Unique Learning System

By Jeanette Nowak

What is Unique Learning System (ULS)

Unique is an online, standards-based set of lessons and materials specifically designed for students with special needs to access the general curriculum.

- It aligns to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- It aligns to the Essential Elements (EE)
  - Dynamic Learning Maps Consortium (DLM) helped create the alternate standards

Who is Unique For?

Whose instruction should be based on the alternate academic achievement standards (Essential Elements)?

Students who will participate in alternate academic achievement standards (Essential Elements) are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities:

- Typically characterized as functioning at least two and a half to three standard deviations below the norm in both adaptive and intellectual functioning; **and**
- Performs substantially below grade level expectations on the academic content standards for the grade in which they are enrolled, even with the use of adaptations and accommodations; **and**
- A student who requires extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains, across all content areas and settings.

The IEP team is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the student receives academic instruction that is the most appropriate and challenging based on the student's individual needs. The determination is not based on a categorical disability label.

<u>Vocabulary</u>

Benchmark Assessments performance-based common assessments; allow you to collect baseline data and then monitor progress in targeted skills areas including reading, writing, math and emerging skills; suggested administration: 2-4x a year

Checkpoint Assessments monthly pre- and post-tests assessing specific grade band skills; data from these assessments can identify instructional goals and monitor growth after monthly unit instruction; suggested administration: 2x a month

Core Materials foundation for transition skill development in the context of routine, classroom activities; available to all grade bands all year long

Core Rubrics address transition readiness skill areas of employability, social strategies, self-advocacy, daily living and communication; suggested administration: 2-4x a year (available to all grade bands)

Course contains a prescribed number of modules to provide detailed instruction to support mastery of a larger topic.

Vocabulary

Differentiated Levels: (applies to both Unique Learning System and News-2-You)
Level 1: Students typically require maximum support within instructional tasks. For these students, increasing the level of participation is the main objective. (Participatory)
Level 2: Students require picture support and other direct support in learning and the demonstration of skills. (Supported)
Level 3: Students typically are reading or have potential to learn to read text and independently demonstrate comprehension of learned information within modified content. (Independent)

GPS (Goals, Preferences and Skills) contains assessments and resources to generate data; data used to effectively identify and monitor students' goals, preferences and abilities in relation to the instructional practices within the Unique Learning System curriculum framework

<u>Vocabulary</u>

Grade Bands contain age-respectful, engaging materials for students with significant disabilities and provides access to the general education curriculum;. aAll materials align to general education and extended standards for core subjects in all 6 grade bands; Preschool (students ages 3-5), Elementary (Grades K-2), Intermediate (Grades 3-5), Middle School (Grades 6-8), High School (Grades 9-12), Transition (Students ages 18+)

Lesson Plans provided within each lesson and include Instructional Targets aligned with your state's extended standards;, outline a defined instructional routine to support instruction and incorporate three levels of differentiated task expectations to meet the needs of each student

n2y Library searchable database containing over 1,000 leveled books on a variety of topics available as an iDoc offering text-to-speech capabilities, or as a printable PDF; each book includes a communication board to aide in comprehension and communication

Unique Monthly and Yearly Tasks

Monthly

- Set Unit Dates
- Monthly Checkpoints 2x/month
- Print curriculum materials
- Supplementary science and social studies materials

Yearly or Multiple Times

- Classroom Schedule
- Student Schedule
- Student Profile
- Benchmarks
- Transition for about to turn 14 and older

Set Classroom Schedule

- My Account
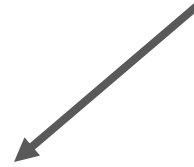- My Schedules

Do first
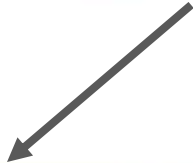
Do second

Classroom Schedule

Student Schedules

Add Student Schedule

Remove Student Schedule

SM

JO

Classroom Schedule

Edit Selected Schedule

Start Over

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:00 am							
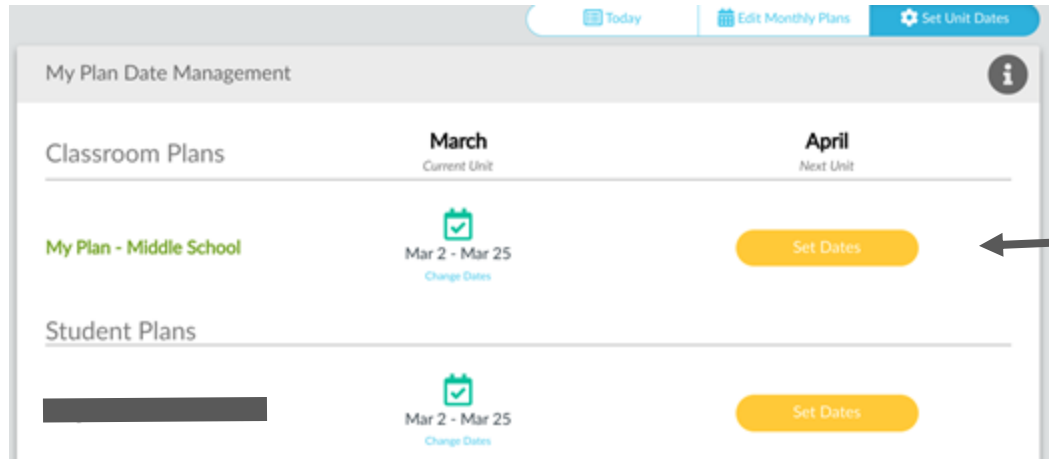
Set Unit Dates

- Home - Teacher Dashboard
- Set Unit Dates
  - Don't forget exclusion dates (PD day, breaks)
  - Don't forget to select all students names

Student Profile

- Unique Learning System
- n2y GPS
- Student Summary Report
  - Then under Profile, select the most recent to update.
  - This determines the student Level (1, 2, or 3)

Middle School
Differentiated Level 2

Click on blue Student button to switch students

Click this area to update

Profile

- Provides observational information of the student's current abilities
- Suggested levels indicate the amount of support needed during instructional tasks

Profile	Status	Score	Level	Date
K-12 Student Learning	✓ Completed	2.19	2	Oct 20, 2021 ▶
Self-Help Skills	✓ Completed	N/A	-	Sep 08, 2020

Monthly Checkpoints

- Unique Learning System
- n2y GPS
- Monthly Checkpoints
- Administer Checkpoint

Select current month
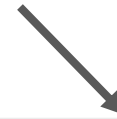
Snow Current School Year

Which Month?

November	January	February	March

Which Test?

There are various tests, administer all of them.

Content Understanding

Which Version?

Before unit starts

Pre-Test	Post-Test

At the end of chapter 6

Assign to students

How would you like to administer the test?

Uses teacher login

Teacher Login	Offline	Student View

N2Y Library

Where you can use stories to connect to other content areas such as science, social studies, and life skills. Use this resource to modify the regular education curriculum in the regular education classroom.

- Unique Learning System
- n2y Library
- Search for topics (might need to try many different keywords to find stories)
- Click Download as PDF
  - You will have to come up with your own comprehension questions as it does not come with the stories.

Monthly Lessons

Where you get all your content for the month for direct instruction, guided practice, and independent work.

- Unique Learning System
- Monthly Lessons
  - Can prepare for current and next month
  - Can't go back months, need to save info on your computer if behind with suggested lesson plans
  - Not individual grade levels but a grade band

Monthly Lessons

All Lessons

Unit Overview

Content areas

Reading / Language Arts

Math

Science

Social Studies

Incorporate as needed

Life Skills

Suggested Monthly Plan

Helpful to use when first learning how to use Unique.
Print to turn in for lesson plans.

Lesson Plans

Tools and Powerpoint Files

Interact with these tools to see if they will help support
your lesson materials or other needs.

Leveled PDFs

Supporting Files

Monthly Lessons - Reading

Additional ideas and supports for reading include:

- Vocabulary
  - Use sight words also for spelling
  - Use to create your word wall

- Reading
  - Teach highlighting, context clues, and other strategies through reading activities

- Writing
  - Use additional resources to increase writing abilities based on student needs and EE grade level standards

Monthly Lessons - Math

Supplement with additional intervention programs as Unique is not very strong in this area compared to reading. They lack vocabulary, meaningful math activities, and do not provide content toward all the EE standards for the grade band.

- Incorporate websites such as:
    - Sheppardsoftware.com
    - Liveworksheets.com
    - BrainPop
    - Epic

Monthly Lesson Tips/Suggestions

- Don't have to print whole documents, select pages to print
- Can print 2 pages to 1 page with double sided option to help save paper for stories and math problems
- Finding a rhythm and routine will become easier with time

Core Materials

- Unique Learning System
- Core Materials
  - Use materials that best fit the needs of your current students needs.
  - Can be used for morning routines or Do Now activities
  - Helps with visual supports

I suggest saving these documents for future reference as they are nice to have.

Courses

Additional supports for science and social studies. Use this resource to modify the regular education curriculum in the regular education classroom.

- Unique Learning System
- Courses
  - Save and then print the PDF option
  - Has lesson plans, story, and comprehension questions for assessment

Science and Social Studies Modified Suggestion

When your students are in the regular education classroom for science and social studies, their curriculum should be modified to meet their needs.

- Print the materials from the Courses section in a 3" master copy binder and have each of the sections labeled.
  - Print the lesson plan, story, and comprehension questions
  - Make 3 copies of social studies, one for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teacher to keep in their room
  - Make 3 copies of science, one for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teacher to keep in their room
    - The materials are the same as it is for a grade band and not a specific grade
    - Use the N2Y Library to print additional stories that align with the curriculum to add to the binders
    - Use other resources to find additional materials for students to use
      - Print and put in each of the binders

Social Studies - DLM Support

This is a great resource to help with what additional curriculum information to include in lessons for social studies as what they are tested on the DLM does not align with the Wisconsin Essential Elements (currently as of 3/4/22).

Social Studies Rater Scale - Grade 4

- https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/StateBonusItems/Social_Studies_Grade_4_Rater_Form_WI.pdf

Social Studies Rater Scale - Grade 8

- https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/StateBonusItems/Social_Studies_Grade_8_Rater_Form_WI.pdf

Transition

Use this transition resource to help you with students who are going to turn 14 within the life of the IEP for listing information on the IEP about transition and to include on the PTP as well.

- Unique Learning System
- N2y GPS
  - Core Rubrics
    - Complete all assessments with student
  - Transition Planning
    - Complete all the assessments with student
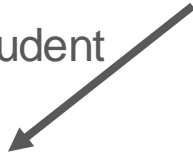
Student View

Configure Student View ›

Transition

Core Rubrics ›

Transition Planning ›

Teacher Reference Materials - Instructional Tools

- Unique Learning System
- Teacher Reference Materials
  - Instructional Tools
  - Use materials that best fit the needs of your current students
  - Helps with materials for activities and additional differentiation

| Comboard Strips | Dolch/Fry Word Lists | Greeting Cards | Letter to Parents | Scientific Inquiry Processes | Sound Cards | State Outlines | Tracing Letters and Numbers | Word Journal Cover & Tabs | Word Part Posters |

Leveled PDFs

| March Chapter Book Level H/I | March Chapter Book Level F/G | March Chapter Book Level F/G Symbol Supported | April Chapter Book Level J/K | April Chapter Book Level F/G | April Chapter Book Level F/G Symbol Supported |

Math Packs

| Math Pack: | Math Pack: | Math Pack: | Math Pack: | Math Pack: | Math Pack: | Math Pack: |

Teacher Reference Materials - Instructional Guides

- Unique Learning System
- Teacher Reference Materials
  - Instructional Guides

Strategies for Meaningfully Involving Level 1 Students

Level 1 and understanding prompting

Teaching Strategies

| Active Participation Guidelines | Active Participation Scripts | AT Decision | Instructional Tips | Leveled Books | Mathematics | Phonemic Awareness | Suggested Monthly Plan | Vocabulary | Word Study |

Year Topics

This section allows you to see 3 years of the monthly reading topics that will be taught. They are on a loop so year 4 will start the whole 3 year cycle over again. This is so that students don't have the same story within the grade band that they are in.

- Unique Learning System
- Year Topics
  - To print, select ELEM-HS schedule to print for reference
  - Can also use this to help prepare for stories that will be covered in reading that can also be used for science and social studies.
    - Such as vocabulary, reading comprehension questions, longer chapter stories

eXtras!

This section provides social stories, visual supports, signs, stories, student certificates, and more.

- My Account
- eXtras!

IEP Suggestions

- In present levels state what level they are in Unique for reading and math and also state what is expected at that level
- State if students are using picture supports for written responses
- State if students are matching versus writing in answers
- For grade comparisons, use Essential Elements
- Use Benchmarks and Monthly Checkpoints for present level data
- Use Transition assessments for students about to turn 14 during the life of the IEP

Wisconsin Essential Elements

EE for ELA

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/dpi-ee-ela.pdf

EE for Math

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/dpi-ee-mathematics.pdf

EE for Science

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/dpi-ee-science.pdf

EE for Social Studies

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/Essential_Elements_for_Social_Studies_2022.pdf

Additional Resources

Wisconsin Alternate Academic Achievement Standards

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/topics/essential-elements

GUIDE TO DETERMINING STUDENTS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

- https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/mscd-guide-to-determining-students-with-mscd.pdf

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

- https://dynamiclearningmaps.org/wisconsin

Visit my website for more content area support, ideas, and materials for how to implement alternate standards in the classroom.

https://www.msnowakhomeroom.com/