

Essential Elements of the PYP Framework

In keeping with the IB's philosophy of developing openminded, inquiring thinkers who use prior knowledge and increase current knowledge by taking risks in a balanced and principled manner, while always attempting to be reflective, caring, and communicative individuals, the education approach it follows is transdisciplinary. This approach to learning goes beyond disciplines to a problem or issue to which students find solutions by delving deeper into a subject and across subjects.

Components of Unit Planning:

For learning to be within, across and beyond subjects, the PYP framework lays great emphasis on the following:

- **Concepts** – This is also called concept-based inquiry which drives a learner to use existing or prior knowledge to understand the meaning of newly acquired information, put this information in context and apply it to understand the world around them. It is a powerful tool to understand, apply and connect. Gaining a clear and in-depth understanding of any new information, idea or material facilitates an environment where the learner can connect and combine this understanding across subjects instead of putting them in unique, disconnected boxes. After all, the objective is for the learners to use their knowledge to make sense of the world around them.
- **Knowledge** – With a clear understanding of a concept, learners build on their knowledge or their reservoir of information and use this to expand their thinking beyond factual information. It sets in motion a process where learners question, and inquire and challenge ideas. They critically analyze the material and information to raise further questions, thereby creating opportunities to apply themselves and find solutions to issues or problems by applying knowledge acquired across subjects, but with great clarity and depth.
- **Approaches to Learning/Skills** – Conceptual clarity cannot be obtained if learners do not engage in detailed research to acquire more information or knowledge. However, in order to conduct research, students must begin by asking questions, thinking, collaborating, and following self-management. Different groups of learners can have powerful thoughts about a similar problem or issue, but the best solution can be presented only when students are willing to exhibit positive social skills by sharing ideas with classmates, challenging each other's thoughts, and communicating effectively. The teacher here is the facilitator but the students are the action takers.
- **Learner Profile** – In order for learners to successfully and effectively understand concepts, connect them to prior and existing knowledge, apply the new knowledge acquired, and communicate challenges, outcomes, or ideas adequately, the IB required learners to have certain critical attributes. These attributes of learners being inquirers, thinkers, knowledgeable, risk takers, whilst being open minded, balanced, caring, and communicative allows students to enhance their own learning. Developing these attributes creates global citizens who are aware, proactive, thoughtful action takers.
- **Action** – Finally, after having obtained clarity in concepts, applying the knowledge across and beyond subjects to effectively solve problems and generate new ideas, an IB learner has to have the ability to take action fearlessly. That is where the learner attributes are so critical. One might ask the right questions, carry out adequate research, be open minded and absorb information, but if all of this does not result in steps taken to make the world a better place, then the effort is wasted. To take effective action, learners must learn to collaborate, listen, express opinions, respect other's opinions and finally take well informed decisions.