

# Curriculum Structure

Curriculum is organized into three main sections:

1. Program Planning (general information)
2. Curriculum Context (information for specific curriculum)
3. Curriculum Expectations (what students learn) and Teacher Supports (how students might learn).

Curriculum is written primarily for teachers and educators, so some of the language will be technical and include theoretical and education terms. [Parent guides](#) are available for some subjects, which provide helpful summaries of the learning.

## Program Planning

Program Planning information applies to the curriculum in all subjects and disciplines in Grades 1 to 12. It provides the most up-to-date information on policy governing education in publicly funded schools across the province. For example, it includes information regarding the creation of safe, accepting and inclusive classrooms.

Educators are guided by Program Planning information as they:

- develop lessons and programs based on the curriculum and
- create the classroom and school environments in which the lessons and programs are taught.

**Note:** Program Planning information for Kindergarten is unique and is set out in [The Kindergarten Program, 2016 \(and 2019 Addendum\)](#).

## Curriculum Context

Each curriculum has a section that supports the teaching of the specific subjects. This section often includes the vision and goals for the curriculum. It also has information that guides educators as they develop lessons and programs. For example, the math curriculum has specific information about how teachers approach mathematics education. This content is part of the official Ontario curriculum.

## Curriculum Expectations and Teacher Supports

The curriculum combines the curriculum expectations (what students learn) with teacher supports (how students might learn) while giving teachers the flexibility to choose appropriate resources and teaching strategies.

### Curriculum Expectations

The curriculum for each subject or discipline is made up of a set of learning expectations that outline the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn and apply by the end of a grade or course.

For each subject, expectations are arranged into sections (or strands) to help with organization. However, educators look at the learning goals across the entire grade or course as they plan for and develop lessons and learning activities.

**Curriculum expectations are mandatory**, and courses of study and classroom programs in each grade must be developed from them.

There are two sets of curriculum expectations – overall expectations and specific expectations.

**Overall expectations** describe in general terms the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each grade.

**Specific expectations** describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail. They are often organized under numbered subheadings, so that they can be identified within the overall expectation.

While the expectations are arranged into sections to help with organization, educators look at the learning goals across the entire grade or course as they plan for and develop lessons and learning activities.

### Teacher Supports

Curriculum expectations are often accompanied by optional “teacher supports” that give educators tools, examples and resources related to specific learning goals.

Teacher supports are for educators to use to help them plan their work in the classroom but **are not a mandatory component** of the curriculum.

Teacher supports may include examples, sample teacher prompts and other teaching resources. These show how students may achieve the learning outlined in the curriculum expectations. Teachers can choose to use the examples and

prompts that work for their classrooms, or they may develop their own approaches.

Here is an example from the Grade 8 History curriculum that shows how overall expectations, specific expectations and teaching supports are used together to support learning:

***Overall expectation:***

**B2. Inquiry:** use the historical inquiry process to investigate perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada between 1890 and 1914 (FOCUS ON: *Historical Significance; Historical Perspective*)

***Specific expectation:***

**B2.4** analyse and construct maps as part of their investigations into some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada during this period, with a focus on exploring their spatial boundaries (*e.g., determine the location of key events in the Klondike gold rush; analyse a series of historical maps to determine the growth of cities in this period; analyse an interactive map that shows the growth of residential schools in Canada; create a flow map to show the origins of immigrants to Canada and the regions in which they settled*)

***Teacher supports:***

***Sample questions:*** “What does this historical map of the Klondike gold rush tell you about the impact of the gold rush on Indigenous peoples?” “When you examine these maps, what do you notice about differences in population distribution in Canada between 1890 and 1914?” “Where did Ukrainian or Doukhobor immigrants tend to settle?” “When you study a map showing European alliances in 1914, where do you see potential for conflict?” “What information should you include on a map to show changing patterns of economic development in northern Ontario during this period? What type of map would best suit the purpose of showing the perspectives of both the Cree and the federal or provincial government on such development?”

**Why Is My Child Learning This?**

This information has been included throughout curriculum to provide [parents](#) with information on what their child is learning in that strand or expectation. This content is not part of official issue curriculum, they have been included for informational purposes only. If you have any questions about what your child is learning, or how they are being assessed and evaluated, you may contact their teacher or principal.

## Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment is the process of gathering evidence of how well a student is doing. The main purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. Teachers provide students with helpful feedback and coaching for improvement. They also help students learn independently, set individual goals, monitor their own progress, determine next steps, and reflect on their own thinking and learning.

Evaluation is the process of judging the quality of student learning against set criteria and assigning a value, mark or grade.

For Grades 1 through 12, all curriculum expectations must be taught and assessed, but evaluation focuses on students' achievement of the overall expectations. Assessment information for Kindergarten is set out in [The Kindergarten Program, 2016](#).

Teachers use their professional judgement to determine which specific expectations:

- should be used to evaluate achievement of the overall expectations
- will be accounted for in instruction and assessment but not necessarily evaluated.

Report cards reflect the student's achievement of the overall expectations.

Each curriculum contains an achievement chart. It provides a standard province-wide guide for teachers to assess and evaluate student achievement of the expectations in the particular subject or discipline.

On this page

[Program Planning](#)

[Curriculum Context](#)

[Curriculum Expectations and Teacher Supports](#)

[Assessment and Evaluation](#)

[Back to top](#)