

Unit Rationale Guidelines

The rationale answers the question: Why is this unit being taught? There are at least **three parts** to the answer: (a) How does the topic fit into the discipline? (b) How does the instruction and content meet the needs of the learners? and (c) How does this unit fit with the rest of the curriculum? The rationale also explains the reasons you organized your lessons in the particular order in which they will be taught.

Relationship to the Discipline:

_____ Discussion of how this unit fits into the discipline (i.e., why is it important for a scientist or mathematician to understand this topic?)

Needs of the Learners Outside of School:

_____ Discussion of specific needs of students within their lives (outside of school) in relation to this topic

_____ Discussion of specific ways in which this unit meets those needs

Relationship to the Curriculum:

_____ Discussion of how this unit fits in with the rest of the curriculum (across years)

_____ Explanation of the unit's place in the sequence of the curriculum (within the year)

Unit Rationale Scoring Guide

Criteria	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Needs Revision
Relationship to the Discipline How does this topic fit within the discipline?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a generalized description of the topic within the discipline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional details are provided in examining the relationship of the topic to the discipline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relationship is provided.
Needs of the Learners Outside of School In what way will this unit fill the needs of the students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies concepts and/or skills that the students will gain. Sets these concepts and/or skills in the broader societal context of the students' lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater specifics in identification of concepts and/or skills, possibly with linkage. Is especially clear in establishing the context of learning out of school. Gives clear examples that illuminate the principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not adequately identify concepts and/or skills. Concepts and/or skills are trivial or irrelevant. No mention or inadequate mention of learning in the broader societal context of the students' lives.
Relationship to the Curriculum How does this unit fit with the rest of the curriculum?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly links the unit to other parts of the curriculum. Identifies the sequence of the curriculum involving this unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaborates on ways that the unit depends on, interacts with, and supports other parts of the curriculum. Discusses sequencing in terms of conceptual development or possible alternative sequences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links do not exist or do not make sense. There is no mention of sequence.