

Designing an Integrated Grade 2 Curriculum

CURRICULUM DESIGN / INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN / CROSS-CURRICULAR PLANNING

Portfolio case study | Academic year 2026–2027 | Wells International School, Thailand

Role: Grade 2 Homeroom Teacher; curriculum planning and design contributor • Status: revised curriculum framework in use/planning; individual projects at different stages

Project at a glance

The work centred on translating standards and classroom requirements into a coherent Grade 2 thematic curriculum. English Language Arts (ELA) provides a systematic literacy progression; Science and Social Studies offer authentic contexts for reading, writing, inquiry and communication. Mathematics retains its own progression where thematic links would be artificial.

The design challenge

Grade 2 teachers needed a shared and practical overview of what to teach, when to teach it and how to connect learning across subjects. Without relying on prescribed textbooks for all areas, lesson preparation also required careful selection and creation of resources. A useful curriculum therefore needed to preserve explicit foundational skills while making thematic learning meaningful, manageable and visible across the year.

My contribution

I contributed to the review, organisation and practical development of the Grade 2 curriculum, including thematic sequencing, literacy integration, lesson and resource planning, and the design of project-based learning opportunities. This case study describes my curriculum-design work and the documented programme; it does not claim sole authorship of the school curriculum or outcomes that have not been evaluated.

Design principles

- Literacy as the spine: a planned progression of phonics, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing across the year.
- Standards-led integration: CCSS ELA, NGSS Science and AERO Social Studies guide thematic choices and assessment evidence.
- Conceptual progression: begin with children's immediate contexts (family and community), then extend to scientific, civic, economic and global ideas.
- Purposeful inquiry: ask students to observe, explain, investigate, design and communicate—not merely complete themed activities.
- Coherence without forced integration: mathematics and specialist subjects retain clear subject-specific sequences.
- Responsive implementation: weekly planning can adapt to assessment evidence, student needs and school-calendar interruptions.

How the curriculum was structured

The revised map links weekly themes with vocabulary, spelling and sight words, grammar, writing, suggested reading and comprehension strategies. The accompanying comprehensive syllabus explains the programme rationale, subject coverage, teaching approach, assessment, differentiation and implementation considerations.

Illustrative progression

Theme / context	Curriculum connection	Learning experience
My Family	Identity, communication and literacy	Personal and family-centred reading, discussion and writing
Our Community & Our Place	AERO geography and informational literacy	Maps, symbols, legends, grids and routes; Mapping Our School mini-project
Plants & Pollinators	NGSS life science and explanatory language	Plant structures, life cycles and pollination; slides, interactive games and project booklet
Materials & Their Properties	NGSS physical science and engineering	Proposed Materials Innovation Expo: testing and explaining prototypes
Countries Around the World / Celebration of Cultures	AERO global connections and research literacy	Proposed cultural exhibition with research and presentations

From standards to classroom learning

A recurring planning sequence connected the standards and theme to weekly language skills, learning objectives, resources, classroom activities and assessment. For example, the Our Community & Our Place unit moved beyond naming map features: students worked with map keys, grid references, compass directions and routes, leading towards a practical school-map product.

For Plants & Pollinators, curriculum concepts were taught using instructional slides and reinforced through interactive games. A subsequent project booklet provided an additional opportunity to demonstrate understanding. This is an example of how the curriculum framework informed classroom materials; the separate Educational Games case study contains the detailed classroom evaluation.

Project-based learning as selective application

The proposed Grade 2 PBL framework deliberately limits major projects so that inquiry does not displace systematic literacy and subject teaching. It outlines one mini-project and four larger experiences, each connected to an authentic audience or purpose.

- Mapping Our School — a mini-PBL producing a useful map for classmates or visitors.
- Grade 2 Materials Innovation Expo — an exhibition of tested material-based prototypes.
- Primary Student President Election — a real campaign, speeches and primary-wide vote.
- Grade 2 Market Day — planning, advertising, sales and financial reflection.
- Countries & Cultures Exhibition — a research and presentation capstone.

The framework proposes four-point rubrics that assess curriculum understanding, communication and process—not simply the visual polish or cost of the final product. Individual evidence and checkpoints are

recommended for group work. These are framework proposals, not claims that all five projects have already taken place.

Assessment, inclusion and iteration

Assessment is designed around evidence of the intended learning: discussion, reading and writing, student products, formative checks and project rubrics. The planning documents also emphasise multilingual learners, age-appropriate research, accessible resources, manageable family costs and opportunities for individual evidence within collaborative projects.

The curriculum is a working framework rather than a fixed script. Suggested texts can be replaced by suitable alternatives, and pacing should be adjusted when interruptions or learner needs require it. Future curriculum reviews should compare planned coverage with taught coverage and use student work and teacher reflections to improve sequencing.

What this demonstrates professionally

- Curriculum mapping and standards alignment across ELA, Science and Social Studies.
- Learning progression, instructional sequencing and cross-curricular planning.
- Design of authentic assessment and project-based learning frameworks.
- Translation of curriculum requirements into usable teacher resources and learner activities.
- Critical judgement about when to integrate subjects and when to protect foundational instruction.
- Iterative planning that accounts for classroom realities, learner differences and school schedules.

Evidence and limitations

Available supporting artefacts include the Grade 2 Revised Curriculum Map (2026–2027), Grade 2 Comprehensive Syllabus and Grade 2 Project-Based Learning Framework. Screenshots of the curriculum map, an anonymised unit plan, a school-map activity and an assessment rubric would strengthen the published portfolio page.

This case study documents design choices and classroom examples; it does not present a formal impact study of the curriculum redesign. Programme-wide achievement gains, teacher time savings and completion of proposed PBL events should not be claimed without further evidence.

Reflection and next steps

This work reinforced that curriculum design is more than assembling themes: it requires a defensible progression of skills, meaningful disciplinary content, manageable teacher workflows and credible evidence of learning. My next step is to gather examples of student work, compare planned and delivered coverage, and record feedback from colleagues to refine the curriculum for future cohorts.