TN Department of **Education**

Professional Learning Package: Implementing Unit Starters

TN

**Module 2:
Refining Instruction
with Unit Starters**
Learning Session 2b

Module 2 Learning Sessions

Session	Guiding Questions
1 ✓	• What growth did students make as a result of engagement with the Unit Starters? • What growth did I make as a teacher as a result of engagement with the Unit Starters?
2	• How can I refine my instruction moving forward?

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Time: 1 min – 0:01

Script: "The first learning session in this module prompted us to reflect on what we and our students learned as a result of engagement with the Unit Starter. In this second learning session, we will focus more on action. We'll talk about specific things we can do to refine our instruction moving forward."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Time: 1 min - 0:02

Script: "Let's take a moment to review our group norms so we can all engage in a productive learning experience…"

Additional Facilitator Information: Add further group norms if desired

Learning Session 2

- Guiding question:
  - How can I refine my instruction moving forward?

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Time: 1 min – 0:03

Script: "Please read the guiding question on this slide. Notice that the focus of this session is to identify concrete actions we can take to strengthen our instruction."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Mini-Session B:
Plan using the *Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee*

Mini-Session B Learning Goals

- Think through planning that:
  - reflects the *Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee*;
  - builds conceptual knowledge; and
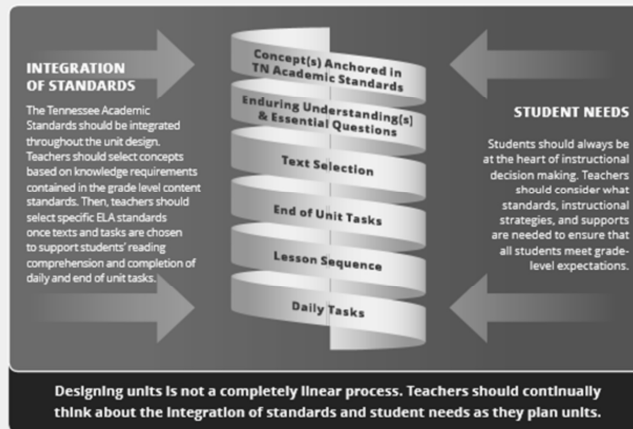 - offers students opportunities much like the Unit Starters.

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Time: 5 min – 0:05

Script: "In this Mini-Session B, we will consider how we can use the Unit Starters and the *Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee* to impact our planning. We will dive deeply into the Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee. We will also consider the standards aligned concepts that students could build knowledge around. Finally, we will think about the opportunities that this type of planning can offer our students."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Time: 6 min – 0:11

Script: "We are going to begin by revisiting the *Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee* spiral graphic. We know the Unit Starters were created using this framework and that this framework is closely aligned to the level 5 indicators on the TEAM Planning Rubric. Read the explanation on page 11 of Teaching Literacy in Tennessee."

"What are the biggest takeaways from this framework as you think about the work you have just done with Unit Starters?"

"How has the idea of "backwards planning" helped you?"

"How have you seen, "beginning with the end in mind," impact the students in your class(es)?"

"How could you replicate backwards planning in your own instructional plans?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

STEP 1 — IDENTIFY CONCEPT(S)

Teachers should first identify a concept(s) that will become the foundation of the unit. This step should be guided by an integration of the Tennessee Academic Standards including ELA, science, social studies, and fine arts. The standards provide a general guide for the types of knowledge students should gain in their respective grade levels, which will help in identifying appropriate concept(s).

STEP 2 — DETERMINE ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S) AND GENERATE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Teachers should determine enduring understanding(s) and generate essential questions that prioritize the learning around the concept(s). Enduring understanding(s) are statements reflecting the conclusions students will draw as a result of engaging with the concept, and essential questions are open-ended questions that spark students to draw the conclusions needed to gain the enduring understanding.[30, 31, 32, 33]

STEP 3 — SELECT MULTIPLE TEXTS

Teachers should select multiple texts that reflect the expectations of grade-level standards and support the enduring understandings. Texts should be worthy of students' time and attention, be of exceptional craft and quality, and provoke a deep level of thinking.

STEP 4 — DEVELOP END-OF-UNIT TASKS

Teachers should develop end-of-unit tasks, which should allow students opportunities to apply what they have read, heard, and seen during unit in an authentic and meaningful way. End-of-unit tasks should allow students to demonstrate critical thinking and textual analysis skills and convey conceptual knowledge around the enduring understandings of the unit.

STEP 5 — DESIGN LESSON SEQUENCES

Teachers should design lesson sequences that build in complexity over time and support students in gaining the enduring understandings. The lesson sequences should utilize a variety of instructional strategies that ensure students have opportunities to deepen their understanding.

STEP 6 — CREATE DAILY TASKS

Teachers should create standards-aligned daily tasks that allow students to incrementally show their knowledge and skills until they are able to fully demonstrate their learning through the more comprehensive end-of-unit task.

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Identify Concepts

IDENTIFY CONCEPT(S)

Teachers should first identify a concept(s) that will become the foundation of the unit. This step should be guided by an integration of the Tennessee Academic Standards including ELA, science, social studies, and fine arts. The standards provide a general guide for the types of knowledge students should gain in their respective grade levels, which will help in identifying appropriate concept(s).

Time: 1 min – 0:18

Script: "As we think about the Framework for Teaching Literacy in Tennessee spiral graphic and the steps that you have just read about, identifying a concept is the first step."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Identify Concepts

- Consult your Tennessee science and social studies standards.
- What are the most important concepts for students to learn at your grade level?
- As a team, decide what you want students to learn.
  - Example:
    - Teacher: "I can see that it is important for second graders to learn about America."
    - Coach: "What do you want students to understand?"
    - Teacher: "I don't want them to only learn recall things like landmarks and state names.
    - Coach: What do you want students to learn?
    - Teacher: "I want students to understand that the country they live in is diverse and full of many cultures. I want students to understand they have an important role as an American. I want them to understand patriotism. Patriotism may be my concept."

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Time: 9 min – 0:27

Script: "As you are planning, you might be able to incorporate this focus on building knowledge into your plans. You will want to consult your grade level science and social studies standards. As a team, you can discuss the most important concepts for students to learn at your grade level. (You may want to consult the conceptual hierarchy from your Unit Starter to help you have a clearer idea of what this might look like.) Based on your grade level standards, what do you want students to learn? What is the knowledge that you want students to be able to know and use? (You may want to use the sample conversation on the slide to help with this conversation.)

Additional Facilitator Information:

Identify and Map Concepts

- Identify your concepts.
  - Chart your concepts and display
- As grade level teams, do a gallery walk to view and discuss concepts in the other grade levels.
  - Note on other grade-level charts when you can make a connection to one of their concepts
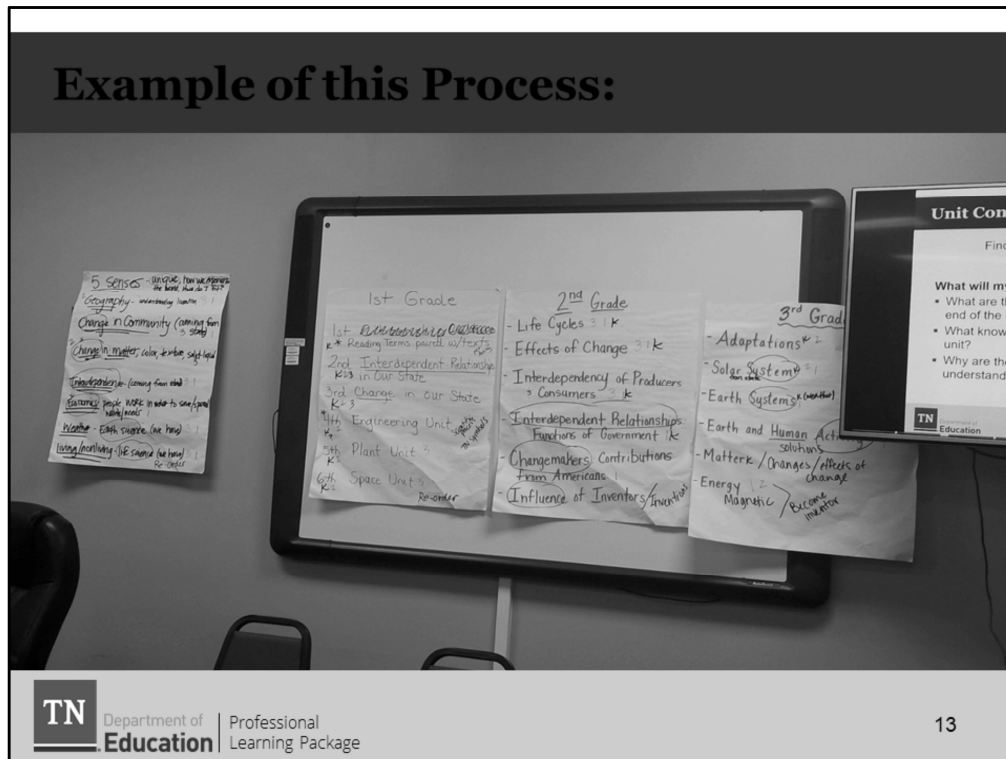- Come back together to see what vertical alignment (across the grade levels) is present.

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Time: 15 min – 0:42

Script: "As you finalize your concepts that you feel are important for students to know and use at your grade level, chart those."

"Vertical alignment is important as we think about concepts that students are learning. It is important that the knowledge is building throughout the grade levels and not being replicated."

"As grade level teams, do a gallery walk of to the other grade level charts. Make a note indicating your grade level anytime you make a connections from one of your concepts to a concepts in another grade level. For example, I am a grade K teacher. As I walk to the grade 2 chart, I notice a concept of interdependency of producers and consumers. I am going to write a K beside that because I am making a connection back to our grade K concept of interdependency of wants and needs." (See photo examples on the next 2 slides for further clarification of this planning activity.)

Additional Facilitator Information:

Time: 1 min – 0:43

Script: "This picture is an example of the gallery walk vertical connection activity."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Example of a Single Grade Level with Vertical Connections

2nd Grade
- Life Cycles 3 1 k
- Effects of Change 3 1 k
- Interdependency of Producers & Consumers 3 1k
- Interdependent Relationships: Functions of Government 1k
- Changemakers: Contributions from Americans 1
- Influence of Inventors/Inventions

Example: After charting, the grade-level teams did a gallery walk to discuss and make connections among the other grade levels. They indicated connections made by writing their grade level beside the concept.

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Time: 1 Min. – 0:44

Script: "This is an example of the gallery walk vertical connection activity. You can see how the other grade levels made connections. This also allows you to see any areas that were not aligned or connected to the other grade levels."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Determine Enduring Understandings & Essential Questions

STEP 2

DETERMINE ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S) AND GENERATE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Teachers should determine enduring understanding(s) and generate essential questions that prioritize the learning around the concept(s). Enduring understanding(s) are statements reflecting the conclusions students will draw as a result of engaging with the concept, and essential questions are open-ended questions that spark students to draw the conclusions needed to gain the enduring understanding.[23, 54, 55, 56]

Time: 5 Min. – 0:49

Script: "Read Step 2 and consider how this could impact your planning process. As you identified concepts that would be essential for students to study at your grade level, you probably had some deeper discussion into the understandings that the students will learn and demonstrate. Essential questions are questions that are open ended and should have answers that require deep study.

A non-example might be: What can we observe from Earth?
This non-example is very straightforward and can easily be answered with an internet search, a single text, or even background knowledge.

An example could be: How does the movement of bodies in the universe create patterns that we observe?
This example gives students the opportunity to explore possibilities as they learn about our universe in depth."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Select Texts

SELECT MULTIPLE TEXTS

STEP 3

Teachers should select multiple texts that reflect the expectations of grade-level standards and support the enduring understandings. Texts should be worthy of students' time and attention, be of exceptional craft and quality, and provoke a deep level of thinking.
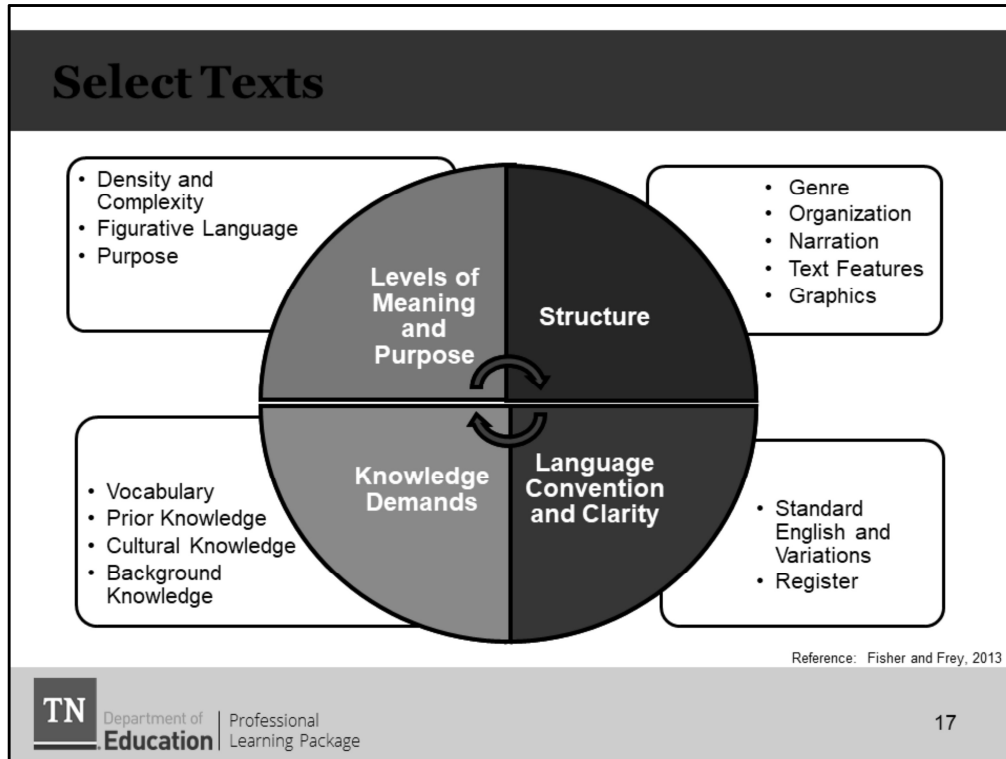
Time: 5 Min. – 0:54

Script: "Read Step 3 and consider how this could impact your planning process. As you create your text set to support students in learning more about this concept, you will want to consider texts that are high quality and content rich. Additionally, you will want to support students across the literacy block. You may need texts for Interactive Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Small Group Reading, and Independent Reading. Think about the Unit Starter that you just completed, how did those texts support your literacy block? What would you like to add to the list as you are thinking about your text set?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

Time: 5 Min. – 0:59

Script: "Think about the texts that you used in the Unit Starter. How did they exemplify these qualitative aspects of texts? What texts might you include in your instruction around your concept to provide qualitatively complex texts for your students to engage with?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

Develop End-of-Unit Task

DEVELOP END-OF-UNIT TASKS

STEP 4

Teachers should develop end-of-unit tasks, which should allow students opportunities to apply what they have read, heard, and seen during unit in an authentic and meaningful way. End-of-unit tasks should allow students to demonstrate critical thinking and textual analysis skills and convey conceptual knowledge around the enduring understandings of the unit.

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Time: 5 Min. – 1:04

Script: "Read Step 4 and consider how this could impact your planning process. It is important to create an End of Unit task that is standards aligned and allows students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of the concept and enduring understandings from the literacy unit. The next three slides provide you with some guidance for planning a strong end of unit task. How might you use the end of unit task from the Unit Starter that you just taught to assist you with this?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

Consider this Quality Criteria

Strong end-of-unit tasks:

- Require students to synthesize their learning from multiple unit texts to demonstrate their understanding of the unit concept.
- Require students to use details from multiple texts to explain or provide evidence to support their understandings.
- Require students to choose appropriate details and elaborate on their thinking sufficiently, which may take multiple readings of a text and also include evidence and connections across texts.
- Prompt student thinking about texts that reflects the analytical demands of multiple grade-level literacy standards.
- Prompt student responses about texts that reflect the demands of the grade-level content standards.
- Require students to demonstrate their understanding in an authentic and meaningful context.

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Time: 5 Min. – 1:09

Script: "As you are planning an end-of-unit task here are some criteria for strong end-of-unit tasks.
Strong end-of-unit tasks…

- Require students to synthesize their learning from multiple unit texts to demonstrate their understanding of the unit concept.
- Require students to use details from multiple texts to explain or prove their ideas.
- Require students to choose appropriate details and elaborate on their thinking sufficiently, which will may take more than one day.
- Prompt student thinking about texts that reflects the analytical demands of multiple grade-level literacy standards.
- Prompt student responses about texts that reflect the demands of the grade-level standards.
- Require students to demonstrate their understanding in an authentic and meaningful context. We'll discuss more about this specific criterion on the nest slide."

Additional Facilitator Information:
Provide time for teachers to review the criteria on the slide and to ask questions.

Elements of Strong End-of-Unit Tasks

GOAL	Strong end-of-unit tasks will give students the opportunity to answer the essential questions for the unit and allow them to demonstrate their new conceptual understandings.
ROLE	Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic role or "job" for students. This will be a real-world situation in which they would be expected to share an opinion, explain or inform others, or draft a narrative.
AUDIENCE	Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic audience within the context of the scenario. They are the "others" referred to in the goal.
SITUATION	Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic situation: • Convince others of their opinion on topics or texts (opinion). • Explain a topic to others with clear information (informative). • Tell stories to others about real or imagined events (narrative).
PRODUCT/ PERFORMANCE	Strong end-of-unit tasks will clarify what the students will create and why they will create it. These will reflect real-world products or performances.

Adapted From Wiggins, Grant and Jay McTighe. Understanding by Design. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. 2005.

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Time: 5 Min. – 1:14

Script: "As I mentioned on the last slide, one of the key criterion for strong end-of-unit tasks is that they require your students to demonstrate their development of the enduring understandings.

Asking students to demonstrate understanding in an authentic and meaningful context will require us to articulate five things.

GOAL: Strong end-of-unit tasks will give students the opportunity to answer the essential questions for the unit and allow them to demonstrate their new conceptual understandings.

ROLE: Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic role or "job" for students. This will be a real-world situation in which they would be expected to share an opinion, explain or inform others, or draft a narrative.

AUDIENCE: Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic audience within the context of the scenario. They are the "others" referred to in the goal.

SITUATION: Strong end-of-unit tasks will have an authentic situation:
• Convince others of their opinion on topics or texts (opinion).
• Explain a topic to others with clear information (informative).
• Tell stories to others about real or imagined events (narrative).

PRODUCT/ PERFORMANCE: Strong end-of-unit tasks will clarify what the students will create and why they will create it. These will reflect real-world products or performances.

For an end-of-unit task to meet this criterion, we need to ensure the task not only has an authentic product, but also that the product would be authentic for the role/audience/situation. For example, if I were a medical student, it may not be likely that I would create a poster about the skeletal system to share with another student. I may however, create a poster that I could share at a conference or that I could post in a check-up room. There is a clear connection between authentic tasks, purposes and audiences here. For example, consider the task of creating a brief for the president from a third grade Unit Starter from the last round. This is just one example, but it reminds us of the importance of considering all criteria to ensure our end-of-unit task represents a valuable learning experience for students. "

Additional Facilitator Information:

Look-Fors with End-of-Unit Tasks

GOAL	• Require students to answer the essential questions and demonstrate their enduring understandings
ROLE & AUDIENCE	• Provide an authentic role for students • Include an authentic audience
SITUATION	• Have authentic situations: convince others of an opinion, explain a topic, tell real or imagined stories
PRODUCT/ PERFORMANCE	• Reflect real-world products or performances
FORM	• Are written in student-facing language • Include support for the specific form of communication (write/verbally/visually express opinion, information, stories)
RUBRIC	• Are paired with a rubric

Source: McTighe & Wiggins, 2004, p. 69

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Time: 10 Min. – 1:24

Script: "You may want to take some time to look at a few end-of-unit tasks from various Unit Starters. As you look at each example, use the Look-Fors from this slide to guide your analysis and reflection. How could you plan for a standards-aligned end-of-unit task?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

Design Lesson Sequences

STEP 5

DESIGN LESSON SEQUENCES

Teachers should design lesson sequences that build in complexity over time and support students in gaining the enduring understandings. The lesson sequences should utilize a variety of instructional strategies that ensure students have opportunities to deepen their understanding.

Time: 5 Min. – 1:29

Script: "Read Step 5 and consider how this could impact your planning process.   Think about the scaffolding of the learning that the students were provided in the Unit Starter. How can you plan similar learning opportunities for students to engage in as they work toward meeting the goal of mastering the end of unit task? For example, what experiences do students need to be successful at the end of the unit. If I want the students to write in an opinion letter format at the conclusion of the unit, I might plan to support them by designing a daily task that requires letter format and one that requires opinion writing."
Additional Facilitator Information:

Create Daily Tasks

CREATE DAILY TASKS

STEP 6

Teachers should create standards-aligned daily tasks that allow students to incrementally show their knowledge and skills until they are able to fully demonstrate their learning through the more comprehensive end-of-unit task.

Time: 5 Min. – 1:34

Script: "Read Step 6 and consider how this could impact your planning process. Think about the daily tasks that your students completed throughout the Unit Starter. How did these tasks support students along the way? What are the components that should be part of a meaningful, high quality daily task?
The next two slides will give you some more information to use as you plan for high quality and scaffolded daily tasks."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Daily Tasks

Strong daily tasks allow students to demonstrate understanding of the learning objective using details from the text.

Daily tasks provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate and/or apply their new knowledge.

Daily tasks are directly supported by the question sequences and are aligned to the learning objective for the reading.

The daily tasks form a coherent learning arc over the course of the unit that prepare students for the demands of the end-of-unit task.

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Time: 2 min – 2:06 (Part C – 0:24)

Script: "Daily tasks are closely tied to each day's learning objective". Read the statements on the slide. Follow up by explaining that "Daily tasks also provide formative assessment information, which teachers can use to address misconceptions or revisit skills that are not fully developed. In contrast, the end of unit task is more likely to represent the learning that occurs over time and from the guided daily tasks and supporting teaching."

Additional Facilitator Information:

Criteria for Daily Tasks

Aligned to the learning objective	▪ Require students to demonstrate their new or refined understandings ▪ Are unique for each reading of the text
Text-specific	▪ Require students to use details and/or evidence from one or more text to explain or support their ideas ▪ Require students to choose appropriate details and elaborate on their thinking
Integrate the grade-level standards	▪ Prompt students to think, speak, and write about texts in a way that rises to the level of rigor and cognitive demand of grade-level ELA standards ▪ Align to the disciplinary standards
Lead to coherence	▪ Build over the course of the unit to create a coherent learning arc that moves students toward the enduring understandings
Include desired student response	▪ Include a desired student response that shows exactly what we'd like to see students produce

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Time: 2 min – 2:08 (Part C – 0:26)

Script: "Here are some criteria for strong daily tasks…" Invite different educators to read each bullet aloud. Clarify that the intention of the Unit Starters is for students to complete each daily task independently, unless otherwise indicated in the directions (some daily tasks are designed to be completed in pairs or small groups). Teachers may need to provide additional scaffolds to support students in completing daily tasks independently. For example, before an independent writing task, teachers may complete a collaborative writing activity using the interactive writing strategy on a related (but not identical) prompt.

Additional Facilitator Information:

Wrap up

- How does this planning process allow you to begin with the end in mind (backward plan)?
- In what ways is this type of planning beneficial to you and your students?
- How is mapping the vertical alignment (across the grade levels) of concepts a crucial part of the planning process?
- What are your next steps for utilizing your vertical planning maps?

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Time: 13 Min. – 1:50

Script: "As we wrap up this Mini-Session, I would like you to consider these questions:

How does this planning process allow you to begin with the end in mind (backward plan)?

In what ways is this type of planning beneficial to you and your students?

How is mapping the vertical alignment(across the grade levels) of concepts a crucial part of the planning process?"

Additional Facilitator Information:

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Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.

Excellence | Optimism | Judgment | Courage | Teamwork