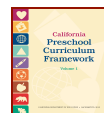


Unit 1: Introduction to the Framework

Getting Ready for the Unit and Connecting to Experience



Focus Statement

Students have an opportunity to connect the idea of a framework to their personal experience.

Getting Ready for the Unit

This unit is designed to be used in a variety of ways. The possibility of numerous ways to use the instructional guide is intended to support faculty as decision makers in their work with students and course content. Therefore, there is a flow to the sequence of key topics in this unit, but each key topic also may be used independently of all or some of the other topics. Because of these options, it is suggested that you scan the key topics in Unit 1 and find what will be most important for your particular needs.

Depending on coursework and students, some faculty might use all of Unit 1 as the sole method of introducing their students to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1). Some might connect their students to the PCF, V1 by combining Unit 1 with the key topics regarding organization of the domain for each of the following domain units (i.e., Units 3, 4, 5, and 6 of this instructional guide). Some might use selected key topics of Unit 1 in combination with other selected key topics in the domain units of the instructional guide. Others might use only Unit 1 and Unit 7 where students are guided through the use of the PCF, V1 as a resource for integrating across domains. Some faculty will choose to work through the entire instructional guide for the PCF, V1 and hence the entire PCF, V1. In that case, Unit 1 would provide an introduction to the rest of the PCF, V1 and would support continued use of the instructional guide.

Key Topic 1, “Getting to Know the Organization of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*,” is recommended if you have limited opportunity to explore the PCF, V1 in depth. This will give students an overview of the PCF, V1 and provide enough information that students will understand how to use the PCF, V1 as a resource in their work. Because the eight overarching principles that guided the development of the curriculum framework are not addressed in depth anywhere else in the framework, students are given an opportunity to become well acquainted with them in Key Topic 2 of Unit 1. Key Topic 3 of this unit, “Getting to Know the



Curriculum-Planning Process,” is intended to familiarize students with what is in the first chapter of the PCF, V1 regarding that topic. It is addressed in more depth in Unit 7, where the planning process is used to plan integrated learning across the four domains of the PCF, V1.

Motivator and Connection to Experience

Before You Start

This motivator is designed to connect students’ own experiences to the idea of a framework. The motivator includes pulling some content regarding curriculum out of Chapter 1 of the curriculum framework to work with, and not all students will be equally familiar with the curriculum components that are referenced. However, it might be a means of beginning to build familiarity with them, and they are dealt with at a deeper level further throughout the framework. Use of the curriculum framework as a resource for planning and use of the eight overarching principles for reviewing curriculum are specifically addressed in Unit 7. There is an opportunity to alert students to the cultural content in many of the decisions we make as family members and as practitioners by pointing out that what we put into frames is shaped by our preferences and priorities.

Active Learning

Getting it started

First, ask students to think of a picture in a frame that is very important to them. It can be of anything—person, place, animal, object, event, etc. They can do this silently and individually, but it will be important to ask for descriptions of a few examples.

Then ask this question: “What does a frame do for a picture?”

Chart their responses, which might include some of the following examples:

- Makes it possible to see it and think about it often
- Gives it importance
- Keeps it clean
- Keeps it separate from other things—gives it uniqueness

Ask for additional examples of something that is framed that is important for them to have in a frame.

Be sure to explore similarities and differences in the examples



that are given. The following questions may be used:

- Do differences in what we choose to frame or display reflect choices based on individual preferences?
- On family priorities?
- On cultural values?

Keeping it going

Ask students to turn to the definition of curriculum framework in the introduction to the PCF, V1, page 3. The paragraph states that, as a curriculum framework, this document provides:

- principles;
- key components of curriculum planning;
- descriptions of routines, environments, and materials; and
- strategies for building on children's knowledge, skills, and interests.



Slide 2

Ask students to develop a visual image of these four topics as a framework. Using a blank sheet of paper, ask them to draw a frame, perhaps two inches deep, around the edges. Many shapes will work, but a rectangle will provide one side for each of the four topics above. Students can do this individually, or a frame can be drawn on chart paper or some large surface where all students can see it.

After the students have drawn this frame, ask them to place these four segments of a curriculum framework into the frame they have just drawn. They can do this by writing the four phrases inside the frame, one on each side.

Taking it further

On pages 13-18 of the PCF, V1, there are several topics relating to curriculum planning:

- Arranging the environment and materials into interest areas for self-initiated play
- Using a variety of activities that are indoor and outdoor
- Using a variety of activities that are teacher guided in small or large groups



- Organizing daily routines as contexts for learning

Ask students to review pages 13-18 for additional curriculum components and add to the four topics listed previously. These could be written into the center of the sheet of paper (i.e., the center of the frame).

Putting it together

Ask students to discuss these questions as a whole group or in pairs or groups of three:



Slides 3-4

- What does a framework provide when these components of curriculum are considered in curriculum planning and put into practice?
- What would the eight overarching principles provide?
- What would a consistent planning process provide?
- What would consideration of materials and environments provide?
- What would consideration of interactions and strategies provide?

Plan a time for students to share their thinking. Some possible thoughts might include these points:

- Provides coherence by holding together the pieces that would just be separate activities without it
- Supports quality by providing guidance for maintaining quality in what is done
- Supports comprehensive curriculum by providing guidance for considering a broad range of needs in planning for children and families
- Supports consistency across domains

Suggest to students that they will become more comfortable with the concept of a framework for curriculum as distinct from curriculum as they work through more key topics in this instructional guide. There will be more exposure to this concept specifically in Unit 7.



Reflection



Slide 5

The following questions can be used to support reflection on this motivator. These can be done as a journaling exercise or as a class discussion.

- Where were new insights for you in this exercise?
- What are some continuing challenges with the idea of a curriculum framework?
- What additional information would you like to know that relates to the idea of a curriculum framework?
- What would you need to do to get that information?