

Teacher Quality Standard I

Teachers demonstrate mastery of and pedagogical expertise in the content they teach. The elementary teacher is an expert in literacy and mathematics and is knowledgeable in all other content that he or she teaches (e.g., science, social studies, arts, physical education, or world languages). The secondary teacher has knowledge of literacy and mathematics and is an expert in his or her content endorsement area(s).

The key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rests at the intersection of content and pedagogy.
—L. S. Shulman

To teach all students according to today's standards, teachers need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly so they can help students create useful cognitive maps, relate one idea to another, and address misconceptions. Teachers need to see how ideas connect across fields and to everyday life. This kind of understanding provides a foundation for pedagogical content knowledge that enables teachers to make ideas accessible to others. (Shulman, 1987)

Although Shulman's work dates back to the late 1980s, the importance of teacher content knowledge and pedagogical expertise has never been more important than it is now as teachers ensure students are college and career ready for the demands of the 21st century.

Element E

Teachers develop lessons that reflect the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines.

Professional practices referenced under each element of the Rubric for Evaluating Colorado Teachers are cumulative. Therefore, for teachers to be Proficient in developing lessons that reflect the interconnectedness of content areas/disciplines, they must be able to emphasize the key concepts of their content area and connect these to other powerful ideas within the content as well as across disciplines. To be successful in any content area, students need to be able to read and communicate their thinking orally and through writing; literacy must be an integral part of the instruction in all content areas.

ACCOMPLISHED AND EXEMPLARY RATING LEVELS

The impact of a proficient implementation of the professional practices referenced in Element E will be students who are able to accelerate their learning by making connections between content areas, between lessons, and by applying literacy and math skills across disciplines.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES: STUDENTS:

- ***Makes connections between other disciplines and/or content areas and the current lesson.***
- ***Apply literacy skills across academic content areas.***
- ***Apply math skills across academic content areas.***



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- **Accelerate their learning by elaborating on current lesson with connections to prior lessons within the content area and/or with other disciplines.**

Classroom Examples

Middle school music: Students are working on Colorado Academic Standards 3: Theory of Music, Grade Level Expectation 3--Identification of musical elements in a level 2 composition or performance.

Standard 4: Aesthetic Valuation of Music, Grade Level Expectations 1 and 2--Evaluation of musical performances and compositions using advanced criteria; Articulation of music's role and cultural tradition in American history and society. (Implements lesson plans based on: Colorado Academic Standards)

Eighth-grade students are identifying different genres of music popular during the 1960s. This study connects to their unit on the Civil Rights Movement in social studies. *(Connects lessons to other disciplines and/or content areas.)* The music teacher has a strong sense of student strengths in the classroom and has identified two students as real history buffs whose knowledge of this time period surpasses that of their peers. The music teacher also knows that some students prefer to learn facts and details through movement activities. The grade-level team and specialist teachers have identified activities in each content area that can support a variety of learning strengths of all students and are committed to providing engaging choices for students. *(Employs instructional strategies that include literacy, numeracy, and language development across content areas.)* Using several ideas for students to demonstrate their understanding of the styles and genres of music popular in the 1960s, the music teacher offers choices for students, including these:

- Students interested in the historical era can present a more detailed historical presentation on the 1960s.
- Students interested in learning and presenting facts and details through movement can select a song they know that is representative of the 1960s and Civil Rights Movement and create dance movements that depict the overall message in the song.
- Students interested in analyzing the style and form of music in the 1960s can evaluate whether particular songs meet certain theory criteria to be placed in a specific genre of music.

Planning/Coaching Questions

- How will I identify the key concepts that need to be emphasized in a lesson?
- How will I ensure the key concepts are emphasized in a lesson?
- How will I make connections between key concepts and powerful ideas within the content?
- What connections will I make between the content being taught and other content areas?
- How will I clarify and elaborate on interdisciplinary connections?
- What literacy instructional strategies will students need in order to master the content being taught?
- How will I model use of the instructional strategies for students?
- How will I support students with language development related to the content being taught?



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