



ACTIVITY 3.9

Auditing for Balance in Classroom Curriculum and Assessment

PURPOSE

Often when teachers are introduced to a new (or different) standards-aligned curriculum, they quickly identify one of the primary road block to implementation: “When am I going to find time to teach *all this*?” The following activity provides a process by which teachers can compare what they currently teach and assess to the content of a new or existing curriculum to determine the following:

- Where their instruction and assessment already align
- What parts of the curriculum they need to add
- Which instructional activities, targets and assessments they can eliminate
- What role current texts and supplementary materials play in daily instruction

Is there balance among the written curriculum targets and the assessment methods used to assess them? To complete the activity, teachers need to have created their current personal curriculum map for the year or course, including the content and skills they will teach and assessments they will use for each.

TIME

2–3 hours, depending on the scope of the comparison

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Each teacher’s current curriculum plan, map, or syllabus for the year or course, including content and skills taught and assessments used
- Numbered list of the state/district curriculum standards/grade-level learning targets for each subject to be addressed

SUGGESTED ROOM SETUP

- Tables and chairs set for ease of discussion among participants
- Interactive whiteboards or easels with flip charts and markers to record discussion and decision making

DIRECTIONS

Data Gathering

1. *New and current curriculum—Where’s the match?* Compare your curriculum map’s list of content and skills to the numbered list of the new curriculum standards/grade-level learning targets. On your curriculum map, highlight those content and skill entries that show up on the list. Next, go back through the highlighted content and skill

entries and write the number of the new curriculum standard(s)/grade-level learning target(s) next to each highlighted content and skill on your curriculum map to show the match.

2. *Instruction—How's the balance?* Working with the content and skill entries you highlighted on your curriculum map in Step 1, determine the amount of emphasis each new standard or grade-level learning target receives in your current teaching. Is it about right, given its relative importance to everything else students must learn and its emphasis in state and district assessments? Is it overrepresented? Underrepresented? Not present at all? Mark the corresponding column on the chart, “Comparing the Classroom Curriculum to District/State Standards.”
3. *Assessment—How's the balance?* Again working with the content and skill entries you highlighted in Step 1, refer to the assessments students take over the course of the year. Is each new standard or grade-level learning target sufficiently sampled, given its relative importance to everything else students must learn and its emphasis in state and district assessments? Is it oversampled? Undersampled? Or not assessed at all? Mark the corresponding column on the chart, “Comparing the Classroom Curriculum to District/ State Standards.”

Decision Making

4. *What to leave out?* Examine the content and skills you *didn't* highlight in Step 1 to determine which can and should be eliminated from your curriculum map. If you can address the new curriculum in less than the full year, consider which of these content and skills can and should remain in your teaching plan.
5. *What to adjust?* Use the information in Figure 3.6, “Comparing the Classroom Curriculum to District/State Standards” gathered in Steps 2 and 3, to rework your curriculum map.

Figure 3.6 Comparing the Classroom Curriculum to District/State Standards

Standard/ Grade-Level Learning Target	Instruction and Activities			Assessment				
	Right amount of emphasis	Too much emphasis	Not enough emphasis	Not present	Sufficient sample	Oversampled	Under- sampled	Not sampled
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								

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