

Introduction

FACILITATION GUIDE OBJECTIVES

The purposes of this professional development workbook are to assist teachers and curriculum designers (or teachers themselves) to:

- Understand the purposes, definitions, and driving questions of each of the four parallels comprising the Parallel Curriculum Model (PCM);
- Apply what they have learned to remodel existing curriculum aligned to the characteristics of each parallel using a lesson design template;
- Become familiar with key components of essential curriculum design that serve as the basis for the lesson design template;
- Understand and apply the concept of Ascending Intellectual Demand as included in the lesson template; and,
- Remodel existing curriculum using a combination of parallels to enrich what and how students learn.

In this workbook, you will receive tools, resources, and strategies for accomplishing these things. The work in this guide is based on *The Parallel Curriculum: A Design to Develop High Potential and Challenge High-Ability Learners*, 2nd ed. (2008), developed and written by Carol Ann Tomlinson, Sandra N. Kaplan, Joseph S. Renzulli, Jeanne Purcell, Jann Leppien, Deborah Burns, Cindy Strickland, and Marcia Imbeau. If possible, read that book prior to or in tandem with using this workbook.

The initial chapter of this workbook is devoted to first understanding and exploring the nature and intent of the Parallel Curriculum as a model. It exposes workshop participants to the four parallels, to ways of thinking about course content and the Parallel Curriculum Model. Chapters 2 through 5 delve specifically into each parallel one at a time: Core Curriculum Parallel, Curriculum of Connections, Curriculum of Practice, and Curriculum of Identity. In each chapter, teachers will remodel or design lessons (or units) they currently teach by applying the characteristics of sound PCM lessons within the targeted parallel. Finally, Chapter 6 explores how the four parallels might come together in a single unit to enrich what and how students learn.

COMPONENTS

- The *session overview* provides a brief explanation of what each specific session entails.
- Use the *masters* to make handouts and transparencies as you see fit. The masters are intended to highlight key vocabulary and principles of the PCM and serve as a handy reference for participants as they redesign their own lessons and units.

- The *introduction* sets the stage for the workshop and briefly introduces the topic.
- *Teaching and learning activities* provide an array of material you can use to communicate definitions, characteristics, and concrete examples for components. You determine which mode of presentation (e.g., handouts and/or overheads) works best for you. Participants use the masters, prior knowledge from a previous session, major discussion points, experience, and their materials and resources to redesign or create anew a key component (e.g., assessments, introductory activities, products) of a parallel.
- *Closure/looking forward* provides opportunities for sharing of the work participants accomplished during the teaching and learning activities.
- The timing of a given session will depend on key variables, such as your group size, the expertise of participants, a facilitator’s presentation style, and so forth. We suggest that facilitators review all sessions carefully and assign approximate time frames given these variables. Two or more workshop sessions can be combined into a given staff development time allotment. If there is limited time, revise and conduct sessions according to time specifications.
- Scripts are provided in some instances to give you an idea of what we intend to emphasize and our thinking about the topic. Depending on your comfort level, you may use our words verbatim or adapt the language to suit your style. One major goal of this guide is to foster critical thinking and expression during discussion and group interactions so participants are well-versed in the Parallel Curriculum Model and the components of the lesson design template. Therefore discussion questions are interspersed throughout the lessons.
- Appendix A provides *facilitation suggestions* designed to help you lead discussions that foster critical thinking and ground participants in the distinctive and overlapping qualities of the parallels.
- Appendix B provides a game that may be used at any time to assess participant knowledge of basic vocabulary related to the PCM.
- Appendix C lists four key attributes of a Parallel Curriculum unit. This document serves as a final check on whether a unit matches the intents and purposes of this model.
- Appendix D offers the driving questions of the four parallels in one document for reference
- Appendix E provides an overview of the intent and characteristics of the four parallels.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUGGESTIONS

As you proceed from session to session, participants will be accumulating many resources and voraciously creating materials. You might suggest that participants equip themselves with a large three-ring binder that includes tabs. With this—or a similar—organizational system in place, there will be a “home” for the materials they receive and create as you work together.

FEEDBACK

Throughout your work together, you will guide participants in various activities and discussions as they remodel their own lessons and units. Consider to what degree you wish to review the curriculum they design and how you will provide feedback. For example, will

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you formally provide written feedback for each activity to individual teachers? Will you informally work with teacher groups to share your impressions orally?

Although this workbook was written very carefully to guide you through each step in presenting, you will most assuredly find yourself taking various tangents based on the nature of your group. Give yourself permission to be flexible enough to do that. If you are working alone or with a partner, our intent is that you, too, will find value and guidance for implementing the PCM or pushing your own awareness and expertise to new heights. If you are working with educators that are not in your district, we hope you can create new alliances and relish newfound collegial relationships. Enjoy this experience with your group as you learn and grow together.