

**The A+ Essentials as a Guide to Plan and Reflect**

Glenda Cook, OKA+ Fellow, used by permission

| Arts   | Curriculum  | Experiential Learning  | Multiple Learning Pathways  |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>In A+ Schools the arts are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* taught daily</li> <li>*inclusive of drama, dance, music, visual art and writing</li> <li>*integrated</li> <li>*valued as essential to learning</li> <li>*included in planning</li> <li>*practiced</li> <li>*a part of personal experience</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools curriculum is addressed through the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*mapping that reflects alignment</li> <li>*thematic webbing</li> <li>*development of essential questions</li> <li>*creation and use of interdisciplinary thematic units</li> <li>*cross-curricular integration</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools experiential learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*is grounded in arts-based instruction</li> <li>*is a creative process</li> <li>*acknowledges entry points</li> <li>*includes differentiated instruction</li> <li>*provides multi-faceted assessment opportunities</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools multiple learning pathways are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*used within planning &amp; assessment</li> <li>*understood by students and parents</li> <li>*studied, and new research is explored by teachers</li> <li>*creating balanced learning opportunities</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>  | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>  |
| <p><b>How can the arts be infused?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drama</li> <li>• Dance/movement</li> <li>• Music</li> <li>• Visual Art</li> <li>• Creative Writing</li> </ul>  | <p><b>What are the Essential Questions for this unit? Are they posted and in language children understand?</b></p>  | <p><b>What learning experiences planned foster higher levels of thinking? Problem-solving? Creativity?</b></p>   | <p><b>What do I know about my students' MIs? How can I use that information to plan?</b></p>  |
| <p><b>How can I include two-way integration to enrich understanding?</b></p>   | <p><b>How can I integrate disciplines?</b></p>  | <p><b>Are all students able to experience success and at the same time be challenged? (scaffolding)</b></p>  | <p><b>How can I use the elements of arts handouts provided by A+ to create new experiences connected to objectives?</b></p>   |
| <p><b>How can opportunities for process-oriented activities where students have many choices be included?</b></p>  | <p><b>How can I create experiences using a number of MIs?</b></p>   | <p><b>How have process standards been included?</b></p>  | <p><b>Have I included opportunities for individual and group interaction?</b></p>   |
|  | <p><b>How will I organize my lessons?</b></p>   | <p><b>What assessment tools need to be in place or created?</b></p>  | <p><b>How can learning be assessed using MIs?</b></p>   |

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| <i>Enriched Assessment</i>   | <i>Collaboration</i>   | <i>Infrastructure</i>  | <i>Climate</i>   |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>In A+ Schools enriched assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*is on-going</li> <li>*is designed for learning</li> <li>*is used as documentation</li> <li>*is a reflective practice</li> <li>*helps meet school system requirements</li> <li>*is used to self -assess by teachers and students</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*is intentional</li> <li>*occurs within &amp; outside of school</li> <li>*occurs during planning time: classroom teachers with arts teachers</li> <li>*occurs with teachers, students, families, the community, &amp; local businesses</li> <li>*includes broad-based leadership</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools infrastructure supports the philosophy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*addressing logistics such as schedules that support planning time</li> <li>*providing appropriate space for the arts</li> <li>*continually developing faculty commitment</li> <li>* creating a shared vision</li> <li>*providing related professional development</li> <li>*continual team building</li> </ul> | <p>In A+ Schools climate improves because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*teachers can manage the arts in their classrooms</li> <li>*stress is reduced</li> <li>*teachers are treated as professionals</li> <li>*morale improves</li> <li>*excitement about the program grows</li> <li>*A+ whole school reform is invigorating</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   | <p><b>Planning and Reflective Questions:</b></p>   |
| <p><b>How can students show understanding in different ways?</b></p>   | <p><b>What collaborators have been identified? (in the school, families, community)</b></p>  | <p><b>What do students need to be able to do to be independent and responsible? How can I facilitate conversations that address art technique, procedures, responsible actions and independence?</b></p>   | <p><b>How can we collaboratively create guidelines to have fun and stay safe as we learn? How can we use those guidelines to reflect on behaviors? Choices?</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Have I asked students to reflect on their own learning? Encouraged self-assessing and projecting next steps?</b></p>   | <p><b>Have I included the expertise of others in my school?</b></p>  | <p><b>What is the logical sequence of the lesson (or series of lessons)?</b></p>   | <p><b>What am I doing that the students could do instead? What do they need to know to be able to do it?</b></p>   |
| <p><b>What assessment tools will be used to assess prior knowledge as instruction begins? To provide ongoing information? To determine mastery? As a reflective tool?</b></p>  | <p><b>How can my team (teachers and assistants) have the most direct impact on student learning?</b></p> <p><b>How can I plan experiences for students to work collaboratively?</b></p>  | <p><b>How can I manage time? Should I consider restructuring my classroom time?</b></p>  | <p><b>How can we create an environment that promotes ownership and reflects student representations of concepts? Standards? Objectives?</b></p>  |
|  | <p><b>How can I find time to collaborate? Face-to-face, email, phone, notes, etc.</b></p>  | <p><b>How can I create interest? Add inspiring tools? Rearrange the room? Find a new way to use familiar objects?</b></p>  |  |