MYP unit planner

Teacher(s)		Subject group and discipline		
Unit title		MYP year		Unit duration (hrs)	

INQUIRY: Establishing the purpose of the unit

Key concept	Related concept(s)	Global context
Key concepts, contributed from each subject group, provide interdisciplinary breadth to the programme. **Key concepts** are broad, organizing, powerful ideas that have relevance within and across subjects and disciplines, providing connections that can transfer across time and culture. (15)	**Related concepts** promote depth of learning and add coherence to the understanding of academic subjects and disciplines. They are grounded in specific subjects and disciplines, and they are useful for exploring key concepts in greater detail. Inquiry into related concepts helps students to develop more complex and sophisticated conceptual understanding. (15)	IB programmes aim to develop international mindedness in a **global context.** (11)
Key concepts engage students in higher-order thinking, helping them to connect facts and topics with more complex conceptual understanding. (15)	**Related concepts** and their definitions are found in each MYP subject group guide (appendix). (57)	Using **global contexts** in planning and teaching helps learners by providing relevance and meaning, which may lead to increased student engagement. (12)
Teachers identify one **key concept** that drives the unit's development. (56)	For each unit, teachers identify one or more **related concept(s)** that extend(s) learning, lead(s) to deeper understanding, or offer(s) another perspective from which to understand the identified key concept(s). (57)	All learning is contextual. A learning **context** is a specific setting, event or set of circumstances, designed or chosen, to stimulate learning. The **context**, therefore, should have a relationship to the learner, the learner's interests and identity, or the learner's future. (17)
These concepts are not only "**key**" in the sense of being important; they also provide a **key**—a way into a body of knowledge through structured and sustained inquiry. They place no limits on breadth of knowledge or on depth of understanding, and therefore provide access to every student, regardless of individual aptitudes and abilities. (56)	Students should have meaningful inquiry into all of the [key and] **related concepts** for each relevant subject group at least once over the course of the MYP. (58)	[…] **contexts** are specific, varied and highly situational. (17)
		The existence of multiple **contexts** for teaching and learning underscores the fact that all concepts are open to interpretation. (17)
Students need multiple opportunities to		When concepts are set in **context**, they are less likely to become prescriptive checklists of "facts by another name". **Contexts** help to create productive discussion within and

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| explore the concepts defined for each subject or discipline. (58) | | outside of the classroom. (17)

Contexts for learning in the MYP are chosen from **global contexts** to encourage international-mindedness and global engagement within the programme. (18)

Global contexts provide a common language for powerful contextual learning, identifying specific settings, events or circumstances that provide more concrete perspectives for teaching and learning. (58)Table 3 (pages 60-62) contains explanations of the MYP **global contexts** and some of the many *explorations* that they can inspire.

These and other **contexts** for teaching and learning inspire explorations of our common humanity and guardianship of the planet. (59) |
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Statement of inquiry

Statements of inquiry should not be so specific that they cannot be transferable beyond the content of the unit. (63)

[Combine] a key concept, one or more related concepts, and a global context for the unit into a meaningful statement that students can understand. This statement expresses the relationship between concepts and context; it represents a transferable idea supported by factual content. (62)

The statement of inquiry:

- represents a **contextualized, conceptual understanding**

- can be qualified (using phrases such as "often", "may" and "can") if it is not true in all situations, but is still an important idea

- can be formulated at different levels of specificity. (62)

Summative assessment tasks should be directly linked to the statement of inquiry. (64)

Teachers should refer to the **statement of inquiry** to ensure that **concepts** and **context** inform the selection of learning experiences,

formative assessment and teaching strategies. (66)

Inquiry questions

Inquiry questions are drawn from, and inspired by, **the statement of inquiry.** Teachers and student develop these questions to explore the statement of inquiry in greater detail. Students can develop their own questions in ways that satisfy curiosity and deepen understanding. The strands of subject-specific objectives can also be helpful in formulating inquiry questions. (63)

Inquiry questions give **shape and scope** to a unit of study, and they help to **scaffold** the objectives that students should strive to achieve. (63)

Factual: (63)

- Knowledge/fact-based
- Content-driven
- Skills-related
- Supported by evidence
- Can be used to explore terminology in the statement of inquiry
- Frequently topical
- Encourage recall and comprehension

Conceptual: (63)

- Enable exploration of big ideas that connect facts and topics
- Highlight opportunities to compare and contrast
- Explore contradictions
- Lead to deeper disciplinary and interdisciplinary understanding
- Promote transfer to familiar or less familiar situations, issues, ideas and contexts
- Encourage analysis and application

Debatable: (63)

- Enable the use of facts and concepts to debate a position
- Promote discussion

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- Explore significant ideas and issues from multiple perspectives

- Can be contested

- Have tension

- May be deliberately provocative

- Encourage synthesis and evaluation

As the unit progresses, both teachers and students can develop additional questions to explore. (63)

Objectives	Summative assessment	
The objectives of any MYP subject group state the specific targets that are set for learning in that subject group. They define what the student will be able to accomplish as a result of studying the subject. Each objective is elaborated by a number of **strands;** a strand is an aspect or indicator of the learning expectation. (63)	In the context of the MYP curriculum, a unit can be defined as a period of study that concludes with a summative assessment. (50)	Describe how the statement of inquiry and summative assessment task(s) are connected
The objectives of each subject group represent the use of knowledge, understanding and skills that must be taught. They encompass the factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive dimensions of knowledge. MYP objectives reflect and offer opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile. (64)	Summative assessment tasks should be **directly linked to the statement of inquiry** and provide varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. In planning these assessments of learning, teachers should ask the following questions. (64)	
The objectives for years 1, 3 and 5 of the programme are provided in MYP subject group guides, and their use is mandatory. (64)	• How does this assessment task relate to the statement of inquiry? • Which MYP objectives are being addressed?	
In practice, schools often introduce objectives and criteria for MYP years 3 and 5 in the previous year so that students in MYP years 2 and 4 become familiar with, and begin working	• How can we create meaningful performances of understanding? • What evidence of learning will there be? • How can we collect evidence of learning? • How will the assessment task demonstrate conceptual understanding?	

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towards, stated requirements, adapting and interpreting them in ways that are developmentally appropriate. (80)

[…] MYP objectives are described in terms of what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme. Each objective is aligned with its corresponding assessment criterion. (81)

- How will results be recorded and analysed?

- How and when will students receive feedback?

Summative assessments are designed to provide evidence for evaluating student achievement using required MYP subject group specific assessment criteria. (79)

Choosing from a range of assessment strategies, teachers can devise assessment tasks that give students adequate opportunities to show clearly what they can achieve in relation to inquiry questions, and hence the subject group objectives for that unit. (85)

Open-ended tasks may be combined with other strategies, such as performance assessments. (85)

Performance assessments can allow students to perform the learned skills and show their understanding in real- world contexts. (85)

Teachers should consider the distinction between activities or tasks and performances of understanding that are more effective in building deep understanding. The MYP uses the term "performance" in its widest sense to describe all forms of assessment where students are assessed on their ability to demonstrate predetermined learning objectives. (86)

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Approaches to learning (ATL)
ATL skills empower students to succeed in meeting the challenging objectives of MYP subject groups. (20) While ATL skills are not formally assessed in the MYP, they contribute to students' achievement. (20) All teachers in MYP schools are responsible for integrating and explicitly teaching ATL skills. (21) Many ATL skills directly support the attainment of subject-group objectives. (64) ATL skills focus on the process of learning, helping students to become confident, independent, self-managed learners for life. Teachers should teach skills explicitly, and students should have structured opportunities to practise them. (65)

ACTION: Teaching and learning through inquiry

Content	Learning process
Teachers can use a wide range of content, developed through MYP key and related concepts and global contexts, as a vehicle for teaching effective learning strategies. Likewise, ATL skills can be powerful tools for exploring significant content. This dual focus (content and process, knowledge and skills) promotes student engagement, deep understanding, transfer of skills and academic success. (20) This content may be mandated by state or national systems; it may come from school-based requirements or the school's curriculum overview; or it may be derived from a range of education standards. (66)	**Learning experiences and teaching strategies** Students at the MYP age range learn best when their learning experiences have context and are connected to their lives and to the world that they have experienced. (18) Teaching and learning in all IB programmes is: (66) • based on inquiry • focused on developing conceptual understanding • developed in local and global contexts • focused on effective teamwork and collaboration • differentiated to meet the needs of all learners • informed by assessment (formative and summative). Teachers should purposefully choose strategies and learning experiences that are aligned with the unit's statement of inquiry; help students meet subject group objectives; support the development of effective ATL skills; and meaningfully prepare students to achieve high levels of performance in the unit's summative assessment. (67) Teachers should ensure that a range of learning experiences and teaching strategies is: (67)

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	• embedded in the curriculum
	• built upon prior learning
	• age-appropriate, thought-provoking and engaging
	• based on the differing needs of all students, including those who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue, and students with learning support requirements
	• open-ended and involves teaching problem-solving skills.
	IB programmes recognize and value students' efforts to construct meaning when exploring the world around them. To support this, the MYP requires teachers to provide learning experiences that draw on students' prior knowledge and provide the time and opportunity for reflection and consolidation. This constructivist approach respects students' ongoing development of ideas, and their understanding, transfer and application of these ideas to wider contexts. Constructivism implies a pedagogy that includes student inquiry into concepts through content in authentic global contexts. This pedagogy leads to the most substantial and enduring learning. (72)
	The MYP can provide valuable experiences that help students engage in sophisticated inquiry into questions about the nature, limits and value of knowledge. Inquiry based approaches to teaching encourage students to share ideas with others and to listen to, and learn from, what others think. In this process, students' thinking and their understanding is shaped and enriched. (73)
	Formative assessment Teachers should provide students with regular, specific feedback on the development of ATL skills through learning engagements and formative assessment. (64) Teachers need to develop ways of ascertaining students' prior learning so that they can plan appropriate learning experiences and teaching strategies. (67) Teachers also need to consider how to monitor and support learning as students engage with the unit. Formative assessment (assessment for learning) provides teachers and students with insights into the ongoing development of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. *Assessment for learning* is "the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they

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need to go and how best to get there" (Black et al. 2002). (67)

Formative assessment can also provide important opportunities for students to rehearse or refine performances of understanding as they **prepare to complete** summative assessment tasks. (67)

Through effective formative assessment, teachers gather, analyse, interpret and use a variety of evidence to improve student learning and **to help students to achieve their potential.** (79)

Formative assessments can be planned from the start of a unit, although they may change as teachers engage with students to determine the next stages of learning. (79)

The MYP values the use of a variety of assessment strategies. The following list of strategies is not exhaustive, and the strategies themselves are not mutually exclusive; indeed they should be used in conjunction with one another to provide a balanced view of student achievement. [**Observation**; **selected response (**particularly useful during the course of a unit, in formative assessment, as it is usually quick and straightforward to administer and can provide instant feedback for students and teachers); **open-ended tasks**; **performance**; **process journals**; **portfolio assessment**]. (85)

Differentiation

Planning for different levels of ability. (112)

As schools implement the MYP inclusively, teachers design learning experiences that allow students across a range of needs to meet their learning objectives (see Meeting student learning diversity in the classroom (2013)). (27)

The inclusion of all students requires a school to address differentiation within the written and taught curriculum, demonstrated in the unit planner and in the teaching environment […]. (28)

Effective formative assessment also provides teachers and students with a way to explore personal learning styles as well as individual student strengths, challenges and preferences that can inform meaningful differentiation of learning. (67)

Differentiation (modifying teaching strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners) can build opportunities in which each student can develop, pursue and achieve appropriate personal learning goals. When considering pedagogical approaches to meeting individual learning needs, teachers also need to consider each student's language profile. (68)

	Teachers can differentiate teaching and learning by providing examples (work samples or task-specific clarifications of assessment criteria); structuring support (advance organizers, flexible grouping, peer relationships); establishing interim and flexible deadlines; and adjusting the pace of learning experiences. (68)
	All students should be able to access the curriculum through the specific design of the unit and through the strategies that teachers employ to differentiate the content, process and outcomes of learning. Differentiation may include offering students various modes of interpreting materials, whether visually, aurally or kinaesthetically, and allowing students to choose alternate modes of presentation for their performances of understanding (for example, oral presentation, writing, or a practical method such as leading a peer-to-peer workshop). (68)

Resources

Teachers plan and record the content, learning process and resources that they use in the course of the unit. (66)

The specific learning experiences and teaching strategies devised by teachers depend on available resources […]. (67)

Teachers need to investigate available resources and consider what additional resources might be necessary for the unit. Important resources to consider include:

- instructional materials and classroom technologies
- textbooks and other written and visual texts
- teaching materials developed by businesses and not-for-profit organizations
- educational games and simulations
- teaching aids and manipulatives
- learning environments beyond the classroom
- students' diverse languages and cultures
- families, experts and other primary sources in the school and the community
- school, university and community libraries
- digital resources, including the internet. (69)

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REFLECTION: Considering the planning, process and impact of the inquiry (Table 5, 70-71)

Teachers and students need not engage in reflection on every question; choosing a focus for reflection often leads to more meaningful results. Teachers and students should also consider other questions that can help to improve the planning, process and impact of inquiry in the MYP. Reflection will always be shaped by the specific needs of teachers and students in particular contexts. (71)

Prior to teaching the unit	During teaching	After teaching the unit
Why do we think that the unit or the selection of topics will be interesting?	What difficulties did we encounter while completing the unit or the summative assessment task(s)?	What were the learning outcomes of this unit?
What do students already know, and what can they do?	What resources are proving useful, and what other resources do we need?	How well did the summative assessment task serve to distinguish levels of achievement?
What have students encountered in this discipline before?	What student inquiries are emerging?	Was the task sufficiently complex to allow students to reach the highest levels?
What does experience tell us about what to expect in this unit?	What can we adjust or change?	What evidence of learning can we identify?
What attributes of the learner profile does this unit offer students opportunities to develop?	What skills need more practice?	What artefacts of learning should we document? Which teaching strategies were effective? Why? What was surprising?
What potential interdisciplinary connections can we identify?	What is the level of student engagement?	What student-initiated action did we notice?
What do we know about my students' preferences and patterns of interaction?	How can we scaffold learning for students who need more guidance?	What will we do differently next time?
Are there any possible opportunities for meaningful service learning?	What is happening in the world right now with which we could connect teaching and learning in this unit? How well are the learning experiences aligned with the unit's objectives?	How will we build on our experience to plan the next unit?
What in the unit might be inspiring for community or personal projects?	What opportunities am I hearing to help students explore the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal biases that might be retained, revised or rejected? (DP Theory of knowledge skills development)	How effectively did we differentiate learning in this unit?
Could we develop authentic opportunities for service learning?		What can students carry forward from this unit to the next year/ level of study?
How can we use my students' multilingualism as a resource for learning?		Which subject groups could we work with next time?
		What did we learn from standardizing the assessment?

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