

Prewriting: Think of the students for whom this work is intended. Identify their grade level(s) and unique abilities and challenges. Reflect on the types of school tasks that may speak to the motives they bring to school. What are their learning styles and specific interests?

Capture key reflections about your students that may help guide you in designing work for them.

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Thinking of the key reflections above, which Design Qualities should be emphasized and why?

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Using the Design Qualities of Context:

Content and Substance

What do you want students to know or be able to do as a result of participating in this unit of work, and what is the specific material you want them to deal with in order to learn these things? For example, is there something you want them to read, a story you want them to consider, an experiment you want them to perform, a set of skills you want them to develop and practice?

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Content and Substance Sentence

State what students will know and be able to do at the end of this unit that they could not do before this unit was designed. Do this in one sentence that contains at least one higher level verb. (Bloom's Taxonomy)

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Reflect on the following questions regarding your statements:

- Is it very clear what students are expected to know and to be able to do?
- How important do you think it is that students learn these things? For example, do you personally believe it is important? Do your colleagues and the principal assume that students who leave your class will know these things or be able to do these things? Is it likely that this content will show up on standardized tests? Have you given any thought to how you might persuade students that it is important that they learn these things?
- At what level do you expect the students to learn what you intend? Are you interested only in ensuring they can remember the basic facts they are presented or do you expect them to use what they learn to create something new? Do you want them to analyze what they learn and use what they learn to solve problems?

Using the Design Qualities of Context:

Organization of Knowledge

Clear and Compelling Product Standards

Protection from Adverse Consequences for Initial Failures

Organization of Knowledge

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Reflect on the following questions:

- How were student interests taken into account when developing this work, tasks, or assignments?
- Has attention been given to activities, tasks, and assignments that engage the students even though they may not be interested in the subject?
- Are curriculum materials available that will support students' working on and with the concepts, facts, skills, understandings, and other forms of knowledge that students are expected to deal with, understand, and master?
- Is a range of media and presentation formats employed to appeal to students with different learning styles and ways of thinking?
- Are students called on to conduct experiments, read primary source materials, and read books and articles that convey powerful ideas in powerful ways?
- Have serious efforts been made to cause students to use what they are learning to analyze problems, issues, and matters of concern to them?
- Are students encouraged to develop an interdisciplinary perspective to see how what they are learning in a history class, for example, might have relevance for what they are learning in mathematics, language arts, and other subjects?

Clear and Compelling Product Standards

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Reflect on the following questions:

- Are the standards by which performances, products, projects, and exhibitions are assessed and evaluated made very clear to students? Are efforts made to ensure that students find the standards used to assess their work as relevant, meaningful, and important to them as opposed to

- seeing these standards as personally irrelevant conditions that they must meet to get a good grade?
- Are students regularly encouraged to assess their own work in terms of the standards set?
 - Are assessment conferences with individual students or small groups of students held where the qualities of student products are assessed?
 - Is assessment used primarily as a tool to promote student success and only secondarily as a means to justify the distribution of rewards and grades?
 - Is emphasis placed on the quality of student work products rather than on time schedules?
 - Are peer evaluation and public discussions of performances, exhibitions, and products used?

Protection from Adverse Consequences for Initial Failures

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Reflect on the following questions:

- Are student interactions, such as in peer evaluation, framed to be respectful, friendly, and supportive?
- When a student fails to meet the standards, but is making sincere efforts, are there ways to support the student and encourage him or her to see such failures as a normal part of the learning process?
- If all students are expected to meet standards at some point, when they fail to do so, are there opportunities to work directly with the student to diagnose the cause of the failure and correct the situation?
- Are students provided with feedback on their performance on a regular basis, not just at the time that grades are distributed?
- Do teachers and students have access to the resources needed (time, people, space, information, and technology) to provide optimum opportunities for success?
- If a student, after numerous tries, fails to meet the standard, will advice be sought from colleagues, parents, and the student regarding things that would make success more likely?

Using the Design Qualities of Choice:

Product Focus
Affirmation of Performance
Affiliation
Novelty and Variety
Choice
Authenticity

Product Focus

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Reflect on the following questions:

- Is the work linked to a product, performance, or exhibition of value to the student? Do students see a clear connection between what they are doing and what they are expected to produce?
- Are products personalized so that the different types of student interests are responded to even when students are working on the same product or activity?
- Will this work cause students to place a great deal of personal value on and take pride in the products and performances they are asked to produce?

Affirmation of Performance

This box expands as you type.

Reflect on the following questions:

- Are students involved in creating products that will be of use to other students, read by other students, or viewed by other students?
- Are parents and guardians involved in the standard-setting process, and do we encourage them to function as full partners in the evaluation of the student's performance in school and in the classroom?
- Will work be displayed for other adults in the school and the community?
- Will student work be designed so that the student feels that what he or she is doing is of value to others as well as to him or herself?

Affiliation

This box expands as you type.

Reflect on the following questions:

- Does in-class and out-of-class work involve two or more students working together on a common product?
- Are students' tasks designed in such a way that cooperative action is needed to complete the work assigned successfully?
- Are students given work to do that requires the active involvement of parents and other adult members of the community, including senior citizens?
- Are some of the products students produce clearly intended to be useful to others?
- Do students know enough about group processes to analyze and evaluate the operation of groups of which they are a part?
- Are tasks designed for students that require the use of the Internet and other forms of electronic communication to build cooperative networks among students, as well as between students and adult groups?

Novelty and Variety

This box expands as you type.

Reflect on the following questions:

- Are students provided with a wide range and varied modes of presentation?
- Are students provided opportunities to lead others, and are they also provided assistance in carrying out leadership functions when they have difficulty?
- When possible, will this work encourage students to participate in educational activities and programs sponsored by groups and organizations outside the school?

Choice

This box expands as you type.

Reflect on the following questions:

- Are students encouraged to experiment with different means of presenting information and gaining access to information?
- Are students participating in decisions regarding the processes to be employed in assessing performance and determining the standards by which their performance will be evaluated?
- Are students provided access to a wide range of technologies, from workbooks and text books to original source materials, sophisticated computer programs, presentation technologies, laptop publishing, and so on?
- Are computers and other forms of instructional technology used?
- Are the experiences provided students likely to make a difference in the level and type of engagement students will display?

Authenticity

This box expands as you type.

Reflect on the following questions:

- How will students see a link between the quality of products, performances, and exhibitions they produce and consequences that they consider to be personally important?
- Will students believe that they can do the work given them if they invest the effort, and most of the time be willing to invest the effort required to do the work assigned?
- Is the work designed in ways that increase student ownership for the quality of the results?
- Are the consequences of meeting standards or failing to meet standards clear to students, and do they understand that meeting these standards is important to their current circumstances as well as to their future prospects?
- Is the work assigned to students designed and evaluated in such a way that success of one student does not have a negative impact on the success of another student?

- Is the work designed in such a way that students have a positive stake in and care about the success of other students?

Measuring Engagement and Achievement

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Reflect on the following questions:

- How and when will I seek feedback concerning how students responded to this work?
- What do I need to know and do in order to get accurate feedback from my students?
- What do my students need in order to give accurate feedback about this work?
- What will I do with the engagement data I gather concerning this unit and future units?