# Professional Discussion Series Guide

## For Pearson Curriculum Courses with the Dynamic Classroom Instructional Model

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## **Introduction**

With the launch of the Dynamic Classroom Instructional Model (DCIM) course and the DCIM Playbook, the next step for teachers, counselors, and school leaders working with the new Pearson Curriculum is to sharpen understanding and practice of the instructional model via professional discussion.

Each unit in the DCIM Playbook, except for Unit 1, ends with a section titled “Professional Development Discussion Topics.” These topics are meant to be used in a variety of ways, including small or large group professional development opportunities that may be school or district based in participation. Just as students can benefit from synchronous learning sessions, teachers and others may benefit from taking one or more of the suggested topics as part of a series to explore together as professionals.

The purpose of this Pearson Curriculum Professional Discussion Series Guide is to provide structure, suggested approaches, and the foundational information and sources needed to lead a discussion on suggested topics, and other topics as they emerge, related to the new Pearson Curriculum with the Dynamic Classroom Instructional Model.

Facilitators should review how the Guide is organized, read through the next section on Facilitating the Pearson Curriculum Professional Discussing Series section, and be sure to read each unit’s topics and recommendations before setting up each professional discussion group for a topic.

## **Facilitating the Pearson Curriculum Professional Discussion Series**

### Topic Areas

There are 8 distinct discussion areas (numbers 2–9 in the list below) that may be included in a professional discussion series that covers the DCIM, the new Pearson Curriculum, and the interplay between the educator and the courses. These areas include:

1. Introduction to the art of facilitation
2. Key aspects of the DCIM where teachers may take direct action to improve the learning experience
3. Examination of lesson elements that may require teacher involvement
4. Working with the integrated course threads of social and emotional learning, 21st century skills, growth mindset, and diversity, equity, and inclusion
5. Graded assessment strategy
6. Differences between existing courses without the DCIM and Pearson Curriculum courses with the DCIM, including a focus on cognitive load
7. Formative assessment
8. Demonstrations of learning with a focus on synchronous opportunities and sample work
9. Course adaptation for specific learning needs and sharing teacher-created activities between teachers

There is flexibility for facilitators in terms of sequence and timing of the discussions that you facilitate. They are in an order that matches the Playbook, but it might not be the sequence you feel is best for your group. Also, with 8 topics, one topic could be covered each month of the school year. Another option would be to bundle your series so that there could be a discussion once a week (one hour each discussion) for one month, take a break, and finish the remaining 4 topics as a series in another month. One advantage of taking a bundle approach is that you can give participants a month to acclimate before stating the discussions.

### Best Practices for Facilitating Professional Discussions

As a facilitator for the new Pearson Curriculum, you have the task of organizing and facilitating professional discussions based on recommended topics from the DCIM Playbook. There are practices you can use to help encourage participation of your colleagues in the discussion. As adult learners, we often share thoughts, strategies, and questions. In the role of facilitator, you do just that. You help facilitate the conversation so the group can make sense of challenges and information that relate to the new Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM.

**Facilitation is not training!**

What a relief! It is *not* your job to train your colleagues on how to use the new Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM.  Now that we have clarity on what your role is not, let us look at what your role *is*inforwarding professional discussions. The following points may be found in greater detail in the article, [11 Ways to Facilitate Great Conversation](https://coachingforleaders.com/facilitate-great-conversations/).

### Think Air Traffic Controller and not Pilot

You do not need the expertise of the pilot when facilitating professional discussion groups. Think about how an air traffic controller ensures that planes do not land on top of each other or collide on the runway. They make sure the pilots know the details for getting to the gate, removing distraction and confusion while the pilot does their thing. The pilots trust the air traffic controllers. Your job as facilitator requires that you build a trusting environment so that your colleagues can grabble with concepts and have honest conversations, getting to the ‘gate’ of understanding.

### Set the Group Norms

To build a trusting environment, the norms you establish from the start must align with what trust feels like. Just as the virtual teacher sets rules and creates an environment where students feel free to speak up during synchronous sessions; as a facilitator, you will need to initiate a level-set conversation with your small discussion group. The language should be your own and reflect the way the group has provided input. Examples of these norms might be:

**There are no stupid questions.**

**Be respectful and kind in your response while being authentic.**

**Come prepared.**

**When in doubt, find it out.**

**Join the conversation.**

**Disagreement is welcome, conflict is not.**

In terms of logistics, the larger the discussion group, the more difficult it is for everyone to participate. Ideally, your discussion group can be between 4 and 6 people. If you need to go larger, consider using a breakout option with groups no larger than 6 and a designated person from each group to report out to the larger group. Additionally, you can make use of the chat function.

It is important for discussion group members to prepare before joining the group. For the DCIM topics, the best-case scenario would be that everyone teaching the new Pearson Curriculum would have first completed the DCIM course. They should be told ahead what the discussion topic will be and informed about the pages to review in the DCIM Playbook.

Prior to joining the discussion, participants may need to examine something, reflect, draft a response, select an example, or have an idea. Find a way to break the prompt down, if needed, when you send out a reminder. Consider collecting questions and concerns related to the topic in a collaborative document prior to meeting.

Lastly, an important goal for you as a facilitator will be to keep positive and productive. Change can be hard for people, and it will be important to keep the conversations professional. Concerns should be raised but griping sets a negative tone. You should set a norm and emphasize problem-solving. Keep a running list of questions that the group is unable to answer and feel free to contact Merle Schwartz, [merle.schwartz@pearson.com](mailto:merle.schwartz@pearson.com)for additional insight or to share important ideas.

In summary:

* Set group norms for building an environment of trust.
* Share the discussion prompt ahead and help group members understand the preparation needed.
* Plan for keeping the discussion group small, even if that necessitates small breakout groups.
* Have discussions but be a no-gripe zone with an emphasis on problem-solving and understanding.

### Prepare with Questions, not Answers

Your goal is to help the discussion group construct individual and group knowledge around the Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM. It is important that you have done your own homework to understand the concepts and that you are thinking about questions that will help move the conversation forward—not answers that shift the goal from discussion to training. Professional discussions are just that, discussions.

### Use Open-ended Questions

Open-ended questions keep the conversation going. Facilitating the conversation with questions means that you will need to understand the content as best you can; however, since you are not a trainer, you may also ask clarifying questions to further your own understanding.

Types of discussion starters that work with the topics from the DCIM Playbook:

* where did you find...
* how does...
* how might you....
* what are some....
* how can....
* describe....
* highlight....

### Invite Participation without Forcing it

This one is tricky. Of course, you will want everyone to feel comfortable enough to participate. It is also obvious in a small group when someone is silent. In order to maintain the norms of respect, it is best not to force someone to talk unless they are ready. Unlike the role you may take as a teacher, in the professional discussion you are not grading participation. Your charge is to open the door by invitation.

One way to encourage multiple voices, when necessary, is to preface a discussion topic in the group with, “Let’s hear thoughts from four different people in the group on this topic.” Another option is to have everyone post a short response to a conversation starter in the chat and then ask each person to comment or query on someone else’s post in the oral discussion.

### Allow for Silence

Allowing for silence means granting space for people to think. It may be uncomfortable for you as a facilitator but override your urge to jump in and prompt or answer the question yourself. A rule of thumb is to allow 8 seconds of silence before asking a different question. Chances are that someone will speak up in that time.

### The Role of Disagreement

If your colleagues feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, healthy disagreement needs to be acceptable and expected. The disagreement should be part of working through concepts and seeking understanding from different perspectives. Conflict, on the other hand, may emerge from unchecked disagreement. You can recognize conflict when someone feels a need to convince others to take their perspective. There is a personal undertone to conflict. It may be seen as, I’m right and you’re wrong. This perspective will stop the sharing of ideas. If this scenario occurs, take some time to go back to your norm agreements.

## **Professional Development Topics by DCIM Playbook Unit**

### Unit 2:  The Dynamic Classroom Instructional Model Phases

**Unit 2 Discussion Topic #1**

**As a virtual teacher, what are some ways that you can understand if a student is or is not ready to move forward into a new unit at the introductory point of Activate Prior Knowledge?**

This topic is directly related to the Introduce phase information of the DCIM Playbook, specifically the Activate Prior Knowledge format. The Playbook states that:

*Students may need help from their Learning Coaches or from their teacher if they do not*  *have the prior knowledge needed to move forward. You may need to brainstorm*   *solutions to address this scenario if it is the case.*

This topic is meant to tap into the teacher’s knowledge about assessing student readiness and combine it with what they know about online instruction with asynchronous content. The course does not provide unit pretests. The discussion will be a substantial because the answers are not in the Playbook, but in the teachers’ skill set. Some things the group may consider:

* how synchronous time may be used at the very beginning of a unit to assess readiness
* ways to survey Learning Coaches or students to understand readiness
* resources that may help augment gaps in knowledge

**Unit 2 Discussion Topic #2**

**Given that a lesson has an iterative pattern with Explain, Check-in, and Practice repeating, is there any part of this pattern that you feel could be enhanced with teacher modification?**

As with topic #1, this discussion will be based on teacher knowledge about learning, as well as the format of the Pearson Curriculum using this iterative cycle for Understand as part of the DCIM. Some basic considerations that may emerge in the discussion:

* Explain is where the content is presented. Additional explanation of the concepts in the content for the learning objective can happen in small group synchronous learning, with teacher-recorded videos or additional resources. Teachers will need to talk through the logistics of these methods and possible ways of increasing efficiency.
* Check-ins and Practices typically have only a few items each with the student able to reveal the answer. Teachers may discuss how to create additional items. Only the students and Learning Coaches (depending on grade level) know how well the student is doing via the results of the Check-in and Practice. Some of the discussion should focus on how teachers can be alerted to problems that show in these formative assessments. Note, the focused discussion on formative assessment is in Unit 7.
* Every Understand content bundle of Explain, Check-in, and Practice addresses only one learning objective. Sometimes a second bundle may address the same objective but with a different learning approach (Narrative, Peer Model, or 21st century skills). Teachers might choose to substitute a second bundle on the same learning objective with something they have created themselves.

**Unit 2 Discussion Topic #3**

**Based on experience and what you have learned from the DCIM course and DCIM Playbook, what active role might you take during the Plan and Prepare phase? What would that look like?**

The Plan and Prepare phase is discussed in the DCIM Playbook with the following said regarding the teacher’s role in this phase:

*While the Plan and Prepare phase involves learning objectives and course creation, teachers*  *have a different but important role in their own planning and preparation. Their actions start*  *when the teacher first gets access to the Pearson Curriculum course they will be teaching.*

*It is important that the teacher takes the time to review the course. Make note of all the social*  *and emotional learning lesson topics. Look at how the DCIM model plays out in each lesson*  *for each unit. Take time to understand what the student experience is like and what the Apply*  *and portfolio requirements might be. Think about formative assessment and where challenges*  *might be for students, whether in terms of content or directions.*

The underlying theme in the Plan and Prepare phase for teachers is that while Pearson has done a thorough job in creating standards-aligned asynchronous courses, the courses should not be seen as ‘teacher-proofed.’ The discussion should focus on having participants share how they prepare to teach a course, with a particular emphasis on knowing what is in the specific Pearson Curriculum course they will be teaching. Items that might be shared:

* tips for how to review a course and a unit
* how to recognize where students may struggle and plan for it
* ways to build community around what students are experiencing in their course
* how to review a portfolio requirement

### Unit 3:  Lesson Construction

**Unit 3 Discussion Topic #1**

**Review the courses you teach and create notes for discussion on how often you see lessons following the typical lesson described in this unit and illustrated in the graphic. Discuss anomalies with colleagues to gain an understanding of why certain learning approaches (Narrative, Peer Model, and 21st century skills) might not be used or be used slightly differently.**

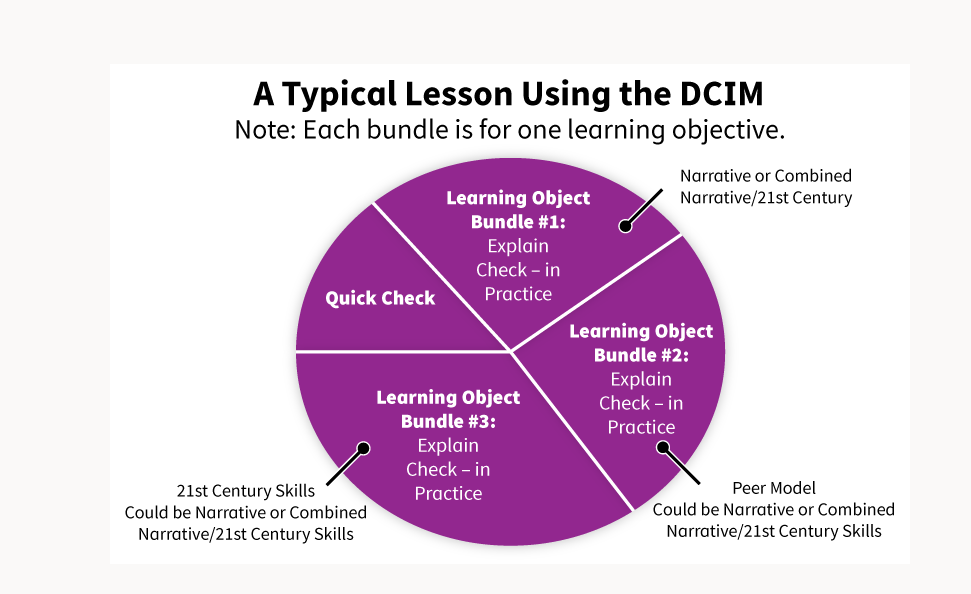


Figure 1. Visual of the components for a typical DCIM lesson.

In preparation for this discussion, it will be helpful to have your colleagues review their courses and note how many of the lessons include the following items:

* lessons with three content bundles of Explain, Check-in, and Practice
* lessons with two content bundles
* lessons made of only one content bundle
* lessons with more than three content bundles
* lessons with one of each learning approach (narrative, peer model, and 21st century skills)
* lessons using only two learning approaches
* lessons that are only one type of learning approach (generally Narrative)
* thoughts about why lessons may deviate from the “typical” lesson demonstrated in the graphic

Have participants select several good examples of each of the learning approaches (narrative, peer model, and 21st century skills) and be ready to explain what made them particularly well matched for presenting the content.

**Unit 3 Discussion Topic #2**

**How can you highlight the 21st century skills that may be integrated (but not obvious) in a learning object bundle using the 21st century skills approach?**

The 21st century skills in a learning bundle are not called out directly and may go unnoticed by the student, the Learning Coach, the teacher, or all three. The following statement in the DCIM Playbook highlights the importance of the approach:

*In their article published in the Journal of Education and Practice (2015, V6 #6, p. 152),*  *researchers Halah Ahmed Alismail and Dr. Patrick McGuire summarized, “Students need 21st*  *century skills in order to improve their achievement and promote cognitive processes and the*  *construction of knowledge that prepares them to be successful in their future careers. As a*  *result, teachers should apply different strategies and methods for teaching these skills because*  *there is not one specific strategy or model to achieve this goal.”*

Source:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322616880\_21st\_century\_standards\_and\_curriculum\_Current\_research\_and\_](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322616880_21st_century_standards_and_curriculum_Current_research_and_practice) practice

In preparation to answer this question, ask your colleagues to join the discussion prepared with several observations of how 21st century content bundles either spoke of a skill or set up the learning context so that students had to use the skill.

Facilitate the conversation around actions teachers may take to advance the development of 21st century skills. To refresh your memory, the skills listed in the Playbook include:

* creativity and innovation
* critical thinking and problem solving
* communication and collaboration
* information, media, and technology skills
* information literacy
* media literacy
* life and career skills
* flexibility and adaptability
* initiative and self-direction
* social and cross-cultural skills
* productivity and accountability
* leadership and responsibility

### Unit 4:  Integrated Threads

**Unit 4 Discussion Topic #1**

**Four threads were reviewed in Unit 4. These were SEL, 21st century skills, growth mindset, and DEI. All four of these threads are related to reflective personal and social areas. The teacher plays an important role in guiding students (and themselves) towards better adoption of each area’s implications. Consider the four threads and think about what you might need to do differently to support growth in your students and yourself. Be ready to share and question in a collaborative setting.**

There is a lot to unpack in this topic. Looking at a colourful sweater from a distance, it appears uniform. Looking at the weave up close, the different threads become more obvious. In the case of our threads through the Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM, only one is obvious (currently) in terms of learning objective. Things to consider:

* Our social and emotional learning (SEL) thread starts each unit.
* We use 21st century skills as a learning approach for a content bundle, but the skills are threaded elsewhere. In no place are they labelled as 21st century skills. Note: we discussed 21st century skills in Unit 3.
* Growth mindset is not clearly called out in the curriculum but can be found in certain types of content presentation as well as in SEL and 21st century skill areas.
* Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a commitment Pearson has made specific to content development. There are guidelines that are now being integrated in development processes, but this area is evolving. Teacher training in DEI, as related to the Pearson Curriculum, will be offered when ready.

All four of these threads require a personal touch that goes beyond the asynchronous learning experience. Learning Coaches will not be as well prepared to address these areas as teaching professionals. The discussion should focus on a spirit of how-to. It will likely involve considering different forms of communication with students.

**Unit 4 Discussion Topic #2**

**New guidelines and upcoming training were mentioned under the DEI section. While the content development process has not yet caught up to the global Pearson guidelines, what are some actions you can take to address some of the challenges mentioned within your content area while waiting for the changes that will come to the course content?**

The Playbook mentioned five DEI challenges to content:

1. Underrepresentation – we need to assure that the images and stories we present include people of different ethnicities and cultural identities who are promoted as equal and active participants in terms of their voice, influence, and authority.
2. Negative Associations Exaggerated – we need to avoid associating negative and stereotypical characteristics, imagery, and behaviors to ethnicity, gender, and race.
3. Limited Positive Associations – we need to ensure people of minority ethnicities are presented in positive roles that are not indicative of stereotypes, including roles of power and leadership. Examples of this would be frequent representations of Asians related to sciences and technology and Black people in sports and music.
4. Missing Stories – we need to be diligent in using reliable sources for multicultural perspectives, sharing contributions of people of minority or marginalized ethnicities, and highlighting contributions from individuals less well known to avoid reinforcing the notion of exceptionalism of the individuals represented.
5. The Problem Frame – We need to challenge content and discussion that frames individuals from minority ethnic or religious groups as passive, helpless victims of their “own” disadvantage. When terminology is needed that indicates vulnerability or disadvantage of marginalized groups, we need to provide insight of situational and systemic factors that contribute to the experience of the groups referenced.

Ask your colleagues to review these challenges and consider how each one might be relevant or not to their own work, particularly when doing synchronous learning. Be ready to also ask the group for specific actions they may take to demonstrate commitment to DEI in their teaching practices.

### Unit 5:  Assessment Strategy for the Pearson Curriculum Course Using the DCIM

**Unit 5 Discussion Topic #1**

**Become familiar with the different types of assessments and how they look within a Pearson Curriculum course using the DCIM. Are there areas that are unclear to you? Record your observations and questions in preparation for a professional development discussion.**

This discussion topic requires that your group plan ahead for the discussion and consider the information shared within the Playbook as well as their experience in reviewing their course’s approach to assessment. To ensure participants are ready, it is suggested that you start a discussion thread and ask people to post questions and observations before the group meets.

### Unit 6:  New Instructional Model and Differences from Existing Courses without the DCIM

**Unit 6 Discussion Topic #1**

**One of the differences mentioned between the Pearson legacy courses and the courses with the DCIM has to do with cognitive load. Become familiar with the concept and come to a professional discussion ready to talk about how the DCIM handles cognitive load and what ways you as the teacher might interface with the format.**

The preparation for this discussion requires that colleagues do a bit of research to understand the basics of Cognitive Load Theory (CLT). A simple internet search will suffice. Participants should be able to describe or retell how the DCIM demonstrates consideration of cognitive load but move beyond that to discuss how understanding CLT can specifically help them in their synchronous learning work and individual or small group interactions.

Some online sources on CLT include the following:

* [Cognitive Load Theory](https://www.psychologistworld.com/memory/cognitive-load-theory)
* [What is cognitive load?](https://theelearningcoach.com/learning/what-is-cognitive-load/)
* [What is The Cognitive Load Theory? A Definition for Teachers](https://www.teachthought.com/learning/cognitive-load-theory-definition-teachers/)

**Unit 6 Discussion Topic #2**

**What questions do you feel you need more information about to understand the differences between existing courses without the DCIM and the Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM?**

The table below is from the Playbook. It broadly summarizes the similarities and differences between the Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM and existing courses without the DCIM. Ask your colleagues to bring their questions, and possibly post ahead in a chat, for areas they feel they are still unclear about.

Consider creating a shared document and ask colleagues to contribute their questions or observations to the document before meeting to discuss.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Existing Course without the DCIM** | **Courses with the DCIM** |
| **Lesson Pattern** | * Getting Started slide with “hook” * Instruction slides * Activity slide * Review slide * Assessment Slide | * Initial slide with learning objectives and keywords * Explain slide (similar to courses without the DCIM Instruction slide) * Check-in slide with answers * Practice slide with feedback * Quick Check   The lesson pattern generally repeats Explain, Check-in, and Practice two to three times with a Narrative, Peer Model, or 21st Century learning approach. |
| **Unit Level Beginning** | Unit Overview with objectives and lessons listed | Unit summary slide with lessons listed and no objectives.  Unit Introduction slide with SEL lesson followed by academic topic introduction. |
| **Unit Conclusions** | Unit concludes with Unit Review and Test | Unit concludes with an Apply activity, Review and Reflect, Sample Work option, and Unit Test. |
| **Objectives** | Objectives, which may be related to a textbook, are located on the Get Started slide. There may be more than one objective. | Learning objectives linked to learning standards are located before the Explain slide and the student sees it as Objective. There usually is one learning objective for each Understand cycle (one of the three learning approaches with Explain, Check-in, and Practice), unless there is a need for a different objective within the lesson. |
| **Content Presentation** | Often presents like a textbook in one sequential lesson with Activity page and Review at end.  There are a variety of interactive methods, along with text, to present content. This varies greatly between courses. There may be animated people or animals used to present content. | Focused and tightly addresses a specific idea or concept using a repeatable pattern of content presentation.  In addition to Peer Model videos, there are some videos and interactive components. |
| **Consistency of Presentation** | Somewhat unpredictable in terms of where items or links are placed. Wider range of look between courses with different look and feel. | Most courses look similar following a standard approach. |
| **Focus** | Lessons may have more than one learning objective, use several call outs and asides, and multiple sub-topics. | Lessons are streamlined, more tightly addressing a specific idea or concept. There is only one learning objective per Understand cycle (learning object with Explain, Check-in, and Practice). |
| **Cognitive Load** | Because more than one learning objective may be addressed, the content may include multiple topics based on the textbook presentation. | The lesson structure purposefully allows for planned chunking of content with a focus on one learning objective. |
| **Use of Visuals, Interactives** | There are numerous visuals in these courses, much of it coming from textbooks and also third-party sources. | Almost all lessons have a Peer Model video as part of the second Understand cycle (learning object).  There are other videos and graphics as well, although less than existing courses without the DCIM at this time because Pearson’s goal is to develop assets that are fully owned and adaptable by Pearson. It will take time to create all the visual assets that might enhance courses as development continues. |
| **Approach to Textbooks** | Print and eBooks texts are part of most courses with lessons linking out to required textbook reading. | Not reliant on digital or other textbooks, which allows for ownership of material and flexibility to update as needed. The courses are generally not built around a textbook and do not require materials to be shipped to homes. |
| **Frequency of Checking for Understanding (check points)** | A lesson generally has one Quick Check at the end. There may be exercises within the lesson that provide feedback for answers that the student inputs. | The model includes multiple opportunities for students to check for understanding where answers and feedback are provided as part of each Understand cycle (Explain, Check-in, Practice). Each lesson has 2-3 of these cycles (learning objects).  Additionally, there is a Quick Check at the end of each lesson. There is a “check answer” feature for courses in grades K-5. |
| **Frequency of Practice** | Practice opportunities are part of the Activity page, often coming from the related textbook. Each lesson has one Activity. There can be multiple tasks within the lesson and students may check their accuracy with provided materials within the text. | The model includes multiple opportunities for students to practice with feedback within the Understand cycle (Explain, Check-in, Practice). Each lesson has 2-3 of these cycles (learning objects), thus 2-3 opportunities for practice with feedback. |
| **Review** | There are review exercises before the unit test, some of which tie back to the textbook. | The Review section prompts the student to self-assess their skills by listing the learning objectives from the unit. Review comes after an Apply lesson and Online Practice lesson.  There is a Reflect section that follows the Review and this encourages the student to think about their learning (metacognition).  The Reflect slide is followed by Study Tips that guide the student in strategies to try in order to make sure they know the unit material before taking the unit test. |
| **Appearance and Other Attributes** | | |
| **Look and Feel Between**  **Courses** | Each course may look different, but all have the same skin approach with the sequence of Getting Started, Instruction, Activity, Review, and Assessment. | Curser hover-over the advancing arrows mid-slide indicate which part of the lesson is coming next or came before.  Consistent style format throughout every course.  Key words have definitions pop up when the mouse is hovered over them. Key words follow the learning objective on a slide. |
| **Use of Tools, Third-party Assets** | There are third-party assets such as videos, tools, tutorials, etc. included. | Use of third-party assets is avoided so that Pearson owns all material and can update accordingly. |
| **Location of Resources** | Resources, including the Backpack, are located under Course Tools. | Resources, including the Backpack, are located under Course Tools.    Teacher resources in the Backpack are growing. They include and SEL job aid. |
| **Assessment**  **Note: Details for these items will be provided in the DCIM course or Playbook** | | |
| **Quick Checks** | yes | yes |
| **Quizzes** | yes | no |
| **Unit Tests** | yes | yes |
| **Discussions** | yes | yes |
| **Portfolios** | yes | yes |
| **Sample Work (space for teachers to request uploaded work for review)** | There are Sample Work assignments created and included in the lesson. | Teacher may develop and request an assignment outside the of what is in the course and have students upload to the drop box. |
| **Grade Entry** | May enter without assessment completed. | Can enter after assessment completed. |

### Unit 7:  DCIM Course Experience

**Unit 7 Discussion Topic #1**

**Consider all the potential areas in the DCIM that provide feedback to the student, Learning Coach, and teacher about learning progress or misconceptions. Prepare for a professional development discussion about formative assessment in the DCIM and how to get the needed snapshots of progress quickly enough respond to individual or group learning needs.**

This topic is most important. In the existing model, formative assessments built into the asynchronous course in the form of Check-in's, Practices, and Apply (non-portfolio) are not graded or viewed by the teacher. If there are gaps or misconceptions, how are teachers identifying them?

View this discussion as part of a contribution of feedback for the Pearson Curriculum department. Remind colleagues to come prepared for the discussion and create notes or a spreadsheet that itemizes what teachers are currently doing and what they wish would be provided to them that would help them understand student learning better.

\*Please share the results of this discussion with Merle Schwartz: [merle.schwartz@pearson.com](mailto:merle.schwartz@pearson.com).

### Unit 8:  Application of the DCIM

**Unit 8 Discussion Topic #1**

**Within the DCIM, students demonstrate their learning through their Apply lessons, the portfolios, discussions, and teacher-assigned sample work. With colleagues who teach in the same grade band and subject, join a discussion prepared to highlight 1–3 of these learning opportunities found within the course or courses that you teach. Discuss your thoughts for how to best support these demonstrations of learning.**

Encourage your colleagues to focus on an assignment or task that enables students to demonstrate knowledge of the learning objective. They should highlight something within the course that they like and explain why.

Approach the topic of Discussions. In this conversation, teachers should be talking about their role within the given discussion found in a course and how they have incorporated discussions during their synchronous learning time. Your colleagues may want to branch out beyond the use of synchronous time for discussion to a general conversation around use of synchronous learning. This is perfectly fine as a transition topic once the initial topic has been touched on.

This unit in the Playbook mentions remediation. While adapting the curriculum is found in Unit 9, this is also a good place to start the conversation with a focus on non-special needs students.

**Unit 8 Discussion Topic #2**

**Discuss the use of sample work. Be ready to provide an example, or to create an assignment with others that you would use in a unit as sample work. What criteria should there be related to the creation of meaningful sample work in your area?**

This topic is a form of show and tell. You want your colleagues to come to the discussion able to demonstrate something they have created as sample work. Ask them to give their reasons for creating the assignment and any details they can about how they implemented it and supported students to successfully complete the assignment.

### Unit 9:  DCIM courses Adapted to Specific Learning Needs

**Unit 9 Discussion Topic #1**

**Select a portfolio that may be a struggle for some of your students. Create a replacement or modified portfolio with a particular student with special needs in mind. Come to the professional discussion prepared to share, receive feedback, and provide feedback to your colleagues on their presentations.**

Ask your colleagues to review their courses and become very familiar with how the portfolios are used. Have each participant consider one portfolio that may be in need of modification to meet the needs of a student with learning challenges. Each colleague should create a modified version and bring to the discussion willing to share and participate in the feedback process.

**Unit 9 Discussion Topic #2**

**How can teachers in your school collaborate and capture customization work?**

As this is the last unit of the Discussion Series, use this time to discuss how teachers may collaborate in understanding particular aspects of courses or in creating support materials for students that may be needed. The idea is to avoid “reinventing the wheel.” Is there a system, or could there be a system, where teachers can easily upload and search for exemplars of teacher-created work?

## **Moving Forward**

Review the notes you have from your times together and create a list of things that may require follow up with Pearson Curriculum. Share your findings with Merle Schwartz ([merle.schwartz@pearson.com](mailto:merle.schwartz@pearson.com)), your Pearson Curriculum lead for this work. Additionally, email Merle with questions or requests for a drop-in session.

Summarize the following:

* What topics helped advance our professional practice?
* What remaining questions do we have?
* What would we like to see developed as part of the Pearson Curriculum offering?
* What do we think should be fixed?
* What are our action steps to apply some of what we learned together?
* What future topics might we want to discuss?

**Congratulations on facilitating important professional conversations about the Pearson Curriculum with the DCIM!**