

MODULE 2: SEQUENCING LEARNING PROGRESSIONS



◀ VIDEO 2.1 Module 2 Overview
resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook

Standards can't be learned in a single day. Instead, they represent the knowledge gained through extended experience and interaction with the content. Identifying the concepts and skills within a standard, or groups of standards, reveals information in the form of the concepts and skills to be learned, but also, as noted in Module 1, raises other questions.

- First, what underlying prior knowledge must students possess?
- Second, how might the concepts and skills within this standard be sequenced in a logical way?

A sequence of learning progressions frames the planning needed for students to reliably learn. This marks a process some call “unpacking” or “unwrapping” the standards. We rely on backwards planning that begins with the outcome standard and the ways in which students will demonstrate mastery of that standard—in other words, how the teacher will assess the learning. We have included mastery of standards as the last module in this playbook to demonstrate the flow of the lesson, but some teams turn to that section now and focus on the ways in which students will demonstrate their learning.

Of course, the planning process also includes a range of meaningful experiences that guide students toward mastery as teachers check for understanding along the learning journey, making modifications based on how quickly students are grasping the information. We have focused on the meaningful learning experiences that teachers design in Module 8. This module focuses on the logical progression of learning.

Learning progressions articulate a pathway to proficiency. The learning progressions are like tent poles for a unit of study in that they delineate the major supports for the standard. To use another metaphor, they are the stones that mark a path. Standards provide the scope and sequence of a curricular area that show how concepts are broadly developed from kindergarten through high school. Learning progressions are more fine-grained and describe the intermediate steps students will use to reach mastery.

Learning progressions differ from learning intentions, which we will address in the next module. Learning intentions expand each of the learning progressions into daily statements of expectations for students. But it is too broad a leap to move directly from a standard to the daily learning intentions. The learning progressions aid in setting forth a path that will lead to the desired outcome standard. Learning progressions are the essential core concepts and processes that underlie the standard (and they can be used to design assessments of mastery, as we will see in Module 7).

DETERMINING A LEARNING PROGRESSION

We will use a middle school Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS) to demonstrate the process of developing a learning progression. Once the concepts (nouns) and skills (verbs) have been identified, the next step is to analyze the logical progress of learning. Let's consider the following standard:



MS-LS1-1. Conduct an investigation to provide evidence that living things are made of cells—either one cell or many different numbers and types of cells.

To gain mastery on this standard, students need to develop an understanding of the presence of cells as a condition for being a living thing, as well as the ability to carry out an investigation that will illustrate the core disciplinary concept. In addition, students need to be knowledgeable about gathering and reporting evidence when conducting an investigation, and they need to understand that living things are composed of cells. Therefore, a possible approach for this standard might be to have five learning progressions, each with some number of learning intentions. Each of them would start with “I am learning about . . .”

1. the differences between living and nonliving things.
2. the characteristics of unicellular and multicellular living things.
3. using a microscope and related scientific equipment to identify cell types.
4. data gathered from a cell investigation and how to extract and analyze data.
5. arguments supported by evidence to support or refute the claim that living things are composed of cells.

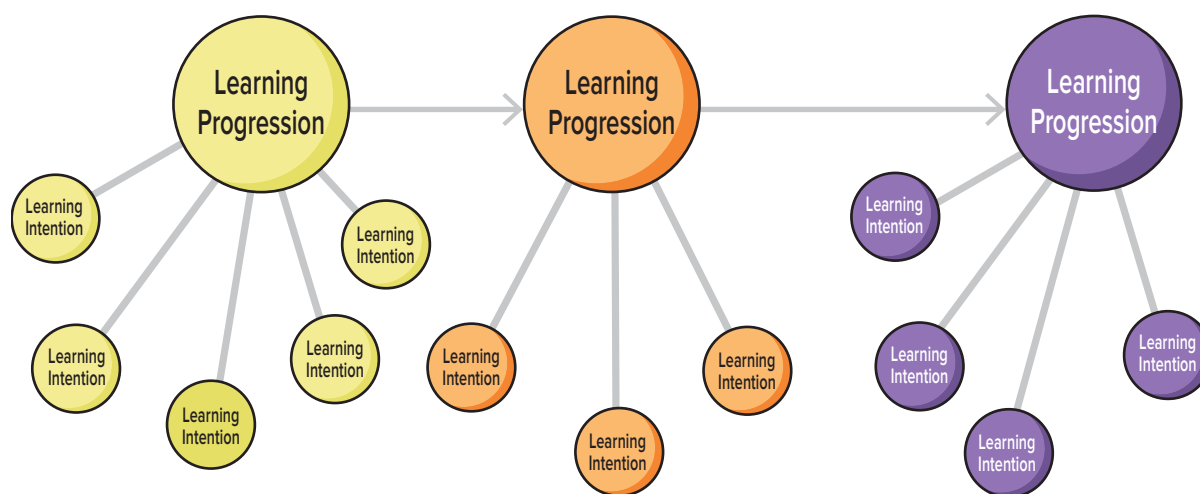
These are not individual lessons, and some may in fact involve previously mastered skills

(e.g., using a microscope). However, identifying a progression for learning ensures that students consolidate concepts and skills in a coherent and cohesive manner. Once these learning progressions have been identified, each can be further expanded into daily learning intentions, which will be addressed in the next module. See Figure 3 for a visual representation of the relationship.

Importantly, there is no right number of learning progressions (or learning intentions). As we metaphorically noted earlier, these are the tent poles, and we recommend that there are enough of them to support students’ learning. Remember that the learning progressions are broader statements from which the daily learning intentions are developed.

Based on the students in your class, some of the individual learning progressions may have already been mastered. For example, the middle school students might already know how to use a microscope, so the teacher could skip that one, even though it might be important for students in another class to focus on. In other words, learning progressions detail the logical order of students’ learning, and teachers decide where to start and what to include, based on their knowledge of their students.

FIGURE 3 The Relationship Between Learning Progressions and Learning Intentions



In some cases, there are sample learning progressions provided for teachers, such as the following:

- Progressions Documents for the Common Core Math Standards: ime.math.arizona.edu/progressions
- Learning Trajectories for the K–8 Common Core Math Standards: www.turnonccmath.net
- ELA Learning Progressions (Delaware Department of Education): www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2036
- A discussion about learning progressions in science can be found at <http://www.sensepublishers.com/media/593-learning-progressions-in-science.pdf>
- A list of learning progressions in social studies can be found at http://www.lewiscentral.org/departments/curriculum__instruction/curriculum_framework_and_standards/content_areas/social_studies/k-12_learning_progressions_in_social_studies/

PLC CONVERSATIONS

1. What challenged you in this module?
2. How are learning progressions different from learning intentions, and why is this important?
3. How can you reach agreement about the learning progressions for a given standard?



NOTES



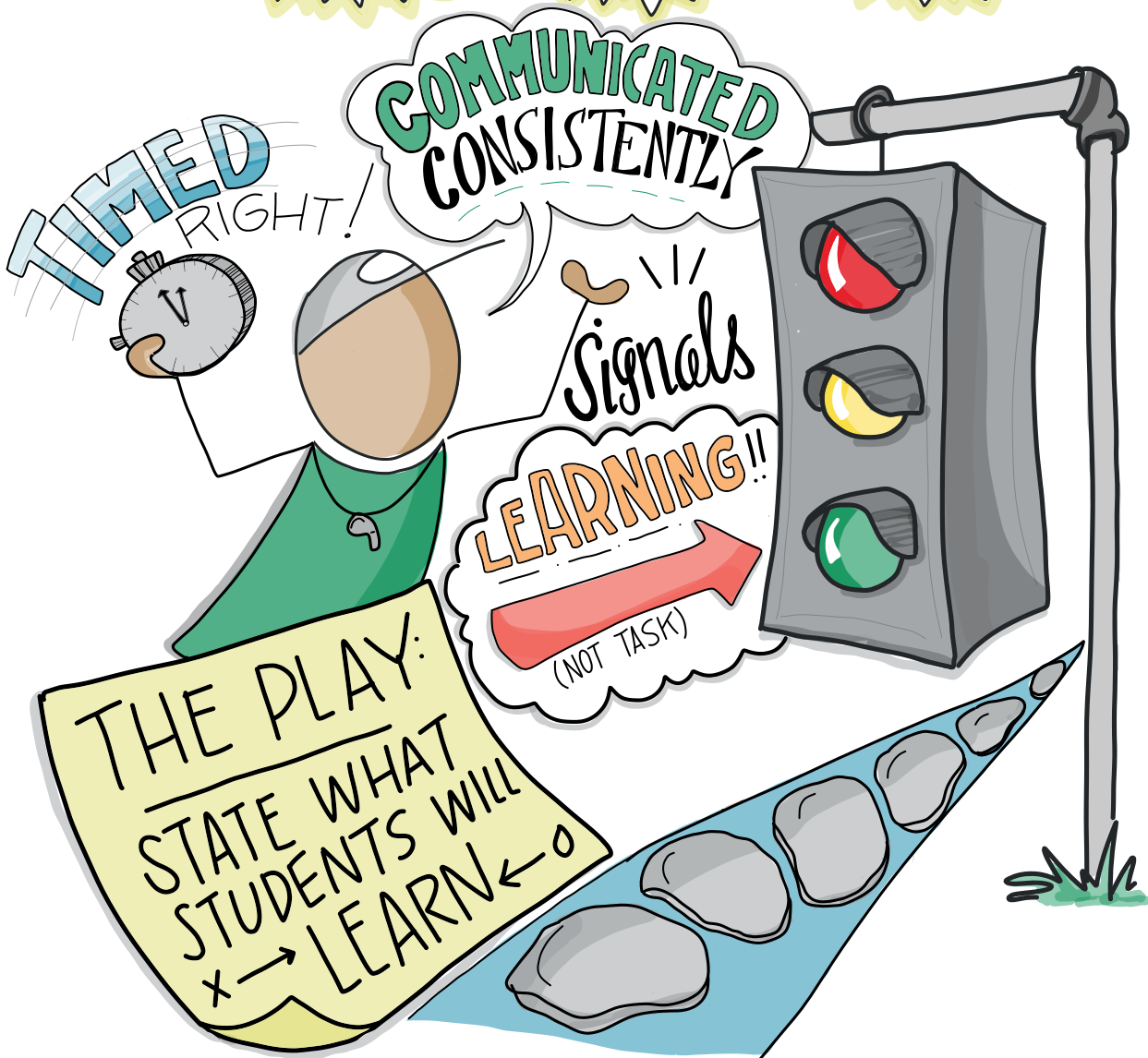
MODULE 3:

Elaborating ^{Learning} Intentions

KNOWLEDGE

SKILLS

CONCEPTS



MODULE 3: ELABORATING LEARNING INTENTIONS



◀ VIDEO 3.1 Module 3 Overview
resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook

Standards are statements for teachers that identify what students should know and be able to do at

a given point in time. Standards are too broad for students to master in a single lesson. And, as a matter of fact, some standards might need to be addressed over the span of multiple units of study. Effective teachers start with a standard to identify the content and skills. They then identify the learning progressions that are required to meet the standard. You have already practiced doing both.

Next, they break the learning progressions extracted from that standard into lesson-sized chunks and phrase these chunks so that students will be able to understand them. Each one of these chunked phrases—a daily statement of

what a student is expected to learn in a given lesson—is a *learning intention*.

Learning intentions can focus on knowledge, skills, or concepts. Here are a few examples of learning intentions:

1. I am learning about the impact of the setting on a character.
2. I am learning about rotation of the sun and moon.
3. I am learning about the persuasive techniques used in advertising.

Figure 4 provides less- and more-effective examples of learning intentions. Note that one difference is that the task is emphasized in the less-effective examples, whereas the learning is emphasized in the more-effective examples.

Learning intentions have a priming effect on learners. They signal to the students what they will be learning or what they have learned. For example, students need to understand that a particular math activity is for the purpose of building fluency or that the assigned reading in science is to build the background knowledge they'll need for the lab experiment they'll soon be completing.

FIGURE 4 Less- and More-Effective Learning Intentions

LESS EFFECTIVE	CONTENT AREA	MORE EFFECTIVE
Draw a map with land and water identified.	Kindergarten history / social studies	I am learning how land and water are represented on maps and globes.
Analyze your writing using the checklist for task, purpose, and audience.	Grade 4 English language arts	I am learning about the role that author's purpose and audience play in my writing.
Complete questions 9–15 in Chapter 6.	Middle school math	I am learning about the relationship between rational numbers, decimals, and long division.
Explain Newton's Third Law.	High school science	I am learning that forces are composed of both a magnitude and direction.

COMMUNICATING LEARNING INTENTIONS

Learning intentions should be communicated in ways that are developmentally appropriate for the students you are teaching. After all, the benefits of establishing the goals for learning in the lesson will be completely lost if the learner can't understand them. Using the learning intentions listed earlier, we have further expanded them into student-friendly language:

1. Today, we'll read two stories about city and country life. We'll focus on comparing the lives of these two characters and the differences in their lives based on where they live. We'll figure out how the setting in these books where they live impacts them. When asked what they are learning, students would likely answer, "We are learning about setting and how that impacts characters."
2. As we revise our opinion papers, we are going to learn how to update our word choices so that we use technical vocabulary such as the authors we've been studying use. When asked what they are learning, students would likely answer, "We are learning about technical vocabulary in our writing."
3. As we have been learning, there are a number of techniques advertisers use, such as repetition, bandwagons, glittering generalities, and celebrity associations. Today, we'll look for examples of those in television ads. When asked what they are learning, students would likely answer, "We are learning about the techniques of advertisers."

TIMING LEARNING INTENTIONS

Some teachers might be concerned that statements such as these can rob students of a period of investigation and inquiry, but they can be written in a manner that doesn't give away the punchline, or they can be written with the investigation explicitly called out—"Discover the product property of exponents by expanding and simplifying exponential expressions."

Learning intentions don't have to be used exclusively at the outset of the lesson and, in fact, should be revisited over the course of the lesson. Teachers can withhold their learning intentions until after an exploration or discovery has occurred. And teachers can invite students to explain what they learned from the lesson and compare that with the initially stated learning intention for the lesson. Interesting class discussions about the alignment (or lack of alignment) can provide a great deal of insight on student understanding.

Having said that, we believe that daily learning intentions contribute to student success and efforts to ensure equity and excellence for students. When students do not know what they are expected to learn, the chance that they actually learn is reduced. There is even evidence that indicates when students know what they are supposed to be learning, they are three times more likely to learn it (Hattie, 2012).

PLC CONVERSATIONS

1. What challenged you in this module?
2. Do any of our learning intentions focus more on tasks than expectations for learning?
3. What language should we use so students in our grade understand the learning intentions?



INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



For your independent practice, complete the template that follows with one of your standards and its concepts, skills, learning progressions, and learning intentions.

STANDARD(S)	
CONCEPTS (NOUNS)	SKILLS (VERBS)
LEARNING PROGRESSION	
LEARNING INTENTIONS	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	



For a blank version of the independent practice pages in this book, visit resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook

Copyright © 2019 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *The Teacher Clarity Playbook: A Hands-On Guide to Creating Learning Intentions and Success Criteria for Organized, Effective Instruction* by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, Olivia Amador, and Joseph Assof. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site or nonprofit organization that has purchased this book.

MODULE 4:

crafting **CRITERIA** for Success

STUDENTS
WHO ARE...
MOTIVATED



SELF-ASSESSING
&
EMPOWERED

my **LEARNING JOURNEY**



MODULE 4: CRAFTING SUCCESS CRITERIA



◀ VIDEO 4.1 Module 4 Overview
resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook

How do you know whether your students are successful at learning what you wanted them to learn?

How do *they* know whether they're successful? How can students know whether or not they've achieved the intended learning or whether they're making progress toward doing so? The daily learning intentions that are communicated by the teacher are an end product of careful planning. The success criteria provide a means for students and the teacher to gauge progress toward learning, thereby making learning visible to the teacher and the student.

Success criteria let students in on the secret that has been too often kept from them—what the destination looks like. Imagine getting into an airplane that was being flown by a pilot who didn't know where he or she was headed. Rather, a control tower would contact her at some unspecified time in the future to let her know she had arrived—or worse, that she missed the mark entirely. That is a completely irrational way to fly a plane. Yet students often have a similar experience. They're flying their own learning plane but have little sense of where they are headed. Wouldn't the trip be completed more successfully and efficiently if the pilot knew from the beginning where she or he was going?

Now imagine how much more successful and efficient learning would be if we enlisted students in their learning journeys. Success criteria signal the learner about the destination and provide a map for how they will get there.

Further, the success criteria empower learners to assess their own progress and not to be solely dependent on an outside agent (their teacher) to notice when they have arrived.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCCESS CRITERIA

Success criteria have been shown to increase students' internal motivation. And all of us have students who are not motivated—well, not motivated to learn *our* content. Success criteria (and relevance, as we will explore later) provide students with clear, specific, and attainable goals and can spark motivation in some of the most reluctant learners. A very convincing case could be made that internal motivation to succeed is one of the more important things your students can learn. Success criteria work because they tap into principles of human motivation. People tend to compare their current performance or ability to a goal that they have set or that a caring teacher has set with them. When there is a gap between where they are and where they want to be, cognitive dissonance is created, or as Piaget called it, *disequilibrium*. Students are motivated to close the gap and get rid of the dissonance by working and learning, and thus assimilating or accommodating information and ideas. The more explicitly and precisely they can see the goal, the more motivated they will likely be.

TYPES OF SUCCESS CRITERIA

Criteria such as “Do your best” and “Try hard” are not very clear or actionable. It may well be worthwhile to ban these phrases from your vocabulary, as they set very low targets. (Whatever

the student does is often claimed as his best, yet this “best effort” may not be good enough.)

- Sometimes, teachers use “I can” statements that focus on future success levels.
- Other times, the success criteria are statements of what has been learned.
- Success criteria may include more than one statement per learning intention.

Importantly, the success criteria are not simply tasks to be completed, such as “Complete the science lab” or “Finish the essay.” These are tasks that may be used to determine learning, but they are not focused on the success level to be achieved.

Instead, criteria such as those listed in the table below are more likely to produce results.

Success criteria for longer projects often come in the form of rubrics and checklists. These tools can be constructed to focus on multiple areas of success, such as organization, voice, and mechanics in writing. Figure 5 contains a rubric developed for students to self-assess their contributions to group problem-solving tasks. Strong rubrics have indicators and performance descriptors as well as language that students can use to monitor their success. The usefulness of a rubric is limited if students don’t have lots of opportunities to use these tools to gauge their own progress.

English Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I will be able to clearly support my opinion using evidence from the text.• I can use correct spelling and punctuation so my reader can understand my writing.• I am able to explain Poe’s use of the unreliable narrator in short stories.• My story has an opening that grabs the reader’s attention and an ending with a cliffhanger.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can put numbers with decimals in order from smallest to largest.• I can identify all prime numbers between 1 and 100.• I can make a table of equivalent ratios.• I can explain why two fractions are equivalent.• I can explain how to locate the solution to a system of equations by examining a graph.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can show how buoyancy and density affect an object suspended in a liquid.• I can name the planets of the solar system in order from their distance from the sun.• I can explain how changes in velocity affect the movement of an object.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can compare and contrast how people traveled long ago and today.• I can identify when, how, and why this country was established.• I can define necessary conditions for an economy to grow.

FIGURE 5 Self-Assessment Rubric

CRITERIA	REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER	AWARE PRACTITIONER	REFLECTION NOVICE
Reflective Thinking	The reflection explains the student's own thinking and learning processes, as well as implications for future learning.	The reflection explains the student's thinking about his or her own learning processes.	The reflection does not address the student's thinking and/or learning.
Analysis	The reflection moves beyond simple description of the experience to an analysis of how the experience contributed to student understanding of self, others, and course concepts.	The reflection is an analysis of the learning experience and the value of the derived learning to self or others.	The reflection does not move beyond a description of the learning experience.
Recognizes the Contributions of Others	Recognized and made use of special talents of each team member.	Made some attempt to use special talents of team members.	Does not recognize or use special talents of team members.
Ownership	Accepts responsibility for the team's successes and struggles and states goals for future self-improvement.	Accepts some responsibility for the team's struggles but does not link to future goals.	Accepts minimal responsibility for struggles and blames other team members instead.

Source: Adapted from Buck Institute for Education, <http://www.bie.org/objects/cat/rubrics>.

Irrespective of the tool used, success criteria provide teachers and students with a goalpost that they can use to monitor progress.

PLC CONVERSATIONS

1. What challenged you in this module?
2. How do you define success and the appropriate level of learning for students?
3. How will we respond if students meet the success criteria in advance of our teaching?



GUIDED PRACTICE



For your first task in the Guided Practice section, consider the possible success criteria generated during a brainstorming session with teachers. Some of these are more appropriate than others. Which of them would be most appropriate? Which would not be as appropriate for the learning intention?

LEARNING INTENTION	SUCCESS CRITERIA	APPROPRIATE OR NOT
I am learning that content on the Internet must be checked for reliability and trustworthiness.	I can use the “about” information to identify authority information.	
	I can identify date information was published.	
	I can rate the accuracy of the information.	
	I can use the domain name to identify credible sources (e.g., .com versus .edu or .gov).	
	I can identify if the information is relevant to the research.	
I am learning that plants are the primary source of matter and energy in most food chains.	I can compare plant and animal cells, noting differences in their structures.	
	I can define <i>source of matter</i> and <i>energy</i> as they relate to food chains.	
	I can analyze a food chain from a given biome and identify the role that plants play.	
	I can identify producers and consumers in a food chain.	
	I can name common plants that are included in the human food chain.	
I am learning about the role of context in people’s response to music.	I can define the various ways people respond to music.	
	I can explore the context of a given piece of music, including social, historical, and cultural influences.	
	I can identify personal preferences in music as informed by your own culture.	
	I can describe the impact of context on audience reception of a given piece of music.	
	I can explain how social and cultural influences shape popular music across time.	

CONTINUED



Note: For suggested answers, please turn to page 126 or visit the companion website at resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook.

For the second task, craft success criteria for each of the following learning intentions.

LEARNING INTENTION	SUCCESS CRITERIA
I am learning about the impact of water pollution on the environment.	
I am learning about the role of tints and shades in paintings.	
I am learning that shapes can be partitioned into parts with equal areas.	
I am learning that questioning is a way to define unknown words in a text.	

Note: For suggested answers, please turn to page 128 or visit the companion website at resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Now, practice on your own, using your own standard.

STANDARD(S)	
CONCEPTS (NOUNS)	SKILLS (VERBS)
LEARNING PROGRESSION	
LEARNING INTENTIONS	SUCCESS CRITERIA
1.	•
2.	•
3.	•
4.	•
5.	•
6.	•
7.	•
8.	•



For a blank version of the independent practice pages in this book, visit resources.corwin.com/teacherclarityplaybook

Copyright © 2019 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *The Teacher Clarity Playbook: A Hands-On Guide to Creating Learning Intentions and Success Criteria for Organized, Effective Instruction* by Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey, Olivia Amador, and Joseph Assof. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site or nonprofit organization that has purchased this book.