

Deepening Our Understanding of *The Parallel Curriculum Model*

Developing a thorough understanding of a text is a sequential process. At the outset, teachers, administrators, students, or professors who plan to read *The Parallel Curriculum* might find it helpful to scan the book prior to reading in order to note key questions, headings, components, and the organizational structure of the book. Those who want a deeper understanding of the text and who want to apply the theory to the classroom, are invited to use the questions and activities included here to support analysis and discussion. Relevant pages of the text are listed in the first column. The content of that section is listed in the second column, and if appropriate, a suggestion, question, or activity is listed in the third column.

Page	Content	Suggestion, question, or activity
CHAPTER ONE		
1 (second paragraph)	Rationale for a new conception of curriculum	Discussion: Why might we need to think differently about curricula than we have in the past?
2 (bullets)	Conclusions about curriculum design	Activity: On a 1-5 scale, to what extent can you support these conclusions? With which conclusions do you disagree?
3 (last four lines)	Similarities and differences in curriculum for all learners and gifted learners.	Activity: In a small group, create a Venn diagram and list the similarities and differences between curriculum for all learners and curriculum for the gifted
5 (third bold heading)	Respecting individual learner differences	Discussion: To what extent can/should curricula respect the unique characteristics of the learner?

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9 (second bold heading)	Enduring knowledge	Discussion: What does this term mean to you?
9 (third bold heading)	Representative topic	Discussion: What does this term mean to you? How are representative topics currently selected for your school's curriculum?
12 (bullets)	Characteristics of effective curriculum	Activity: On a 1-5 scale to what extent do you agree with these characteristics? With which characteristics do you disagree?
13	Ascending levels of intellectual demand (ALID)	Discuss this term and compare it to synonyms you have used in the past.
14	Student affect	Discussion: Is this concept new? Important?
CHAPTER TWO		
18	PCM overview	Note: Good advance organizer
19 (third bullet)	Teachers as decision makers	Discussion: To what extent does your district mandate content? Resources? Pacing? Assessment? How much discretion do you have? How do you use this discretion?
20	Beginning of Parallel definitions - Core	
22 (bullets)	Characteristics of ALID in Core	
22 (first bold heading)	Brief examples of Core	
24 (bullets)	Connections goals	Activity: Contrast the goals of Curriculum of

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		Connections with the goals of the Core curriculum. In what ways are they similar? Different?
26 (bullets)	ALID in Connections	Discussion: What might be some criteria for selecting one ALID approach over another?
26 (first bold heading)	Brief Connections example	
30 (bullets)	Practice goals	
31 (bullets)	ALID for Practice parallel	
32 (first bold heading)	Brief Practice examples	
36 (bullets)	Identity parallel guiding questions	
38 (bullets)	Goals for the Identity parallel	
39 (bullets)	ALID for Identity	
40 (bold headings)	Brief examples of Identity parallel	
41 (bold heading)	How to combine parallels	
CHAPTER THREE		
43-45	Definition of curriculum	Discussion: How does this definition differ from your own? Your district's?
46-47 (chart)	Ten components of curriculum design	Discussion: Would you add to this list?

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		<p>Might you change any of the definitions? Might you alter any of the exemplary characteristics?</p> <p>To what extent are these components and characteristics present in most curriculum units? Should they be present? How might these components change across the four PCM parallels? Why might they change form?</p>
49 (chart)	Options for choosing appropriate content	Discussion: How are decisions about curriculum content currently made? How might the decision making process be altered to increase the authenticity and power of curriculum content?
49 (second bold heading)	Explanation of assessment component	
51 (chart)	Assessment options	
52 (bold heading)	Explanation of introduction component	
53 (bold heading)	Explanation of teaching methods component	Activity: Make a list of the teaching strategies with which you are most familiar. Identify which ones are least familiar. Develop a plan to learn more about a least familiar strategy.
54-56 (chart)	Teaching methods options	
56 (bold heading)	Explanation of learning activities component	Discussion question: How are learning activities different from teaching strategies?
57-60 (chart)	Learning activities options	Discussion question: What does it mean when a

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		learning activity is “hands-on?” What can teachers do to ensure that students “mentally manage” content?
60 (bold heading)	Explanation of various grouping strategies	
61 (bold heading)	Explanation of products component	Activity: Query a sample of teachers to find out the kinds of products utilized in his/her class. Create a list of the commonly used product formats. How does the list of product options presented in the chart differ from those traditionally offered to students?
61 (bold heading)	Explanation of resources component	
62 (chart)	Product options	
63 (chart)	Resources options	
63 (bold heading)	Explanation of extensions component	
64 (bold heading)	Explanation of modifications component	
67–80	Detailed examples of the ten components	Discussion and Activity: Form groups of ten people. Assign one component to each person. Read the appropriate section of “Lydia’s Story” and evaluate the degree to which her remodeling of the textbook Civil War unit addressed the exemplary characteristics (page 46-47) for that component.

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CHAPTER FOUR		
81-84	Rationale for four parallels	Discussion: Discuss the degree to which you agree with the four approaches to curriculum design included in this rationale. Discuss the current model(s) used to design curriculum in your district at the present time.
85-86	Definition of the Core parallel	
86-87	Goals of the Core parallel	
89-91 (chart)	Modifications to the 10 components	Discussion: Discuss any difference you see between this chart altered to address the goals of the Core parallel and the one on pages 46-47.
88-94	The role of content in the Core parallel	
95 (chart)	Examples of concepts, principles, and skills	Activity: Practice finding concepts and writing principles and facts for a given representative topic.
94-97	Assessment in the Core parallel	
97-99	The introduction component in the Core parallel	
99-106	The other seven curriculum Components within the Core parallel	
106-122	Detailed examples of how the ten components are altered to address the goals and format of the Core parallel	Discussion and Activity: Form groups of ten people. Assign one component to each person. Read the appropriate sections of “Lydia’s Story”

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		and evaluate the degree to which her remodeling of the textbook Civil War unit (pages 67-80) is the same or different from the way she remodeled the unit to fit the format of the Core parallel (pages 106-122).
CHAPTER FIVE		
125-127	The branches of knowledge	Discussion: Analyze the diagram on page 126 and compare it to your own thoughts about the structure of knowledge.
127-128.1	Definition of the Connections parallel	Activity: Identify and explore a synonym for the Curriculum of Connections.
128-129	Focusing questions for the Connections parallel	
129-131	Goals of the Connections parallel	Discussion: Analyze the similarities between this parallel and other models with which you are familiar (e.g., interdisciplinary curriculum).
131-136	The ten curriculum components are modified	Discussion: Discuss any difference you see between this chart and the one you reviewed for the Core parallel
136-144	Selecting content for a Connections unit	Activity: Practice these strategies with a topic of your choice.
144-146	Assessment in the Connection parallel	Activity: Using the topic of your choice, discuss the kind of knowledge you will need to assess in a Connections unit. How will you best accomplish your task?

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146-147	Characteristics of the Connections introduction	Activity: How might you stress the nature of Connections parallel in your introduction?
147-148	Characteristics of the teaching methods	Activity: Make a list of the teaching methods that would increase the likelihood that all students can make connections across time, cultures, and people.
148	Characteristics of the learning activities	Activity: Compare and contrast several different kinds of learning activities that would increase students' ability to make connections.
148	Characteristics of resources	Discussion: What are some of the general characteristics of resources that would support the Curriculum of Connections?
149-150	The characteristics of the remaining components	Discussion: Discuss how a concept map might look different in a Connections unit when compared to a concept map in a Core unit.
150-161	Detailed examples of how the ten components are altered to address the goals and format of the Connections parallel	Discussion and Activity: Use the charts on pages 152-153 and identify another approach that Lydia could take to design a connections parallel using the same topic.
CHAPTER SIX 164-165	Meaning of Practice	Activity: Compare the Curriculum of Practice to the teaching of methodological skills. How are they the same? How are they different?

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166 (chart)	Focusing questions	Discussion: Review the list of focusing questions for the Curriculum of Practice. If practitioners used these questions to help them craft lessons, how might student learning look different?
167-171 (chart)	Standards for inquiry	<p>Activity: The standards listed in this chart send an implicit message to educators about learners for the 21st century. Summarize the skills that will be required of young people in the future. Compare the skills to what is currently taught.</p> <p>Activity: Generate a series of tasks that would emphasize one or more of the historical thinking skills.</p>
173-178	Content and the Curriculum of Practice	Discussion: Select a unit of study and determine how the content could be explored using the Curriculum of Practice parallel.
178-179	Assessment	Activity: Design a series of assessment prompts or questions that could be used at assess content in the Curriculum of Practice.
179	Role of introductory activities	Discussion: Read the contract on pages 200-202. Discuss the type of support a teacher would need to provide to assist students accomplish each step of the contract.

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179-180	Teaching methods	Discussion: Which teaching strategies are best suited to the Curriculum of Practice? What other factors must teachers consider when they select teaching methods?
180-184	Learning activities	Discussion: Discuss when learning activities, like those suggested, could be used in an instructional unit. Could they be used with a Core unit? Could Curriculum of Practice lessons be used to begin an instructional unit?
185	Resources	Activity: Identify the characteristics of the resources used in a Curriculum of Practice lesson. Where are these kinds of resources found?
185-189	Products	Activity: Look over the list of products on page 62. Select 6-12 products that you believe are produced by experts in a discipline and that would align with the Curriculum of Practice.
188-189	Grouping	Activity: Generate different grouping formats that align with the Curriculum of Practice. How do they compare or contrast with the way professionals conduct their work?
190-191	ALID	Activity: With the goals of the Curriculum of Practice in mind, brainstorm how you would provide increasing levels of challenge within a Curriculum of Practice unit.

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194-206	Lydia's Civil War unit	Analyze Lydia's Civil War unit that she modified to reflect the Curriculum of Practice. What would students know and be able to do at the conclusion of the unit? How would these outcomes compare with students who studied the Civil War under a more traditional approach?
207	Looking Backwards and Ahead	Discussion: Compare and contrast the Curriculum of Practice with the other three parallels.
CHAPTER SEVEN		
210	Meaning of Identity	Activity: Consider the three-way mirror metaphor. Create another metaphor to capture the process of identity formation.
213	Identity and learning (chart)	Discussion: Look over the chart. In what ways does schooling contribute to a child's emerging sense of self? What specific strategies do teachers currently use to help nurture each student's identity?
214	The importance of identity formation	Discussion: Why we should be concerned about identity formation in today's youth?
215	Focusing questions	Activity: Develop a set of focusing questions that could be used with elementary students, middle school students and high school students that would help them understand themselves as they study a particular discipline.

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215, 219-221	Content	Activity: Generate several ways to create options for student preference, interest, or choice within a Curriculum of Identity unit.
221-225	Assessment	Discussion: With members of a small group, create some self-reflection assessments that could be used with this parallel.
225-228	Introductory activities	Discussion: How do introductory activities within an Identity unit compare/contrast to those in other parallels?
228-229	Teaching methods	Discussion: How might teaching strategies change to address the goals and purposes of the Identity parallel?
229-230	Learning activities	Activity: Make a list of learning activities that support students' reflection in an Identity unit.
230	Grouping strategies	Discussion: What kinds of management issues might a teacher face when using the Curriculum of Identity parallel? How might these issues be resolved?
231-232	Resources	Activity: Think about the specialized resources that would forward student learning in a Curriculum of Identity unit. Compare/Contrast them to the resources used with another parallel.

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232-233	Extension activities	Discussion: How might teachers manage small group and individual extensions within a Curriculum of Identity unit?
233-235 (Figure 7.9)	ALID	Discussion: What are some other paths to support ascending levels of intellectual demand in the Curriculum of Identity?
219-235	The 10 curriculum components	Discussion: Which of the 10 curriculum components hold the most power to transform a Core Curriculum unit into the Curriculum of Identity unit? Explain your choices.
235-247	Lydia's adaptation	Activity: Review the changes Lydia made to emphasize the goals and purposes of the Curriculum of Identity in the Civil War unit. How might you remodel the lesson differently to address the identity formation of students?
CHAPTER 8		
251-252	Rationale for use of the parallels	Discussion: Consider the multiple ways for using the parallels in the model. Discuss the pros and cons for using them in combination.
252-256	Flexible use of the parallels	Examine the different ways the parallels can be used by practitioners. Create another way, not listed, that the parallels can be used to orchestrate powerful learning opportunities for students.

