



Purposeful Planning

Many inspired teachers believe in the potential of their learners. They see each child as a bright light. They magnify the students' inner strengths through deliberate processes, directing evolving skills toward community transformation goals. These teachers do so with creativity and purpose.

However, something else also sets apart the teachers who seem both exceptional and calm, both organized and inspired: Their planning habits! Whether these teachers have access to a fancy lab or only a piece of chalk, *they have learned to plan*. To make life easier, they keep their most essential tools nearby. Most tend to rely on a consistent set of resources and strategies and a faithful calendar. Without making class time *seem* mundane, they have routinized a timely plan of action.



Many years ago, I wrote a book for new teachers called *First-Class Teacher*, with suggestions compiled by and published by Canter & Associates. Today's course, however, does not outline only basic strategies. Rather, it presents planning tools for the teacher who will apply a specific pedagogy, one impelled by the "why" of the human desire to learn.

This kind of teacher plans based on the theory that the peak experience soars when applied learning cements a human bond or a benefit for living beings—that motivation amplifies to the extent that we add empathy and farsightedness and love to the equation. Regardless of the activity, we honor these altruistic intentions of the learner.

Thus, the end goal inspires the planning strategies. The case studies in the previous session represent only a few of the thousands of stories in which the teacher created a unit plan framework, then made spontaneous, contextual shifts to enhance the plan. The teacher prepared before the start of a semester but watched for triggers to make the learning even more relevant throughout the year. Stories of student epiphanies, academic gains, and dramatic community impact then wrote themselves. Here is yet another example.

About Matching Community Needs and Resources

A fourth-grade teacher began to teach lessons on life sciences and social sciences. As he stood before the class, he expressed awe at the lush biodiversity and geology of the region. His students raised a question. If their country was so rich in natural resources, why did their parents claim they had no justice for the poor? Wasn't this also a resource?

Due to his prior planning, the teacher had a ready response. He told the students they would attend a field trip that very week, on which they could determine for themselves whether to add justice as a resource of their nation. (He had already prearranged the trip but could now rush the timing.)

The students gathered early the next day and went to the courthouse. They met with the judge, a friend of the teacher. She explained to them how the court system worked. Then she explained that they would be able to sit in on a trial. They patiently listened to the whole trial.

At the end of the day, the class remained in the room, so she could speak with them. The judge said, "Each of these two, the defendant and the victim, could not afford legal services, so the court paid for each of them to have two attorneys. The court also provided a full jury and me, an impartial judge. At the end of the day, the verdict represented equal services for



two people, without charge. Now tell me," said Judge Massonia K. Kerkulah, "do you think justice is a resource our government strives to provide?"

The class applauded their response. The class president spoke on behalf of the students and made a statement. They honored her and the other staff members for their service. The students committed to teach their parents how to better utilize the resources available to them to ensure equality for everyone and to reevaluate their impression of the resources of their country. The teacher later declared that this model

of education had become “a blueprint for an evolving world of action.” Do note that the blueprint relied on him to use his planning tools and his foresight!

What advantage did the teacher have? Ironically, he had planned so well that he could afford to act with spontaneity! The court employees were delighted to participate.

Using the Template to File away Contacts

This teacher had surely learned how to apply the 13-S steps outlined in the previous course session, but he also kept presenter contact information on hand, to use at the moment he needed it. He knew the community members who could serve as resources during field trips, guest presentations, and service projects (Share It and Send It steps).

Look at the first tool in your toolkit. Review the information spaces on the form for Matching Community Needs and Resources.

At the beginning of a unit or a school year, use this form to brainstorm human resources in your community who might enhance your projects. Collect their contact information. Jot down notes about their availability. Estimate when their input might illuminate your academic content or when they might effectively step in for a service-learning project. For instance: When will the farmer harvest the pumpkins? When is there an appropriate court case? How will elders need assistance?

File the forms either by habit-of-heart or by community need or by profession and academic topic. Perhaps they suggest a specialty relating to an outcome in literacy or numeracy or science and social science on a project you have not yet anticipated. If you don't use the information now, it may be helpful next semester or next year!

Some teachers ask parents to list their interests and skills the first week of school, then later follow up on family members who could return as guest presenters. Family members coming to class for presentations have included:

- A grandparent who wrote articles about hunger, discussing writing about your convictions
- A nurse collecting soap carvings for parents of premature infants
- A grandparent who worked for the railroad and helped students compare transportation fuel use
- A guitar-playing custodian demonstrating the habit-of-heart humility
- A farmer talking about distribution of food across the community
- An architect talking about building a library
- A medical worker discussing heart-healthy foods to grow
- A mother discussing how to remain resilient in a cyclone

...and so many more! Look at your syllabus and match your academics and your planned projects with parents and others you meet. Where do you see connections?



Check with global partner schools for more distant human resources. Start a file to match your community needs and resources.

A women's shareholder farm in Zambia grew to become a village school, staffed mostly by mothers and grandmothers. Family members often serve as committed advocates, embodying many habits-of-heart.

About the Student Project Rubric

Once you have engaged in a student project, think about how you will align your expectations and assessments.

How will learners know that teachers value their character, their commitment, the value of their learning in promoting sustainable development or bringing joy to someone more vulnerable, such as lonely elders or future cancer patients or malnourished babies or even to gulls on a polluted beach?

They will know it, indeed, if you present a **project rubric** that values: 1) mastery of the habit-of-heart; 2) actual project outcomes; and 3) one or more related academic outcomes associated with the project.

The rubric can serve as both a formative and summative assessment. Given early in the project, it lays out the expectations and definition of mastery. Used again as an assessment, it helps learners reflect on how they might add to their efforts on the next project.

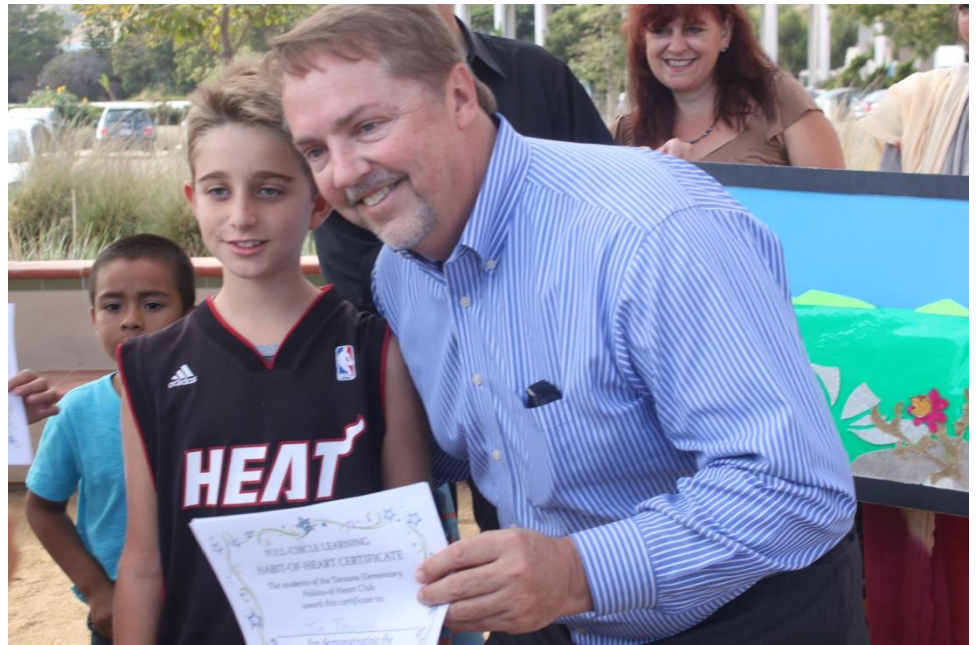
It would be time-consuming to create a rubric for everyday assignments, but this rubric becomes meaningful when students know it is attached to the Share It and Send It steps and will become a major assessment for the unit.

Using the Template to Customize a Unit Project

A blank template has been provided for you to download, copy and reuse. You may choose, instead, to customize your own version in Word or a rubistar.com, or you can even customize a rubric by hand on graph paper or on the board.

All you need is a grid with columns indicating the *categories you want to integrate* and the *definitions that will help the learners reflect on their own progress*. You can add or subtract the number of categories, but somewhere, do include the actual *process* of practicing the habit-of-heart, not just the ability to define it. (In the example given, the students had to show dedication to the completion of the mural, as Dedication was the habit-of-heart.)

Students gave speeches and Awareness Awards to city managers who had opened up a new environmental project. Their artwork, speech writing, delivery and habit-of-heart were clear possibilities for inclusion on a project rubric.



Murals hold many project possibilities and are easy to assess. The mural here, in the lobby of Hopetown School, celebrated the diverse cultures of China's 56 ethnic groups and attached a different habit-of-heart to each one.

About the Pacing Guide

In the last session, you learned how to create a learning unit, which can be flexible in length. A preschool or summer school class may complete a unit in one week. A secondary school class with deeply nuanced applications of the themes may extend a unit over the course of six weeks to two months.

Teachers generally gather during the school break to review their school's national, regional or schoolwide syllabi or grade-level requirements. At this point, they have the opportunity to not only create their first lesson plan unit but to look beyond the length of

that unit. Using chart paper in a horizontal fashion, many teachers divide the schoolyear calendar into sections, blocking out holidays, highlighting key words from each part of the calendar, matching a habit-of-heart with key dates, and identifying possibilities or opportunities for students to share what they learn in a way that mitigates a community challenge or need.

One Los Angeles science/mathematics teacher began the year during an intense drought. Looking at the possibilities within the state standards, she decided to lead her team in planning a unit on Respect that would also give students a sense of participation in the solutions to drought.

Each student made a logo representing respect. They added their designs to a quilt, soon sent to their global partner school. They compared notes about rainfall in both regions. The teacher then turned the focus toward respect for the right to clean drinking water. In science, they studied drought and its impact on the growing process and the water supply.



When the academic calendar called for pie charts, the students measured the length of time their families spent in handwashing or bathing. They made both personal and group pie charts, to encourage water conservation. When it came time to review pie charts later in the year, they could see whether their water conservation had improved.

Meanwhile, the literature/social studies teacher introduced the history of the Roman aqueducts, to dovetail with the science/math themes. Knowing this technique of water storage still helped the city thrive, as Los Angeles borrowed water from California's northern counties, the students made dioramas of aqueducts to teach their community to value water resources and respect those who share their water.

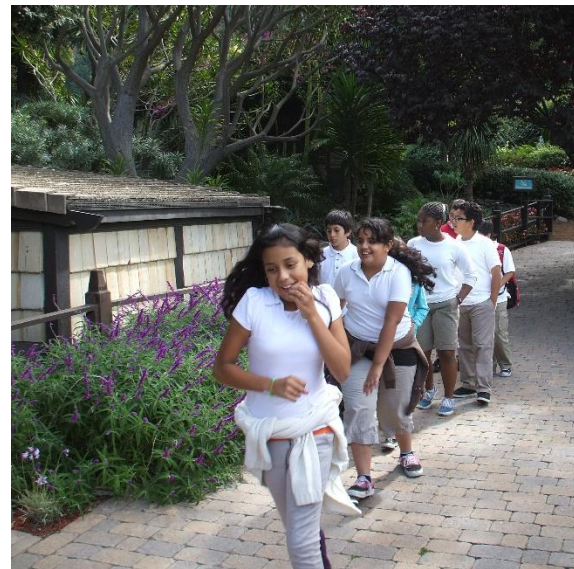


Together, the classes visited a water treatment plant and wrote speeches to thank hydrologists for their work. They cleaned beaches, following up with respectful letters reminding people of the etiquette that protects the precious supply of clean water.

The joint pacing plan the teachers made in the summer enabled them to infuse academic studies with a continuum of purposeful actions that changed behaviors at home and abroad. Speaking of water, her own eyes watered when the lead teacher saw the picture of the children crowding around the quilt pieces her students had created with love and respect. “*This is why I entered the profession,*” she whispered.

Regarding Trading Timetables

In the following example, note that events in the community may also influence the timing of your events on your pacing guide. Perhaps your history lesson was scheduled for February, but an invitation has challenged you to prepare for it in October. Can you trade a habit-of-heart unit between the two months? See the following example.



Another middle school class in Los Angeles aligned social studies and history with their Advocacy habit-of-heart unit. They:

- *Celebrated Gandhi’s birthday by walking to the gardens where some of his ashes were buried, to give talks about his relationship with Martin Luther King.*
- *Held a wisdom exchange with the Full-Circle Learning Academy of Chennai India, where children reenacted the history of Gandhi’s life.*
- *Used the pacing guide to align the timing of holidays, required history lessons, letter writing, and public presentation elements of the project.*

The blank template in this session enables you to file away your pacing plans and refer to them as each new term begins. The following steps may guide your team as you prepare a three-month, six-month or annual pacing guide.

Process for Customizing a Pacing Plan

Identify the dates of the unit.

1. Look at a calendar of the school year. Note where the grading periods or terms end.
2. Look at the table of contents in your FCL lesson plan manual, if you are using one as a springboard. You may also refer to the poster of habits. Divide the weeks in the school year by the number of the habits-of-heart you will teach. Unless you teach early learners, you will have 6-9 weeks to teach a habit-of-heart that also corresponds with the grading period. Record the dates of the first unit on a copy of your pacing plan grid sheet.

Identify the students' motivating purpose for learning.

3. Look at the first grading period. Use backwards design as you plan:
 - a. Based on your unit objectives, think about potential service projects and the activities leading up to them.
 - b. Write down the community need/s students can address by applying this habit of heart. List potential service projects that might fall under the Share It or Sent It steps. You can adjust the timing during the next steps, as you see opportunities to build on academic themes.

Review what students must learn in all their core content areas or subjects.

- c. Look at the student learning goals for each learning period. Note areas of thematic alignment that might affect the timing of your activities or that enhance the concepts in your projects. (For example, can teaching pie charts in math help your students conduct surveys on water conservation as part of a project?) Note which high-priority learning goals should be retaught throughout the unit.

Further customize your activities and your assessments to local needs.

The Course Assignment

Set aside a place for filing place for planning tools. Choose one of the three planning templates covered in this session – the community resources sheet, the project rubric, or the pacing guide. Print the blank document. (Note that the downloadable file is horizontal.) Once you have generated a rough draft, use the template for a final draft.

Fill it out as if you will implement this planning tool in the classroom this month. Discuss your results with a colleague. Your coach or instructor may request that you submit the document or written information, for 15 points.

