

EDI 612 Rubric: Thematic Unit Assessment (updated 7/10/15)

by Grand Valley Education Administrator

Thematic Unit Assessment

Standards

No standards added.

Background for Candidates:

A well-planned unit is trans-disciplinary and allows children to learn in purposeful ways and make connections across domains and disciplines. As they study a central theme, children can experience multiple ways of understanding, and representing information. At the same time, they develop specific skills needed to access information and accomplish tasks.

Directions to the Student

You will plan a thematic unit that contains the following nine sections.

1. Philosophy and Overarching Goals

Articulate the philosophy that is the foundation for your work with children and explain the large goals for the your classroom and the children you are teaching. Your philosophy should be grounded in understanding the developmental characteristics of young children, best practices, and diversity.

2. Rationale for Theme or Concept

Briefly, explain why you chose this theme, and how it fulfills the following:

- Diversity and inclusion
- Developmentally appropriate, ZDP-connects to what children know and can do
- Relevant and interesting to children
- Authentic learning through real, concrete experiences
- Skills/knowledge are meaningful in the present and provide a foundation for future living/learning
- Addresses relevant standards (Common Core, MI Standards for Quality, etc.)
- Integrates the disciplines and developmental domains.

3. Learning Environment: Logistics & Organization

Plan the flow of activities in the unit to support children's learning.

- The physical environment an important part of the curriculum, so create a diagram of the learning environment that show how space will be used and provisioned for to support children and stimulate interest and engagement.
- Schedules and routines can provide structure to support children, as well as, opportunities for children to develop confidence and autonomy. Prepare schedules/routines that support children with a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated, active/quiet, indoor/outdoor activities.
- Positive social interactions and relationships create an emotional environment that supports learning and development. Decisions about how children engage with learning and solve problems shape opportunities for children to develop positive social skills. For example, a variety of groupings and activities can be used to promote individual development and collaborative skills, and a sense of community.

4. Curriculum Web or Outline

This is an overview of the unit to organize activities, content areas, developmental domains and interests. They can be organized in many ways, so use framework that makes sense to you. Brainstorm ideas for activities and learning opportunities related to the theme. Then organize your ideas so that children can build upon and make connections between activities. Be sure to include:

- Activities
- Content areas (language/literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, technology)
- Developmental domains (cognitive, social, emotional, physical)

5. Learning Experience Plans

Six complete plans related to the curriculum framework. Each plan should have a focus (language/literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, technology) but should integrate the different domains. Be sure to include aspects of meaningful family involvement. Emphasize real, meaningful activities that might include:

- Learning/interest centers
- Large group
- Play
- Small group
- Individual
- Demonstrations/practice
- Visitors/speakers
- Field trips

- Projects
- Play Center

Include plans for assessing children's knowledge, abilities and learning. Use assessment strategies that acknowledge multiple ways of knowing, are aligned with learning outcomes, and can be documented. Most importantly, assessments should provide data to support children's learning and development.

Assessments must align with learning goals, objectives and outcomes and could include:

- Observations
- Checklists
- Rubrics
- Work samples
- Questions and dialogue
- Photos

6. Design a play center related to your theme. A play center should encourage curiosity and exploration, imagination and creativity, and should support children to internalize concepts and enhance learning. Use the research presented in the Crisis in Kindergarten article to guide your thinking.

7. Field Trip

Although children and families usually look forward to and enjoy field trips, they should not be considered a 'treat' or reward. Rather, field trips play an essential role in curriculum and instruction by providing information and experiences to make learning real and to connect to children's lives. Plan an experience in the field that is relevant to and enhances learning in your unit. Optimal experiences include preparing children for the trip and opportunities to apply what they learned during the trip. Careful planning is essential and should address: scheduling, adequate supervision, transportation, cost, appropriate attire, permission slips, district/school requirements, and familiarity with the site.

8. Involving Families

Write a letter to families introducing the theme, explaining what children will learn, activities that will take place during the unit, and opportunities for families to become involved and contribute. Consider how you will communicate with and involve families who may have diverse circumstances, interests, abilities, language, etc.

9. Resources and Materials

Identify and list all materials needed for the unit activities, for example:

- Tools & materials

- Expert visitors
- Family and community
- Play centers/activities
- Text set of stories, informational books, poems related to the theme
- Multimedia resources
- Vocabulary-word wall
- Listening center (stories or informational books that might be above reading levels or used for re-reading and enjoyment)
- Learning centers (reading, writing, science, projects...)
- Activities for exploration (measuring, cooking, drama, field trips, experiments, graphing, games...)

Rubric Instructions

For each row of the rubric, assess on a 0-3 scale by selecting a score from the right-side columns for the element on the left-side of the same row.

PLEASE NOTE: Percentages and Grades

PLEASE NOTE: Percentages and Grades within LiveText should be ignored. When a rubric is completed in LiveText, a percentage may appear within the rubric. This percentage will not be regarded by the College of Education and is no reflection of the Grand Valley student's grade or performance within the course. It is a result of assigning numeric values to the columns of the rubric. This numbering generates numeric data for the College of Education to inform us of areas within our courses that we need to improve in the future. Likewise, LiveText provides instructors with a grading tool to grade assignments in LiveText. The College of Education asks faculty not to use this tool, as official grades are currently managed through Banner. Any grade shown in LiveText is non-official and should not be regarded by LiveText users.

Please also remember that an "assessment" is not an end goal, nor is it the same as a course grade. Rather, an assessment is a learning tool that demonstrates students' ability to meet course expectations and allows the College of Education to look for ways to improve our programs. An assessment is also not a student satisfaction/opinion survey. Instead, it is a direct measure of student learning and development outcomes. Providing students with access to these assessments ensure all College of Education students have the ability to showcase their progress throughout their program(s) and beyond graduation.

Thematic Unit Assessment

	Proficient (3) (3.000 pts)	Developing (2) (2.000 pts)	Unsatisfactory (1) (1.000 pt)	Unacceptable (0) (0.000 pt)
Section I Philosophy and Goals NAEYC 1, 4, 6 INTASC 4 (1.000, 3%)	Philosophy and goals are based on knowledge of research and theory related to child development and the holistic nature of developmental domains.	Philosophy and goals are based on knowledge of research and theory related to child development.	Philosophy and goals incorporate knowledge of research and theory related to child development.	Knowledge of research and theory are not presented.
NAEYC 1, 2, 4 INTASC 2 (1.000, 3%)	Philosophy and goals reflect awareness and appreciation for a range diversity and issues of equity	Philosophy and goals reflect awareness and appreciation for a range of diversity.	Philosophy and goals reflect limited understanding of diversity.	Diversity is not discussed.
NAEYC 6 INTASC 9 (1.000, 3%)	Personal experiences may be used to illustrate research/theory.	Connections may be made to relevant personal experiences.	Personal experience and opinion are not related to research and theory.	Personal experience and opinion provide the basis for the philosophy and goals.
NAEYC 1, 4 INTASC 7 (1.000, 3%)	The importance of positive relationships and interactions is highlighted as integral to optimal learning and development.	The importance of positive relationships and interactions is discussed.	Positive relationships and interactions are mentioned.	Interactions and positive relationships are not included.
Section II Rationale for Theme or Concept NAEYC 1 INTASC 1 (1.000, 3%)	Rationale describes characteristics and needs of young children in relation to the unit.	Rationale addresses characteristic s and needs of young children.	Rationale reflects young children's needs and characteristics.	Rationale is not consistent with young children's needs and characteristics.
NAEYC 1, 2, 3 INTASC 2 (1.000, 3%)	Rationale addresses diversity as integral to the unit.	Rationale clearly addresses diversity in the unit.	Rationale reflects awareness of diversity.	Rationale does not address diversity.
NAEYC 1, 2, 4 INTASC 8 (1.000, 3%)	Rationale describes relevance and meaningful learning experiences.	Rationale relevance and meaningful learning experiences.	Rationale reflects relevance and meaningful learning experiences.	Rationale does not address relevance and meaningful learning experiences.
NAEYC 1, 2, 4 INTASC 8 (1.000, 3%)	Rationale describes the value of integrating disciplines and developmental domains through a variety of effective approaches.	Rationale addresses integration of disciplines and developmental domains.	Rationale reflects awareness of integrating discipline and developmental domains.	Rationale does not address integration of disciplines and developmental domains.
Section III Environment NAEYC 1, 4, 5 INTASC 3 (1.000, 3%)	Physical environment aligns with the needs of young children, allows for a variety of activities, groupings, and promotes	Physical environment aligns with the needs of young children and allows for a variety of activities.	Physical environment meets the needs of young children.	Physical environment is not included or does not align with the needs and characteristics of young children.

	interaction.			
NAEYC 1, 4, 5 INTASC 3 (1.000, 3%)	Routines and schedule provide structure and support autonomy. Activities provide balance between quiet/active, individual/collaborative, child initiated/teacher directed activities.	Routines and schedule provide a variety of structure.	Routines and schedule provide structure.	Routines and schedules are not provided and/or do not allow for structure.
Section IV Curriculum Framework NAEYC 1, 4, 5 INTASC 4 (1.000, 3%)	Framework demonstrates integration and connections between unit activities, content, and developmental domains.	Framework provides overview of unit activities, content, and developmental domains.	Framework provides partial overview of activities, content, and developmental domains.	Framework is not provided.
Section V Learning Experience Plans NAEYC 1, 4 INTASC 8 (1.000, 3%)	Plans are interconnected and cohesive; designed according to knowledge of developmental characteristics and address all domains.	Plans are aligned with developmental characteristics and address multiple domains.	Plans are aligned with developmental characteristics.	Plans are not aligned with developmental characteristics.
NAEYC 1, 2, 4 INTASC 2 (1.000, 3%)	Plans integrate diversity and accommodate multiple levels of development and experience.	Plans accommodate diversity.	Plans can be adapted to accommodate diversity.	Plans do not accommodate diversity.
NAEYC 1, 2, 5 INTASC 8 (1.000, 3%)	Plans include concrete, active, meaningful experiences that allow children to explore and make connections.	Plans are teacher directed, but include concrete, active, meaningful activities.	Plans are teacher directed, but include exploratory activities.	Plans are narrowly designed, teacher directed, and don't allow for exploration.
NAEYC 5 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Subject matter is presented accurately, connects to prior knowledge and accommodates different levels of development and experience.	Subject matter is presented accurately and is connected to prior learning.	Subject matter is presented accurately.	Subject matter is presented with inaccuracies or no connection to prior learning, different abilities, knowledge or experience.
NAEYC 4 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Plans include multiple presentations of key concepts in ways that are responsive to knowledge/ability/experiences of children.	Plans include multiple presentations of key concepts that address different learning modes.	Plans include multiple presentations of key concepts.	Key concepts are presented in a single mode.
NAEYC 1, 5 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Clear learning objectives are based on development, prior	Learning objectives are clear, connect with prior learning,	Learning objectives are clear and connect to prior learning.	Learning objectives do not align with prior learning or individual

	learning, and experiences to be meaningful and achievable for each child.	and align with developmental characteristics.		needs.
NAEYC 1, 4 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Plans include opportunities for cooperation and collaboration through various groupings and activities.	Plans include various groupings and activities that promote cooperation.	Plans allow for interaction during teacher directed activities.	Plans are teacher directed and limited to individual efforts.
NAEYC 1, 3, 4, 5 INTASC 2 (1.000, 3%)	Plans are designed to accommodate and support a range of students with linguistic and cultural diversity, and special needs.	Plans include specific accommodations for certain types of diversity.	Plans can be adapted to accommodate diversity.	Plans do not support diverse student needs and abilities.
NAEYC 3, 4 INTASC 6 (1.000, 3%)	Assessments focus on knowing children's needs, strengths, and challenges and provide a variety of ways to demonstrate learning.	Assessments focus on knowing children's needs, strengths, and challenges.	Assessments emphasize deficits and representations of learning through text.	Assessments focus on deficits and are limited to representations of learning through text.
NAEYC 3, 4 INTASC 6 (1.000, 3%)	Assessments align with learning objectives and developmental expectations; data informs subsequent development of goals, curriculum, and, activities.	Assessments align with learning objectives and developmental expectations.	Assessments are aligned with learning objectives.	Assessments are not aligned with learning objectives.
Section VI Play Center NAEYC 1, 4, 5 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Play center is well provisioned to enhance unit goals, encourage exploration, imagination, and making connections to life and across disciplines.	Play center relates to unit and supports learning through exploration and imagination.	Play center relates to unit.	Play center is not included or is teacher directed.
Section VII Field Trip NAEYC 1, 4, 5 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Field trip is relevant and aligned with children's developmental characteristics. Learning objectives are integrated with and support classroom activities.	Field trip is relevant and aligned with learning objectives and children's developmental characteristics.	Field trip is relevant and aligned with children's developmental characteristics.	Field trip does not enhance
NAEYC 2 INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	Field trip includes families in planning, participation, and teaching.	Field trip includes families in planning and participation.	Field trip includes families.	Field trip does not include families.
NAEYC 1, 4, 5	Field trip is well	Field trip is well	Field trip is well	Field trip is not

INTASC 5 (1.000, 3%)	organized, with accommodations for children's needs, and includes pre- and post-trip planning.	organized including accommodations for children's needs and safety.	organized.	organized or clear.
Section VIII Involving Families NAEYC 2 INTASC 10 (1.000, 3%)	Letter to families is respectful, provides information. Families are invited to participate and share interests/expertise related to the unit learning goals and activities.	Letter to families is respectful and provides information about the unit, including learning goals and activities. Families are invited to participate.	Letter to families is respectful and introduces the unit and outlines activities.	Families are not acknowledged.
NAEYC 2 INTASC 3 (1.000, 3%)	Plans include meaningful participation by families.	Unit includes opportunities for families to volunteer.	Family participation is addressed, but limited.	Families are not invited to participate.
NAEYC 1, 2 INTASC 2 (1.000, 3%)	Plans and participation opportunities reflect understanding and accommodation of diverse family units, cultures, and circumstances.	Plans and participation opportunities are varied and flexible.	Plans and participation opportunities exist, but do not reflect a range of diversity of family units, cultures or circumstances.	Plans and participation do not reflect opportunities for family involvement.
Section IX Resources and Materials List NAEYC 4 INTASC 7 (1.000, 3%)	List is comprehensive and allows for expansion of unit.	List includes essential components for implementing plans and enrichment activities.	List includes essential components for implementing plans.	List is not included



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