

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES TO ATTAIN STANDARDS

Standards based learning requires continual decision making on the part of the teacher to intentionally link standards, the strengths and needs of the learners, assessments, and learning and teaching activities.

The following questions developed by Carr and Harris can be helpful to adapt existing curriculum and units of study for use in standards-based classrooms.

Standards

- What standards relate directly to the materials and assessments included in the unit or published materials?
- What other standards could be the focus of this topic or theme?

Learning and Teaching Activities and Materials

- Do the activities build in a logical progression to the identified standards?
- Are the activities sufficient to support the learning of the desired content, concepts, processes, and skills needed to attain the standards?
- Are additional activities needed to supplement existing activities?
- Are there any activities that should be removed?
- Are the activities and materials likely to be of interest to the learners involved?
- Does the activity sufficiently build student understanding of key content and concepts, or are the students left with a completed activity but little or no understanding?
- Do the activities result in products and performances that can be used to assess student learning in relation to standards?
- Are the activities and materials age-appropriate for the learners involved?
- Are the activities and materials consistent with the principles in the district's instructional guidelines?
- Is the written material at a reading level appropriate for the learners involved?

Assessment

- Do the assessments provide feedback in relation to the identified standards?
- Are the assessments sufficient to gather information about or document the standards that are the focus of the unit or materials?
- Are the assessments of high quality?

Learners

- Are there opportunities to find out what progress learners have already made toward attaining the identified standards?
- For learners with special needs, are activities, materials, or assessments modified appropriately?
- Are there opportunities built in for learners to be made aware of the standards that are the focus of the activities or materials and assessments?
- Are there opportunities for learners to be made aware of how they will be assessed in relation to the identified standards?