highlight of the year when we present them to one another in our "physics carnival."

Reflecting back on the process, what improvements to the curriculum do you look forward to implementing the most?

While the curriculum has been revised, it is something that we have been working on since the adoption of the NGSS standards in 2018. We constantly work to improve our lessons and units to create driving questions that engage the students, based on their needs and interests. I am most excited to get the students in the driver's seat and really steer the direction of the unit. They will be coming up with the driving questions that lead us through the unit lessons.

Newtown Public Schools

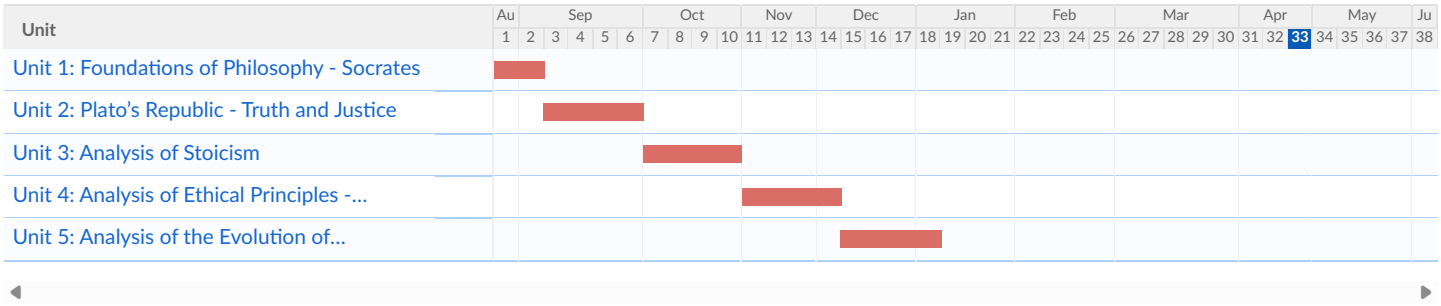
Atlas

Philosophy (Due for Review/Revision)

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Wednesday, Apr 8, 2026 by Eberts, Ryan

Unit Calendar by Year



5 Units found

Unit Plan

Unit 1: Foundations of Philosophy - Socrates

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

Week 1 - Week 2 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Apr 8, 2026 by Eberts, Ryan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Purpose of the Unit: This unit will examine the life and times of Socrates in order to understand the the genesis of Socratic discourse.

Overarching goals for this unit are to examine the following:
The Students will:

- Develop students' ability to think critically through class discourse, particularly the Socratic Method.
- Explore key ethical questions about virtue, justice, and courage.
- Understand Socrates' life as a truth seeker and his willingness to sacrifice his life for it.

Essential Question(s)

Is an unexamined life worth living?

Where do we see the impact of Socrates?

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Questioning

Concepts: Inquiry, Ignorance, Wisdom, Choice, Reflection, Status Quo, Consequences, Discomfort

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. Effective inquiry both reveals and combats ignorance.
2. Questioning challenges the status quo which generates a consequence.
3. Wisdom develops through discomfort and reflection.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Effective questioning both reveals and combats ignorance.

1a. What is Philosophy? (F)
1b. How does philosophy enrich life for both the individual and the collective?(C)
1c. Who was Socrates? What did he do? (F)
1d. What is the Socratic Method? (C)
1e. How did the life and experiences of Socrates shape his world view? (C)
1f. Is the unexamined life worth living? (P)

2. Questioning that challenges the status quo has consequences.

2a. Why was Socrates put on trial? (F)
2b. In what ways did the death of Socrates prove that ideas are dangerous? (C)
2c. In what ways could constant questioning be dangerous to a society? (C)

2d. Is the risk of social conflict worth the benefit of challenging long standing beliefs?(P)
2e. Should individuals follow unjust laws? (P)

3. Wisdom grows through discomfort and reflection.
3a. How is wisdom traditionally defined? (F)
3b. How can admitting ignorance be a form of wisdom? (C)
3c. How does professing ignorance accelerate acquisition of knowledge? (C)
3d. Can there be growth without discomfort? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Definition of Philosophy, Life of Socrates, Trial of Socrates, Socratic Method, Definition of Wisdom, Ignorance

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

1. **What is Philosophy - Students learn what philosophy is by wrestling with big life questions and the importance of thinking deeply**
2. **Socratic Circle - Students take part in a guided discussion building on each others ideas.**
3. **Trial of Socrates Simulation - Students act out the trial of Socrates to exploring the ideas of truth, justice and the courage of challenging the powerful.**
4. **Unexamined Life - Personal Inquiry Journal - Students write statements of belief and choices to see how questioning can aid understanding.**
5. **Where do we see Socrates today?- Students look for examples in today's world where people question ideas or stand up for truth like Socrates did.**

Core Learning Activities_ Unit 1a -What is Philosophy.pdf
Core Learning Activities_ Unit 1a -What is Philosophy (1).pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 1 - Unexamined Life - Personal Journal.pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 1 - Where do we See Socrates Today.pdf
Core Learning Activities_ Unit 1 -Trial of Socrates .pdf

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate
All Grades
Critical Thinker
A critical thinker is a learner who analyzes and evaluates information to make connections and draw conclusions.

- [x] Considers and understands multiple perspectives
- [x] Uses credible data to support ideas

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Philosophy, Socratic Method, Socratic Paradox, Wisdom, Unexamined Life, Status Quo, Militus, Chaerphon

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Socrates.pdf | Socrates and Democracy | SAIL SOCRATES.pdf | Socrates and Plato.pptx | Plato's Apology | Plato's Crito

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Socrates Unit Test | Written Test

This assessment measures student understanding of the major ideas connected to the life and philosophy of Socrates. Students demonstrate knowledge of the Socratic Method, the importance of questioning beliefs, and the idea that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” The test also reviews the historical events surrounding the trial of Socrates in Athens, where he was accused of corrupting the youth and disrespecting the city’s gods. Finally, students should understand how Socrates defended his commitment to truth and accepted death rather than abandon philosophy or his principles.

No Standards Assessed

Expository Writing: The Life and Importance of Socrates | Summative | Expository Essay

Expository Essay

This assessment asks students to explain the life, ideas, and historical importance of Socrates. Students should describe how Socrates used questioning, known as the Socratic Method, to challenge people to think more carefully about truth, knowledge, and morality. The essay should also explain the events surrounding his trial in Athens and why he chose to accept death rather than abandon his philosophical principles. Finally, students should discuss why Socrates’ ideas were so influential and how they shaped the philosophy of his student Plato and the development of Western philosophy.

No Standards Assessed

Socrates Unit Test.pdf | Expository Writing_ The Life and Importance of Socrates — Assessment Overview.pdf

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Unit Plan

Unit 2: Plato's Republic - Truth and Justice

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

Week 3 - Week 6 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Apr 8, 2026 by Eberts, Ryan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Unit 2: Plato's Republic - Truth and Justice

Purpose of the Unit: This unit builds on the study of Socrates from the first unit. It moves into the work of Plato and the theory of the philosopher king, examining the role of truth and justice in leadership, government and society.

Overarching goals for this unit

The Students will:

- Understand the impact of Plato on modern philosophy.
- Examine the influence that Socrates had on Plato.
- Establish standards for what is considered right and wrong.
- Explore the principles of justice and fairness- are they always aligned?

Essential Question: What role does truth play in creating a fair and just society?

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Truth and Justice

Concepts: The Political State, Philosopher-king, Corruption, Leadership, Laws, Morality/Moral Responsibility

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. **The political state determines what is just and implements and enforces just laws.**
2. **No state can be truly just without the leadership of a philosopher king.**
3. **Philosopher kings see truth clearly and therefore have a moral responsibility to lead and enlighten others.**
4. **Corruption violates the principles of justice.**
5. **Justice relies on truth but in some cases, justice may require its omission.**

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. The duty of the political state is to determine what is moral and implement and enforce moral laws.

1a. Who is Plato and how was he influenced by Socrates? (F)
1b. What are some of the key ideas of Plato's philosophy? (F)
1c. What is morality? (C)
1d. What makes a law moral? (C)
1e. What is a Philosopher King? What is the role of the philosopher king? (F)
1f. How does the philosopher king determine morality? (F)
1g. What is the theory of forms? (F)
1h. How do different societies evaluate competing rights claims? (C)

2. No state can be truly just without the leadership of the philosopher king.

2a. What is justice? (F)
2b. Should a just political state advocate for equal distribution of wealth? (C)
2c. Is the adoption of democratic principles the best way to maintain justice and morality? (C)
2d. Should the rights of the minority be sacrificed for the benefit of the majority? (C)
2e. Has there ever been a just state? (P)

3. Philosopher kings see truth clearly and therefore have a moral responsibility to lead and enlighten others.

3a. How is traditionally truth defined? (F)
3b. What are defining metrics for one who sees truth clearly? (F)
3c. Is truth ever open to interpretation? (C)
3d. Is it ethical to withhold truth from those who are not ready to hear it? (P)
3e. Can a leader who understands truth be trusted to act selflessly? (P)
3f. Can leadership that does not understand truth be trusted? (P)

4. Corruption violates the principles of justice.

4a. What constitutes corruption? (F)
4b. How does leadership that seeks personal gain affect the state? (C)
4c. To what extent does corruption exacerbate class stratification? (C)
4d. Is a reluctant ruler (philosopher king) the most just? (C)
4e. Does personal wealth or private attachment always diminish the potential for just rule? (P)

5. Justice relies on truth but in some cases, justice may require its omission.

5a. When is it appropriate for leaders to lie to their citizens if it's for the greater good? (C)
5b. How can lying lead to justice? (C)
5c. Would an absolute commitment to truth ever lead to justice? (P)
1e. Why is lying sometimes necessary in the maintenance of the political state? (C)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Morality, Justice, Duty, Plato, Truth, Philosopher King, Theory of Forms, The Noble Lie, Allegory of the Cave

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

1. Allegory of the Cave Visual Analysis - Students analyze images from Plato's Allegory of the Cave to understand the importance of the Philosopher King and the futility of his position.

2. Philosopher King Debate - Students debate whether society should be led by knowledgeable experts with total power or the uncertainty of democracy. Do we let the passengers steer the ship

3. Justice Scenario Stations - Students rotate through real-world ethical scenarios

4. Noble Lies- Students examine Plato's concept of the "Noble Lie" and discuss whether deception can be justified by the government in order to promote stability

5. Build the Just State Project Students design their own model society using Plato's principles of justice, leadership, and moral structure.

6. Modern Leadership - A connection to Plato - Students analyze modern leaders and determine whether their leadership reflects Plato's ideals of truth, wisdom, and moral responsibility.

Core Learning Activities - Unit 2 - Allegory of the Cave.pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 2 -Philosopher King Debate.pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 2 - Justice Scenarios.pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 2 - Noble Lie.pdf
Core Learning Activities - Unit 2 - Just State Project.pdf
Core Learning Activities -Unit 2 - Modern Leadership.pdf

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Philosopher King.pptx
Plato's Republic.pdf
SAIL SOCRATES (1).pdf
Socrates and Plato (1).pptx
plato_-_the_republic.pdf

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Plato Unit Test: An overview of key concepts from Unit 2 | Summative | Written Test

This assessment measures the understanding of the major ideas we studied in Plato's philosophy, especially those presented in *The Republic*. Students will need to demonstrate knowledge of key concepts such as justice, the tripartite soul, philosopher kings, and the Allegory of the Cave. The test also asks you to apply these ideas to real-world situations and explain how Plato believed a just society and a just person should behave

No Standards Assessed

Unit Assessment - Storyboard Assignment_ The Lives and Philosophies of Socrates and Plato (1).pdf

Plato & The Republic – Multiple Choice Test

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Unit Plan

Unit 3: Analysis of Stoicism

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

Week 7 - Week 10 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Apr 8, 2026 by Eberts, Ryan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Overarching goals for this unit are to examine the following:

- Explore how stoicism began with Zeno's shipwreck
- Evaluate how Seneca dealt with the consequences of anger
- Understand the challenges that Marcus Aurelius had as emperor of Rome
- Understand the core principles of Stoic philosophy
- Explore how stoicism responds to suffering and adversity
- Apply Stoic ideas to modern life and personal experience
- Evaluate the limits and criticisms of Stoic philosophy
- Examine Admiral Stockdale and his famous paradox

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Lens: Resilience

Concepts: Reason, Self Discipline, Detachment, Equanimity, Acceptance, Suppression of Emotion, Self-Mastery, Dichotomy of Control, Stockdale Paradox

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. **Reason and self discipline empower individuals to rise above *(consider a verb like overcome? respond with conscious choice? refrain from acting on? transcend?)* emotional impulse.**
2. **Detachment and acceptance cultivate equanimity in the face of life's uncertainties.**
3. **Understanding the dichotomy of control makes it possible to endure hardship with both realism and hope, as expressed in the Stockdale Paradox.**

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Reason and self discipline empower individuals to rise above emotional impulse.

1a. How did Seneca define anger? (F)
1b. Why did Seneca view anger as destructive? (F)
1c. What is the difference between responding and reacting? (C)
1d. How can reason help people respond to suffering rather than react to it? (C)
1e. How do Stoics distinguish between feeling an emotion and being ruled by it? (C)
1f. Does emotional suppression diminish the humanity of an individual? (P)

2. Detachment and acceptance cultivate equanimity in the face of life's uncertainties.

2a. What happened to Zeno in the historic shipwreck? (F)

2b. How did the shipwreck shape the philosophical path of Zeno? (C)
2c. How do Stoics define equanimity? (F)

2d. Why is equanimity considered a virtue in Stoicism? (C)

2e. Why do Stoics emphasize detachment from external events and outcomes? (C)
2f. Can detachment from people or goals ever become unhealthy or selfish? (P)
2g. Is it possible to fully accept suffering without becoming passive? (P)

3. Understanding the dichotomy of control makes it possible to endure hardship with both realism and hope, as expressed in the Stockdale Paradox.

3a. What is the Stockdale Paradox? (F)
3b. How did Admiral Stockdale embody Stoic principle during his captivity? (C)
3c. How does understanding what we can and cannot control, the Dichotomy of Control, change the experience of adversity? (C)
3d. Why is hope compatible with Stoic acceptance of fate? (C)

3e. *How* can focusing only on what can be controlled lead to ignoring social responsibility? (C)

3f. In extreme suffering, is it realistic—or even possible—to maintain hope without self-deception? (C)
3g. How does the acceptance of what we cannot control change the way we experience pain or adversity? (C)
3h. How do historical or modern examples (e.g., Viktor Frankl, Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai) illustrate the power of internal control in the face of hardship? (C)
3i. Does focusing solely on the dichotomy of control neglect responsibility in *(for?)* changing unjust external conditions? (P)

Content Knowledge

Critical facts and information that students are expected to ***KNOW*** *at the end of the unit.*

Update needed
Deontology, Utilitarianism, Kant, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mills

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Core Learning Activity - Unit 3 - Zeno' s Shipwreck .pdf

Core Learning Activity - Unit 3 - Seneca and Anger.pdf

Core Learning Activity - Unit 3 - Dichotomy of Control Sorting Activity .pdf

Core Learning Activity - Unit 3 - Marcus Aurelius Leadership Case Study.pdf

Core Learning Activity - Unit 2 - The Stockdale Paradox Discussion.pdf

Core Learning Activity - Unit 3 - Stoicism in Modern Life Personal Application.pdf

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Lawhead, William F. *The Philosophical Journey: An Interactive Approach*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Pub., 2000. Print.

Marcus Aurelius, one of Rome's most admired emperors, is known both for his rule and for his contrib

Stoicism_.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUStWm_AkaY

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHonWT6849A&t=370s

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Critical Analysis | Summative | Expository Essay

- **Construct a critical analysis** of which of the ethical approaches is most similar to your own beliefs. When writing your summary try to provide an example of where you have faced a dilemma and how you decided upon your actions, as a result of your beliefs. Please include: What would happen if everyone in the world followed this theory? How does this theory compare to the others you have studied?

3 Standards Assessed

Ethics Championship | Formative | Other oral assessments

- This will be a set of debate-like competitions in which groups try to make the strongest case in discussing a moral issue using a prescribed ethical system.

3 Standards Assessed

Stoicism & My Life – Personal Reflection Assessment.pdf

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Unit Plan

Unit 4: Analysis of Ethical Principles - Utilitarianism and Deontology

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

Week 11 - Week 14 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Apr 8, 2026 by Eberts, Ryan

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Overarching goals for this unit are to examine the following:

- Analyze how Kant, Bentham, and Mill evaluate ethical choices through different philosophical lenses.
- Explore the relationship between intention, duty, and consequences in determining moral action.
- Understand key distinctions between deontological and utilitarian ethics.
- Critique the moral arguments made by Kant, Bentham, and Mill, including strengths and weaknesses.
- Examine the possibility of moral autonomy in the face of social and biological constraints
- Apply ethical frameworks to real-world moral dilemmas in law, public policy, and daily life
- Evaluate how ethical theories shape concepts of justice, rights, and the collective good.

Essential Question(s):

Does the end justify the means?

Can doing the ethically right thing ever lead to a bad outcome?

This unit bridges ancient schools of thought from previous units with modern thinking.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Conceptual Lens: Morality

Concepts: Human dignity, collective good, hypothetical vs categorical imperative, egalitarian ethics, higher vs lower pleasures, the harm principle, deontology, duty, heteronomy, pure practical reason, individual rights, social conditioning

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. **Duty defines moral action more than consequences.**
2. **The collective good justifies the sacrifice of individual rights.**
3. **Reason overcomes the heteronomy and social conditioning that constrain moral autonomy.**
4. **Ethical theories illuminate, but cannot fully resolve, complex moral dilemmas.**

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. **Duty defines moral action more than consequences.**
   1a. What is duty? (F)
   1b. What are deontological ethics? (F)
   1c. What does Kant mean by acting in accordance with duty? (C)
   1d. How does emphasizing duty over consequences shape deontological ethics? (C)
   1e. Can an action be moral if it leads to harm, as long as the intention was good? (P)
   1f. Should leaders prioritize moral rules even if the result is less happiness overall? (P)

2. **The collective good justifies the sacrifice of individual rights.**

2a. What is the principle of utility as proposed by Bentham and Mill? (F)
2b. What is utilitarianism? (F)
2c. How does utilitarianism define the "greater good"? (C)
2d. Should one person be harmed to save many? Why or why not? (P)
2e. Does the collective good alway supersede the rights of the individual? (P)

3. Reason overcomes the heteronomy and social conditioning that constrain moral autonomy.

3a. What does Kant mean by “heteronomy”? (F)
3b. How do upbringing and culture interfere with truly free moral choices? (C)
3c. How does reason affect morality? (C)
3d. Can moral decisions ever be fully autonomous? (C)
3e. Are people responsible for immoral actions if environment shapes behavior? (P)

4. Ethical theories illuminate, but cannot fully resolve, complex moral dilemmas.

4a. What are the key features of both utilitarian and deontological ethics? (C)
4b. Why do different ethical frameworks reach different conclusions about the same dilemma? (C)
4c. Would following a single ethical theory produce better practical decisions? (P)
4d. Is it possible for any ethical theory to offer universal moral answers? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Update needed
Rawls, Nozick, Justice, economic success, Karl Marx

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Core Learning Activities - Unit 4 - Kant vs Bentham.pdf
Trolley Problem Decision Stations.pdf

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Lawhead, William F. *The Philosophical Journey: An Interactive Approach*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Pub., 2000. Print.

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

In Class Debate | Formative | Other oral assessments

- Liberalism v Libertarianism - Students will be assigned both one side of the resolution and write a speech in support of their position.

3 Standards Assessed

Video | Summative | Other Visual Assessments

- Create a video of what life would be like if we strictly applied the ideals of Nozick and Rawls to today's society.

3 Standards Assessed

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Unit Plan

Unit 5: Analysis of the Evolution of Existential Thought

Newtown High School / Grade 11 / Social Studies

Week 15 - Week 18 | 5 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Mar 19, 2026 by Foss, David

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Overarching goals for this unit are to examine the following:

- Understand the ideas of Nietzche, Frankl, Sartre, Camus.
- Examine the relationship between suffering and existence.
- Critique the benefits and shortcomings of organized religion.
- Analyze the value of living an authentic life (reject living in bad faith).
- Evaluate the acceptance of the mundane - the value of Sisyphean tasks.
- Determine if morality can exist without religion.
- Determine if “existence precedes essence.”

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Conceptual Lens: Freedom

Concepts: Bad Faith, Freedom, Anxiety, Death, Leap of Faith, “ubermensch”, last man, eternal recurrence, will to power, God, Sisyphean tasks, absurdity, Existentialism, religion, indifferent universe, meaning, “slave morality”, “master morality”

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

1. **Existentialism posits that meaning is found in and through life not through religion.**
2. **Overcoming moral constraints to individually define values will lead to freedom.**
3. **Freedom requires embracing the pain and agony in life.**
4. **Individuals must create their own values without external moral absolutes.**
5. **The absurd arises when humans, searching for meaning, confront an indifferent universe.**

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1. Existentialism posits that meaning is found in and through life not through religion.

1a. What is existentialism? (C)
1b. Which comes first- essence or existence? (C)
1c. What constitutes religion? (C)
1d. What is “slave morality”? (C)
1e. How does slave morality inhibit human progress? (C)
1f. Can life have meaning without religion? (P)
1g. What purpose does religion serve? (P)

2. Overcoming moral constraints to individually define values will lead to freedom.

2a. How do philosophers like Camus and Sartre approach the meaning of suffering? (C)
2b. What is the role of pain in the formation of one’s authentic self? (C)
2c. How can meaning be found in suffering? (C)
2d. Is an existential awakening the truth? (P)

3. Freedom requires embracing the pain and agony in life.

3a. What is “master morality”? (C)

3b. What can we learn from Nietzsche’s Superman (“ubermensch”)? (C) *Consider the following to remove personal pronoun and determine what is needed to scaffold the generalization: According to Nietzsche, what makes/defines an “ubermensch”? (C) What is the value/benefit of Nietzsche’s “ubermensch”? How can individuals benefit from*

3c. How does Nitzsche view suffering in relation to human growth and creativity? (C)

3d. Would a society that promotes (or Would a society devoted to) the development of “ubermensch” devolve into chaos? (P)

4. The absurd arises when humans, searching for meaning, confront an indifferent universe.

4a. What does Albert Camus mean by "the absurd"? (C)

4b. How can “meaning” be found in a “meaningless life”? (C)

4c. What are some literary or historical examples of people facing an absurd situation? (C)

4d. Can a person live a fulfilling life without believing that life has inherent meaning? (P)

4e. Is Camus correct in stating that “religion is philosophical suicide”? (P)

4f. What makes life worth living? (P)

Content Knowledge

*Critical facts and information that students are expected to **KNOW** at the end of the unit.*

Nietzsche
Sartre

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

Lawhead, William F. *The Philosophical Journey: An Interactive Approach*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Pub., 2000. Print.

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

Newtown Public Schools

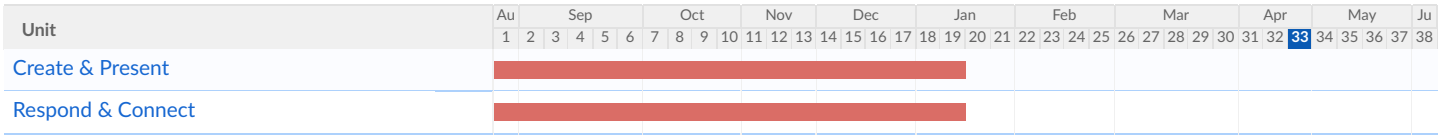
Atlas

Mixed Media (Under Review/Revision)

Newtown High School / High School / F&AA: Art & Music

3 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Wednesday, Apr 8, 2026 by Purcaro, Frank

Unit Calendar by Year



2 Units found

Unit Plan

Create & Present

Newtown High School / High School / F&AA: Art & Music

Week 1 - Week 19 | 3 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Feb 4, 2026 by Womack, Annette

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Students will explore the creative process through idea generation, research, experimenting, & producing mixed media artworks. Throughout the process, students will create, think, analyze, reflect, and interpret art all while developing their own, unique artistic voice.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Conceptual Lens:
Experimentation

Concepts:

- Ideas
- Development
- Experiment
- Mixed-media materials
- Creativity
- Risk Taking
- Disciplines
- Research
- Reflecting
- Revising
- Planning
- Process
- Product
- Artistic voice
- Personal Expression
- Audience
- Story
- Message
- Perception
- Communication
- Interpretation
- Designing
- Craftsmanship
- Presentation
- Display
- Artistic value

Generalizations

Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to ***UNDERSTAND*** *at the end of the unit.*

Students will understand that:

1. Artistic experimentation leads to creative expression.
2. Materials shape the viewer's perception.
3. Intentional planning and reflection deepens conceptual understanding within and beyond the studio environment.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1a. What are the steps of the creative process? (F)
1b. What are sources of inspiration for artists? (C)
1c. Does the mixed-media process enable acquisition of one's artistic voice? (P)

4. A strong visual presentation of work enhances conceptual clarity.
5. Craftsmanship contributes to perceived artistic value.
6. Risk-taking in art helps flexibility in thinking.

2a. What are some common materials used in mixed-media artwork (F)
2b. How can materials tell a story? (C)

3a. What is an artistic plan? (F)
3b. Why do artists reflect on personal work? (C)
3c. Is a plan always necessary? (P)

4a. What are ways artists display work? (F)
4b.What's more important, the process or the product? (P)

5a. Why is craftsmanship important? (F)
5b. How can an artist balance spontaneity with quality? (C)

6a. How can mixed media art influence creation in other artistic disciplines? (C)
6b. How do artists come up with ideas? (C)
6c. What does it mean to take a creative risk? (P)

Content Knowledge

Critical facts and information that students are expected to ***KNOW*** *at the end of the unit.*

Students will know:

- The steps of the creative process (brainstorming, research, experimenting, planning, creating, refining, reflecting, presenting)
- Elements and principles of art & design
- How to research and brainstorm through specific browser searches, inspiration through other media, sketchbooks, journaling, mind-mapping, etc.
- How different materials behave and interact with each other.
- How to use tools and materials safely
- How to reflect and revise one's own work
- How to prep artwork for display and publication
- How presentation can influence interpretation

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NCCAS: Visual Arts
NCCAS: HS Proficient
Creating

Investigate - Plan - Make Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed. Essential Question(s): What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking? What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks? How does collaboration expand the creative process?

☑ VA:Cr1.1.Ia: Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors.

Investigate - Plan - Make Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals. Essential Question(s): How does knowing the contexts histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design? Why do artists follow or break from established traditions? How do artists determine what resources and criteria are needed to formulate artistic investigations?

☑ VA:Cr1.2.Ia: Shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art or design.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches. Essential Question(s): How do artists work? How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective? How do artists and designers learn from trial and error?

☑ VA:Cr2.1.Ia: Engage in making a work of art or design without having a preconceived plan.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers balance experimentation and safety, freedom and responsibility while developing and creating artworks. Essential Question(s): How do artists and designers care for and maintain materials, tools, and equipment? Why is it important for safety and health to understand and follow correct procedures in handling materials, tools, and equipment? What responsibilities come with the freedom to create?

- [ ] VA:Cr2.2.Ia: Explain how traditional and non-traditional materials may impact human health and the environment and demonstrate safe handling of materials, tools, and equipment.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives. Essential Question(s): How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

- [ ] VA:Cr2.3.Ia: Collaboratively develop a proposal for an installation, artwork, or space design that transforms the perception and experience of a particular place.

Reflect - Refine – Continue Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work. Enduring Understanding: Artist and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, reflecting on, revising, and refining work over time. Essential Question(s): What role does persistence play in revising, refining, and developing work? How do artists grow and become accomplished in art forms? How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely?

- [ ] VA:Cr3.1.Ia: Apply relevant criteria from traditional and contemporary cultural contexts to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions for works of art and design in progress.

Presenting

Select Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Enduring Understanding: Artists and other presenters consider various techniques, methods, venues, and criteria when analyzing, selecting, and curating objects artifacts, and artworks for preservation and presentation. Essential Question(s): How are artworks cared for and by whom? What criteria, methods, and processes are used to select work for preservation or presentation? Why do people value objects, artifacts, and artworks, and select them for presentation?

- [ ] VA:Pr4.1.Ia: Analyze, select, and curate artifacts and/or artworks for presentation and preservation.

Analyze Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Enduring Understanding: Artists, curators and others consider a variety of factors and methods including evolving technologies when preparing and refining artwork for display and or when deciding if and how to preserve and protect it. Essential Question(s): What methods and processes are considered when preparing artwork for presentation or preservation? How does refining artwork affect its meaning to the viewer? What criteria are considered when selecting work for presentation, a portfolio, or a collection?

- [ ] VA:Pr5.1.Ia: Analyze and evaluate the reasons and ways an exhibition is presented.

Share Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Enduring Understanding: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented either by artists, museums, or other venues communicate meaning and a record of social, cultural, and political experiences resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding. Essential Question(s):What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?

- [ ] VA:Pr6.1.Ia: Analyze and describe the impact that an exhibition or collection has on personal awareness of social, cultural, or political beliefs and understandings.

NCCAS: HS Accomplished

Creating

Investigate - Plan - Make Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed. Essential Question(s): What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking? What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks? How does collaboration expand the creative process?

- [ ] VA:Cr1.1.IIa: Individually or collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.

Investigate - Plan - Make Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals. Essential Question(s): How does knowing the contexts histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design? Why do artists follow or break from established traditions? How do artists determine what resources and criteria are needed to formulate artistic investigations?

- [ ] VA:Cr1.2.IIa: Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and art-making approaches. Essential Question(s): How do artists work? How do artists and designers determine whether a particular direction in their work is effective? How do artists and designers learn from trial and error?

- [ ] VA:Cr2.1.IIa: Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers balance experimentation and safety, freedom and responsibility while developing and creating artworks. Essential Question(s): How do artists and designers care for and maintain materials, tools, and equipment? Why is it important for safety and health to understand and follow correct procedures in handling materials, tools, and equipment? What responsibilities come with the freedom to create?

- [ ] VA:Cr2.2.IIa: Demonstrate awareness of ethical implications of making and distributing creative work.

Investigate Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives. Essential Question(s): How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? How do artists and designers create works of art or design that effectively communicate?

- [ ] VA:Cr2.3.IIa: Redesign an object, system, place, or design in response to contemporary issues.

Reflect - Refine – Continue Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work. Enduring Understanding: Artist and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, reflecting on, revising, and refining work over time. Essential Question(s): What role does persistence play in revising, refining, and developing work? How do artists grow and become accomplished in art forms? How does collaboratively reflecting on a work help us experience it more completely?

- [ ] VA:Cr3.1.IIa: Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, re-engage, revise, and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision.

Presenting

Select Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation. Enduring Understanding: Artists and other presenters consider various techniques, methods, venues, and criteria when analyzing, selecting, and curating objects artifacts, and artworks for preservation and presentation. Essential Question(s): How are artworks cared for and by whom? What criteria, methods, and processes are used to select work for preservation or presentation? Why do people value objects, artifacts, and artworks, and select them for presentation?

- [ ] VA:Pr4.1.IIa: Analyze, select, and critique personal artwork for a collection or portfolio presentation.

Analyze Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. Enduring Understanding: Artists, curators and others consider a variety of factors and methods including evolving technologies when preparing and refining artwork for display and or when deciding if and how to preserve and protect it. Essential Question(s): What methods and processes are considered when preparing artwork for presentation or preservation? How does refining artwork affect its meaning to the viewer? What criteria are considered when selecting work for presentation, a portfolio, or a collection?

- [x] VA:Pr5.1.IIa: Evaluate, select, and apply methods or processes appropriate to display artwork in a specific place.

Share Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Enduring Understanding: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented either by artists, museums, or other venues communicate meaning and a record of social, cultural, and political experiences resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding. Essential Question(s):What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?

- [x] VA:Pr6.1.IIa: Make, explain, and justify connections between artists or artwork and social, cultural, and political history.

State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education. (2014). National Core Arts Standards. Dover, DE: State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

- Sketchbook prompts
  - Look to websites like...
    - The Art of Education Sketchbook Prompts
    - Inktober
    - Nature Journaling
- Visual journaling, list making, or mind-mapping
- Artistic investigations into historical and/or contemporary artists
- Experiment sheets or stations
- Demonstrations
- Project-directed studio time
- Exit tickets, bell ringers, and check-ins
- Critiques
- Process documentation
- Artists statements

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

- Composition
- Contrast
- Balance
- Emphasis
- Unity
- Rhythm
- Movement
- Space
- Texture
- Layers
- Collage
- Assemblage
- Found objects
- Transfer
- Relief (bas and alto)
- Repurpose
- Print
- Resist
- Texture
- Pattern
- Brainstorm
- Thumbnails
- Refine
- Experiment

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- Collage Techniques: A Guide for Artists and Illustrators
  by Gerald Brommer
- The Printmaking Bible, Revised Edition: The Complete Guide to Materials and Techniques
  by Ann d'Arcy Hughes and Hebe Vernon-Morris
- The Art Teacher's Book of Lists
  by Helen D. Hume
- Artists' Techniques and Materials (A Guide to Imagery) Paperback – October 2, 2006
  by Antonella Fuga
- Printing by Hand: A Modern Guide to Printing with Handmade Stamps, Stencils, and Silk Screens Hardcover-spiral – August 1, 2008
  by Lena Corwinh
- Andy Goldsworthy: A Collaboration with Nature
- Banksy
  by Stefano Antonelli and Gianluca Marziani
- El Anatsui: Art and Life Hardcover – January 5, 2021
  by Susan M. Vogel (Author)
- https://theartofeducation.edu/
- https://artsandculture.google.com/

- Craftsmanship
- Medium/media
- Technique
- Visual impact
- Symbolism
- Interpret
- Revise
- Critique

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Mixed Media_Environmental Art_Artist Statement_Rubric.docx creative rubric.pdf Copy of Sketchbook Rubric.jpg Basic photo Editting

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

- Using TAB or other choice-based lesson formats could allow students to take directions that best fit their needs.
- Check-ins with students are vital to monitoring pacing and adjusting content/quantity.

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

- Artist statements provide an avenue for purposeful writing and descriptive language
- Analyzing artworks, artistic styles, contemporary artists' statements, and articles help students learn the skill of summarizing
- Opportunities to compare and contrast artists/artworks/genres
- Possible Tier 2 & 3 vocab. Could make a word wall.

Unit Plan

Respond & Connect

Newtown High School / High School / F&AA: Art & Music

Week 1 - Week 19 | 3 Curriculum Developers | Last Updated: Mar 31, 2026 by Womack, Annette

Concept-Based Curriculum Unit Template

Purpose of the Unit

The overarching goal(s) of the unit.

Students will analyze artworks in a variety of mediums through discussion, critique, and creative interpretation. Students will develop visual literacy and use mixed-media creation as a means to visually respond, reflect, and connect across perspectives.

Conceptual Lens/Concepts

Concepts are the "big ideas" of the unit. The conceptual lens is a particular concept that focuses the thinking of the unit.

Conceptual Lens: Art is a conversation

Possible Concepts:

- Identity
- Self-reflection
- Perception
- Interpersonal connections
- empathy
- Dialogue
- communication
- Narrative
- Blend
- Layer
- Interpret
- Social justice
- Othering
- Art Activism
- Impact
- Environmentalism
- Consumption
- Cultural Voice
- Representation

Generalizations

*Critical conceptual relationships that students are expected to **UNDERSTAND** at the end of the unit.*

Students will understand that:

1. Engaging with art deepens understanding of the world and the self.
2. Art is a visual dialogue that transcends time and place.
3. Visual communication bears ethical responsibility.
4. Artists respond to and reflect on the world.

Guiding Questions

A combination of Factual (F), Conceptual (C) and Provocative/Debatable (P) questions that lead to the generalizations. Label each question (F), (C) or (P).

1a. What are some ways that a viewer can engage with art? (F)
1b. How does an artist's background influence the meaning of their artwork? (C)
1c. Can a person ever truly understand an artwork if that person didn't walk in the same shoes as the original artist? (P)

2a. What are some common symbols or visual imagery in historical or contemporary artworks? (F)

5. Mixed-media art empowers artists with freedom to integrate diverse materials, blend processes and layer.

2b. How can materials themselves add to a story? (C)
2c. How might artists from the past feel about the way we interpret, celebrate, or critique their work today? (P)

3a How can mixed media techniques express complex emotions or duality? (C)
3b. How can personal biases affect how one responds to a piece? (P)
3c. Can art be harmful? What level of social responsibility do artists have? (P)

4a. What are some cultural or historical themes in artwork throughout time? (F)
4b. In what ways can artists use different materials and techniques to emphasize or challenge societal norms? (C)
4c. Is it possible for artists to create without being influenced by the world around them? (P)

5a. What are some materials or techniques that mixed-media artists use? (F)
5b. How does combining different materials expand an artist's ability to communicate ideas or emotions? (C)
5c. Does using found objects or unconventional materials in art make a statement--or distract from the message? (P)

Content Knowledge

Critical facts and information that students are expected to KNOW at the end of the unit.

Students will know:

- Artwork can be read by analyzing the elements, principles, and symbolism within the composition.
- Interpretation is a two-way street--both the artist and viewer contribute their own personal perspectives.
- Symbolism has historical, cultural, and personal significance.
- Mediums themselves can evoke different sensory and emotional reactions.
- Mixing media can create layered meanings or contrasting ideas.
- Art is a form of expression that allows for a complex understanding of personal identity, cultural context, historical significance, or socio-political messages.

Standards

The content standards that are taught and/or assessed in this unit.

NCCAS: Visual Arts
NCCAS: HS Proficient
Responding

Perceive Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work Enduring Understanding: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments. Essential Question(s): How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art? How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world? What can we learn from our responses to art?

- [x] VA:Re.7.1.Ia: Hypothesize ways in which art influences perception and understanding of human experiences.

Perceive Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work Enduring Understanding: Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world. Essential Question(s): What is an image? Where and how do we encounter images in our world? How do images influence our views of the world?

- [x] VA:Re.7.2.Ia: Analyze how one's understanding of the world is affected by experiencing visual imagery.

Analyze Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism. Essential Question(s): What is the value of engaging in the process of art criticism? How can the viewer "read" a work of art as text? How does knowing and using visual art vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

- [x] VA:Re8.1.Ia: Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.

Interpret Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Enduring Understanding: People evaluate art based on various criteria. Essential Question(s): How does one determine criteria to evaluate a work of art? How and why might criteria vary? How is a personal preference different from an evaluation?

- [x] VA:Re9.1.Ia: Establish relevant criteria in order to evaluate a work of art or collection of works.

Connecting

Synthesize Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Enduring Understanding: Through art-making, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. Essential Question(s): How does engaging in creating art enrich people's lives? How does making art attune people to their surroundings? How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through art-making?

- [x] VA:Cn10.1.Ia: Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas.

Relate Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding Enduring Understanding: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art. Essential Question(s): How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How is art used to impact the views of a society? How does art preserve aspects of life?

- [x] VA:Cn11.1.Ia: Describe how knowledge of culture, traditions, and history may influence personal responses to art.

NCCAS: HS Accomplished

Responding

Perceive Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work Enduring Understanding: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments. Essential Question(s): How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art? How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world? What can we learn from our responses to art?

- [x] VA:Re.7.1.IIa: Recognize and describe personal aesthetic and empathetic responses to the natural world and constructed environments.

Perceive Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work Enduring Understanding: Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world. Essential Question(s): What is an image? Where and how do we encounter images in our world? How do images influence our views of the world?

- [x] VA:Re.7.2.IIa: Evaluate the effectiveness of an image or images to influence ideas, feelings, and behaviors of specific audiences.

Analyze Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism. Essential Question(s): What is the value of engaging in the process of art criticism? How can the viewer "read" a work of art as text? How does knowing and using visual art vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

- [x] VA:Re8.1.IIa: Identify types of contextual information useful in the process of constructing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works.

Interpret Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Enduring Understanding: People evaluate art based on various criteria. Essential Question(s): How does one determine criteria to evaluate a work of art? How and why might criteria vary? How is a personal preference different from an evaluation?

- [x] VA:Re9.1.IIa: Determine the relevance of criteria used by others to evaluate a work of art or collection of works.

Connecting

Synthesize Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Enduring Understanding: Through art-making, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. Essential Question(s): How does engaging in creating art enrich people's lives? How does making art attune people to their surroundings? How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of their lives and the lives of their communities through art-making?

- [x] VA:Cn10.1.IIa: Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art-making.

Relate Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding Enduring Understanding: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art. Essential Question(s): How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How is art used to impact the views of a society? How does art preserve aspects of life?

- [x] VA:Cn11.1.IIa: Compare uses of art in a variety of societal, cultural, and historical contexts and make connections to uses of art in contemporary and local contexts.

State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education. (2014). National Core Arts Standards. Dover, DE: State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education.

Core Learning Activities

The learning activities that support the acquisition of content knowledge, attainment of critical skills and lead to the generalizations of the unit. Activities should be clearly articulated, include teacher instructions and identify optional vs. assured experiences.

Portrait of the Newtown Graduate

- Sketchbook prompts
- Visual journaling
- Critiques
- Artist statements
- Comparative Art Analysis
- Material exploration--materials as a means for expression
- Research into artistic voice (artist-centered)
- Art as a response to a specific event (historical, cultural, pop culture, etc.)
- Investigating personal connections to land, place, or nature.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR ART CRITIQUE

Vocabulary

Academic and content-specific vocabulary needed to support knowledge, understanding and/or skills.

- Symbolism
- Narrative
- Allegory
- Mood
- Composition
- Juxtaposition
- Appropriation
- Voice
- Empathy
- Personal identity
- Collective memory
- socio-political
- Intent
- Audience
- Viewer
- Human experience
- Interpretation
- Analysis
- Theme
- Perspective or point of view
- Bias
- Texture
- Contrast
- Layers
- Transparency
- Assemblage
- Relief
- Depth
- Integration
- Unity
- Balance
- Movement
- Rhythm
- Fragmentation
- Accumulation
- Embed
- Obscure
- Transfer
- Implied narrative
- Tactile Communication

Resources

Teacher and student resources used to support the learning.

- "Design in Nature" by Vivian Varney Guyler (student resource, in classroom, the elements and principles of art in nature)
- "The Shape of Ideas" by Grant Snyder (Teacher resource, in classroom, Comics centered on the creative process and idea generation)
- "Design Th!nking" by Gavin Ambrose & Paul Harris (Teacher resource, in classroom, Visual resource explaining the creative process, particularly research, idea generation, refinement, prototyping, & implementation)
- "Beyond Words" (In classroom, Visual examples from an exhibition exploring experimental poetry and avant-garde collage)

Assessments

The means by which students will demonstrate what they know (content knowledge), what they can do (critical skills), and what they understand (generalizations) as a result of their learning from the unit.

Critique rubric_Mixed Media.pdf Copy of Sketchbook Rubric.jpg Single point Rubric for Comparative Art Analysis

Differentiation

Core learning activities, resources and assessments that meet the needs of all learners.

- Small group mini-lessons. More advanced learners can work more independently.
- Word banks & word walls
- Flexible timelines

Test Prep Connections

As appropriate, include activities that build skills for standardized testing, such as IABs.

- Comparing/contrasting visual artwork
- Teaching aesthetics can help with argument development