Answer question 5, p. 168

• Assume that you are a member of a planning committee charged with recommending a curriculum organization for a school.
• You have been asked whether the new plan should attempt to provide for integration of subject matter and, if so, how it can best be achieved.
• What is your reply?
Curriculum design

- A plan showing the relationships among purpose, organizing structures, organizing elements, and specific learning opportunities.

Curriculum organization

- Too often, curriculum takes on the kaleidoscopic quality of television in presenting isolated pieces of information and sensations without showing their connections or cultivating their underlying meanings.
- So curriculum organization is an attempt to overcome the disarray and fragmentation found in many instructional programs.

Care must be taken . . .

- There is danger, however, in placing knowledge in too neat an integrative framework and in sequencing objects of thought that others have trimmed to fit their patterns.
- The curriculum plan may then become an instrument for control, an obstacle to the learners making connections to new unprogrammed ideas and dealing with the unexpected.
Organizing Options

• Organizing Centers
• Organizing Elements

Organizing Centers

• The centers are areas of focus by which learning activities are integrated and the elements of central knowledge or unifying ideas to be developed throughout the course or program of instruction.
  - A theme, a concept such as energy, a skill such as reading, or a value such as "plain speech," careful listening, or searching for the truth.

Organizing Center Example

• Teach entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in a high school marketing class:
  - Organize the class as a business
  - Students plan and prepare a basketball program, sell ads, sell the program to cover costs and make a profit.
  - Curriculum objectives are integrated into all the activities to carry out the project.
Organizing Elements

• In order for centers to be related, some common element must exist among them.

• Elements are the threads that hold the fabric of curriculum organization together.

Common Organizing Elements

Themes and concepts. Concepts as culture, growth, number, space, construction, communications, and entrepreneurship - the ruling ideas in respective fields.

Generalizations. Conclusions drawn from careful observations. Two examples:
  • “In stable societies all educative influences operate consistently on the individual; in heterogeneous societies, there are inconsistencies and contradictions.”
  • “A person is both participant (subjective) and observer (objective) in all human behavior.”
**Skills.** Skills are generally regarded as proficiency plans for curriculum organization.

- They are commonly used as the basis for building continuity in programs.
- Elementary schools sometimes organize learning experiences around reading comprehension, mathematical concepts, etc.
- Metacognitive strategies in problem solving are the latest organizing elements in skill programs.

**Values.** Cherished beliefs that are not questioned but taken as absolutes for governing behavior. Two examples:

- "respect for the dignity and worth of every human being regardless of race, nationality, occupation, income, or class."
- "respect for self."

When organizing a curriculum plan around values, most of the activities are designed so that they reinforce the particular value selected.

**Selecting Organizing Elements**

- Organizing elements are selected in light of the purposes of the curriculum.

  - When the curriculum goals are technical and vocational, skills are an appropriate element to use.
  - When the curriculum goals emphasize moral and ethical domains with an integrative function, values are the preferred element for organization.
Organizing Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizing Elements</th>
<th>Technology (concept)</th>
<th>Value of persons (value)</th>
<th>Relationship of natural resources to quality of life (generalization)</th>
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<td>x</td>
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How the element is used in connecting different fields

- Learners in technology education might be helped if teachers in other courses exchanged elements with the teacher of the course in technology.
  - In their mathematics course, they could acquire other basic concepts for understanding technology and systems such as algorithms, probability, and binary systems.
  - In their English course, they might be able to examine the interaction between technology and society in the mass media.
  - They could appraise American societal values as reflected in newspapers, advertisements, and modern fiction. They could be helped to see how language is related to thought in both persons and machines.

Theory from cognitive psychology stresses that learning is the making of connections between information and the learners’ existing network of knowledge.

- The idea of teaching lower level concepts before higher order learning seldom makes sense. For example, computational skills do not exist as lower order mathematical problem solving but are learned in relation to and as part of problem solving.
If one wants long-term retention and transfer, the initial experiences should be complex and allow for the student to struggle with the task or questions.

This approach is opposed to teaching an isolated skill where direct instruction and the minimizing of errors during the training or introductory period is more effective.

Impaired performance during training enhances long-term retention and transfer.

Children differ not only in the amount of previously learned subskills they bring to class but in the number of subskills they are capable of coordinating at one time and in their ability to avoid applying incorrect subskills or concepts.

In making a task analysis or hierarchy, the structure of the task from the learner's point of view is important.

When such an analysis shows a mismatch between the capacities of the learners and the demands of the task, the sequence should be redesigned either to reduce the hierarchy or to differentiate concepts that are confusing to children.

The lesson plan is a major organizational structure.

Currently, the systemic lesson plan prevails over alternative plans although teachers depart from it in actual practice.
The Systemic Lesson Plan

- **Diagnosis.** A major performance objective associated with a content standard is identified and there is some provision—a quick quiz or question perhaps—for determining the status of the learners in relation to the objective.

- **Specific objectives or benchmarks.** On the basis of the diagnosis, a specific objective for a day’s lesson is selected.

- **Anticipatory set.** There is a plan for focusing the learner’s attention, giving brief practice or relating learning previously achieved, and developing readiness for the instruction to follow.

- **Perceived purpose.** Learners are informed of the objective and told why it is important and relevant to their present and future situations.

- **Learning opportunities.** Activities are selected that promise to help achieve the desired performance.

- **Modeling.** Modeling is a demonstration or visual example of what is to be attained product or process—and a verbal description of the critical features involved.

- **Check for understanding.** This provision ensures that learners have acquired the essential information or skill.

- **Guided practice.** Activities to test whether students can perform the task successfully are given so that the teacher can decide if students are ready to study on their own.

- **Independent practice.** After learners can perform the task without major errors, they are given an opportunity to practice the new concept, skill, or process with little or no teacher direction either at school or outside of school.
Skill session lessons

- Introduction
  - Anticipatory Set
  - State PO
  - Check understanding
  - Check prior knowledge
  - Explain why important to them
- SSCP Segment 1
  - Show
  - Show and Tell
  - Check of understanding
  - Practice
- SSCP Segment 2
  - Evaluation
  - Conclusion

Alternatives in Lesson Plans

- A mismatch exists between the demands of classroom instruction and the prescriptive planning model.
- Teachers want to maintain the flow of activity during a lesson so that classes do not become unruly.
- They give first priority to planning activities that capture the attention of students during the lesson.
- Their planning focus is on the learners' interests while at the same time attending to the content.

- Alternative-style lesson plans call for the teacher first to engage in self-questioning:
  - What idea am I to teach?
  - What does this idea mean?
  - How does it relate to other ideas within the subject, to ideas in other subjects?
  - How is this idea related to my course goals and standards?
- Next, the teacher plans ways to relate the idea to the minds and motivations of the students.
Sequence and range overlap as the teacher leads the lesson . . .

- Connect to learners and locate the context.
- Engage learners in interactions with the content, encourage conversations, inquiry, and critical analysis.
- Extend and deepen learners' experiences and knowledge.
- Engage learners in meta-level questions throughout each stage.
  - How have I come to know this?
  - Where do I stand in relationship to this knowledge?
  - What do I choose to do?

The Unit

- The unit structure is cited by teachers as the most important teaching tool, followed by weekly and daily planning.

Two kinds of units

- The resource unit
  - a guide for teaching a potential and general population of learners.
- The teaching unit
  - developed for known persons
Both unit types have the same components:

- Rationale (Justification for the unit presented as an overview)
- Standards (Objectives)
- Topics
- Activities
- Materials (References)

The Module

- Your text says:

  - A module is a short course of between 20 and 60 hours, designed in terms of objectives, content, skills required on entry and anticipated at the end of the course, assessment techniques, and suggestions for methodology and resources.

But a module really is . . .

- A self-contained component of a system, which has a well-defined interface to the other components.
  - Something is modular if it includes or uses modules which can be interchanged as units without disassembly of the module.
  - It covers content that can be easily inserted into any curriculum.
Assignment

- Read Chapter 9 in your text
- Annotation no. 5 (Blue)

That's it today . . .