

10 QUESTIONS TO CREATE RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT NGSS CURRICULA



TUNE IN:
TAKING STUDENTS FROM
DISENGAGED TO DRIVEN

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THANK YOU AGAIN!

Nicole VanTassel
@ iExploreScience

TUNE IN

Creating Responsive & Relevant NGSS Curricula

It's time our education system - from our curriculum to our instruction - *tuned in* to our students.

Granted, many of us are already doing this in so many ways - we build relationships, we differentiate, we are working to meet our students' needs as best as we can. But what about our content? What about what we are actually asking our students to learn and to do? Does standards-based teaching mean we can't recognize and build from the interests, issues, and values of the communities we teach?

It's time to *tune in* to connect our science content to what REALLY MATTERS to our students and their communities.

Why?

Our students are finding their place in the world. They haven't yet figured out their identities. They don't fully know who they are. They are not confident in their sense of self. Part of our job as educators is to help them grow in all of these areas — so that they can become empowered adults who can apply the scientific knowledge and understanding we've helped them develop to solve the world's problems. Get me now?

Developing relationships with our students, loving them, caring about them — these are all things we must absolutely do to achieve successful three dimensional learning. That said, these things alone will not make our students feel valued. They will not alone help our students develop their identities and grow in confidence in their sense of self.

Our students will only know and believe we VALUE them when we embrace their interests, their passions, their issues, their opinions, and their own values.

We can do that by tuning our curriculum into our students needs. We can stop sanitizing science and instead embrace it for the human endeavor it is.

And we can start today, by reflecting on our students and our existing curriculum and identifying areas of improvement.

On the following pages, you will find a series of questions to guide your reflections on your students, your school and local community, and your curriculum. These questions were designed to get you thinking. Some of the questions may seem more relevant than others, and some topics you may feel you would not touch with a nine-foot-pole.

That's OK!

Right now, you are simply reflecting on the community you serve.

Some of these reflections will spark ideas for phenomena that are relevant to your content areas, while others will simply help you better understand your students -- how they perceive ideas presented to them, why they react as they do to certain situations, the conclusions they arrive at OR don't arrive at, so on and so forth. I hope this exercise is helpful in exploring the unique composition of your own community and generates some ideas for you for a customized approach to your science curriculum.

As always, you are invited to continue your work with us at iExplore Academy, where you can find your step-by-step guide to designing NGSS-aligned curriculum and instruction.

Yours,

Nicole VanTassel
iExploreScience.com

KNOW YOUR STUDENTS

- What cultures are represented in our student community?
- What languages are represented in your community?
- What are the socioeconomic circumstances of students in our community? How do these circumstances affect their day-to-day life?
- What attitudes exist in the community in regards to gender? Sexuality? Race?

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

- What are some great things that have happened in your community?
- What are your community's assets? (Organizations, natural areas, services, events, social attitudes and behaviors, etc.)
- What are your school's assets? (Physical resources, space, events, staff culture, classroom climates, administration, parental support, etc.)
- Bad things happen. What significant events have challenged your community? (Job losses, violence, natural disasters, etc.)
- What environmental issues are of importance to your local area, city, or region?
- What social issues does your community struggle with?

KNOW YOUR CONTENT

TOPICS/UNITS I TEACH	HOW COULD I TIE THIS TO MY STUDENTS'/COMMUNITY'S EXPERIENCES, INTERESTS, ISSUES?

Tune In To Take Your Students From Disengaged To Driven

ADDITIONAL IDEAS FOR ANCHOR INSPIRATION

ScienceNewsforStudents



SOURCES FOR NGSS PHENOMENON:

#ProjectPhenomena - <https://sites.google.com/site/sciencephenomena/>

The Wonder of Science - <http://thewonderofscience.com>

Phenomena for NGSS - <https://www.ngssphenomena.com/>

The Teaching Channel - <https://www.teachingchannel.org/blog/2016/09/22/phenomena>