



The PYP Travel Guide for Teachers

Christine Orkisz Lang, MEd, PhD

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Personal Introduction

Welcome to the journey of becoming a PYP educator! Engaging deeply with the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a meaningful commitment to thoughtful teaching and learning. The PYP combines some of the most engaging and relevant

educational practices today, and when implemented effectively, it fosters classrooms where curiosity, understanding, and reflection thrive.



My name is Christine Orkisz Lang. I co-authored the original Primary Years Programme and have spent over 30 years either implementing it myself or helping schools develop it in their own contexts.

When the PYP was first created, we had an ambitious goal: to unite the most powerful ideas about teaching and learning from around the world into one coherent framework for young learners. The programme emphasizes conceptual understanding, inquiry-based learning, international-mindedness, the development of learning skills, and the growth of students as thoughtful and responsible members of their communities.



Powerful learning by design



In collaborating with teachers and school leaders implementing the PYP in various contexts, one important realization has emerged: the programme is both powerful and demanding. The ongoing collaborative efforts of educators worldwide to refine and strengthen the PYP, many years after its inception, attest to its validity as well as its complexity.



Teachers implementing the PYP are required to integrate numerous important elements of learning simultaneously, including subject knowledge, conceptual understanding, transdisciplinary learning, the learner profile, approaches to learning skills, student agency, inquiry as a pedagogical approach, and meaningful assessment practices that reveal student thinking.

While each of these elements contributes to rich learning experiences for students, they can feel overwhelming, particularly for educators new to the programme.

Many teachers share similar experiences during their first years of working with the PYP. As they gain a deeper understanding of the framework, they become increasingly aware of the many components to consider. It is common to hear reflective educators asking themselves questions such as:



Thoughtful Teachers Wonder...

- Am I integrating the Learner Profile and ATLs enough?
- Are my units truly transdisciplinary?
- Is this really inquiry-based learning?

One of the most important lessons I have learned from my work with PYP educators over the years is that understanding the programme develops gradually. Familiarity with the PYP grows through experience - planning, teaching, observing student learning, and revisiting units over multiple cycles. What initially feels challenging often becomes more natural over time as teachers become more acquainted with the programme's ideas and structures.

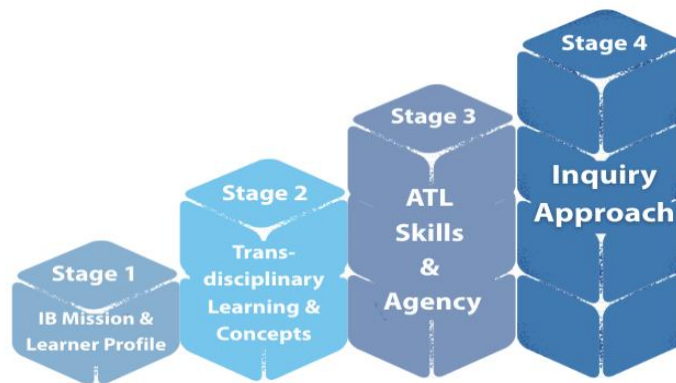


These questions are normal as understanding develops over time

**Four Development
Stages =
Clear Conceptual
Progression**

Putting these stages together as a model involved considering which parts of the PYP naturally fit together and which ideas are often easier to explore earlier or later. Your own experience, and that of your colleagues, may look different depending on your school context. For example, if your school is currently focusing on Approaches to Learning, there is no need to insist on beginning with the learner profile. Likewise, although inquiry appears later in the progression shared here, it can also be a powerful place to begin exploring the PYP.

The stages below summarize how teachers might experience this gradual professional growth:



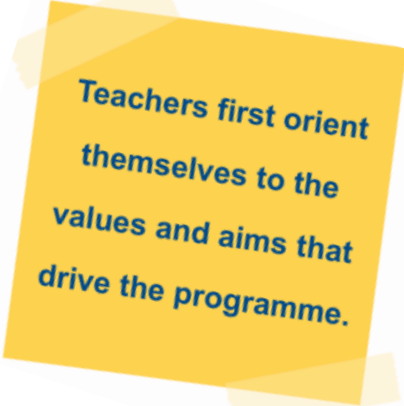
Stage 1: IB Mission and Learner Profile

Teachers first orient themselves to the values and aims that drive the programme. The IB mission emphasizes developing internationally minded learners who are curious, reflective, principled, and open to new perspectives. The Learner Profile provides a shared language for describing the attributes we hope students will develop as learners and members of their communities.

In this stage, teachers explore how these values shape classroom culture, learning experiences, and learning spaces. Rather than treating the Learner Profile as a checklist of traits to be taught, experienced educators come to see these attributes as qualities that grow naturally through authentic learning, reflection, and dialogue. This understanding is strengthened by research, such as John Hattie's (2009), which highlights that teachers' beliefs about students' potential to succeed have a powerful impact on learning. When educators hold high expectations and see every learner as capable of growth, they create environments where these attributes are more likely to flourish.

Landmarks:

- Professional beliefs
- International mindedness
- Learner Profile attributes
- Classroom culture



Teachers first orient themselves to the values and aims that drive the programme.

Stage 2: Transdisciplinary Learning and Concepts

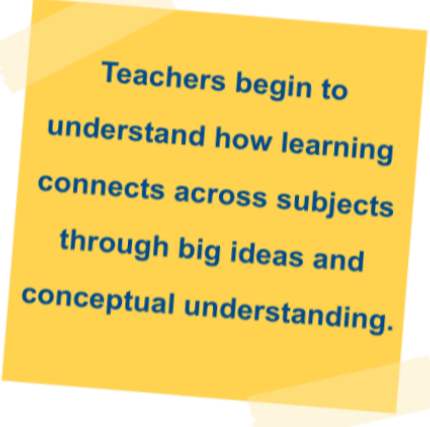
As teachers become more familiar with the programme's purpose, attention often turns to how learning is structured. The PYP encourages educators to move beyond teaching subjects in isolation and instead explore important ideas that connect across disciplines.

Concept-based learning plays a central role. Concepts such as change, connection, causation, and perspective, along with disciplinary and other concepts, help students investigate big ideas that extend beyond a single subject area. These ideas are explored through transdisciplinary themes and units of inquiry that form each school's Programme of Inquiry. Grounded in the work of Lynn Erickson (2007), this approach supports students in moving beyond the recall of facts to the development of transferable understandings that can be applied across contexts. By focusing on concepts, learners make connections, think critically, and construct deeper, more enduring understanding.

At this stage, teachers build confidence in planning learning experiences that allow students to investigate important ideas from multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Landmarks:

- Transdisciplinary themes & subject content
- Specified and other concepts
- Central ideas
- Lines of inquiry



Teachers begin to understand how learning connects across subjects through big ideas and conceptual understanding.

Stage 3: Approaches to Learning and Student Agency

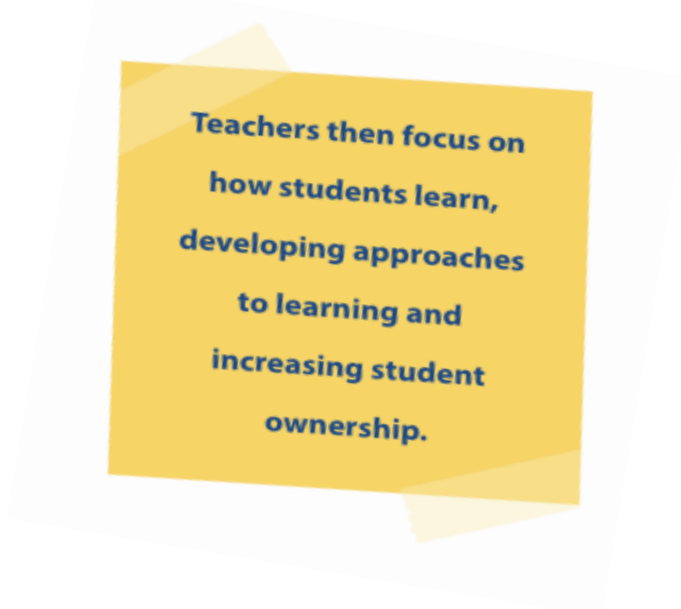
As teachers gain experience designing concept-driven learning, they often begin focusing more intentionally on how students learn. In the PYP, these capabilities are known as Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills and include thinking, communication, research, self-management, and social skills.

Students do not automatically know how to collaborate effectively, ask meaningful questions, or reflect on their learning. These abilities develop through explicit teaching, guided practice, and thoughtful feedback.

During this stage, teachers also explore student agency and how learners can take increasing responsibility for their own learning. As noted by Kath Murdoch, agency grows when learners are given rich opportunities to contribute, make decisions, and take action within a supportive learning environment. Agency does not mean removing structure. Instead, it involves creating environments where students contribute ideas, make choices, and take ownership of their investigations.

Landmarks:

- Thinking skills
- Research skills
- Communication skills
- Self-management skills
- Social skills
- Teacher & student agency



Stage 4: Inquiry as an Approach to Learning & Teaching

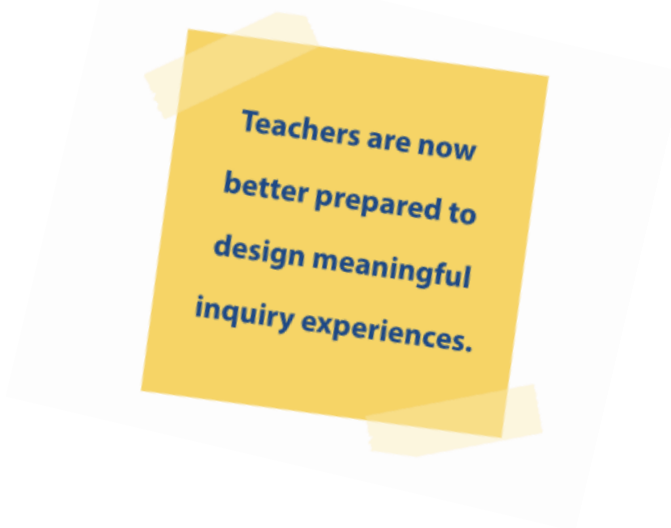
Inquiry is often the most visible element of the PYP, yet it becomes most meaningful when earlier elements are firmly understood. When concepts guide learning, when students have developed strong learning skills, and when classroom culture supports curiosity and reflection, inquiry can flourish. As highlighted by Rachel French (2022), inquiry is strengthened when it is intentionally connected to conceptual understanding and supported by coherent teaching practices.

Teachers begin designing learning experiences where students investigate questions, explore ideas, gather evidence, and construct their own understandings. Inquiry is no longer something added to the curriculum. It becomes the way learning unfolds.

Over time, the different elements of the PYP connect more naturally. Concepts guide inquiry, learning skills support investigations, the learner profile shapes classroom culture, and assessment becomes an integral, ongoing process that makes learning visible. Through formative and reflective practices, students increasingly demonstrate agency, monitor their own progress, and provide evidence of their understanding in a variety of ways, becoming capable and confident assessors of their own learning.

Landmarks:

- Programme of Inquiry
- Inquiry cycles
- Student questions
- Student action
- Assessment capabilities
- PYP Exhibition

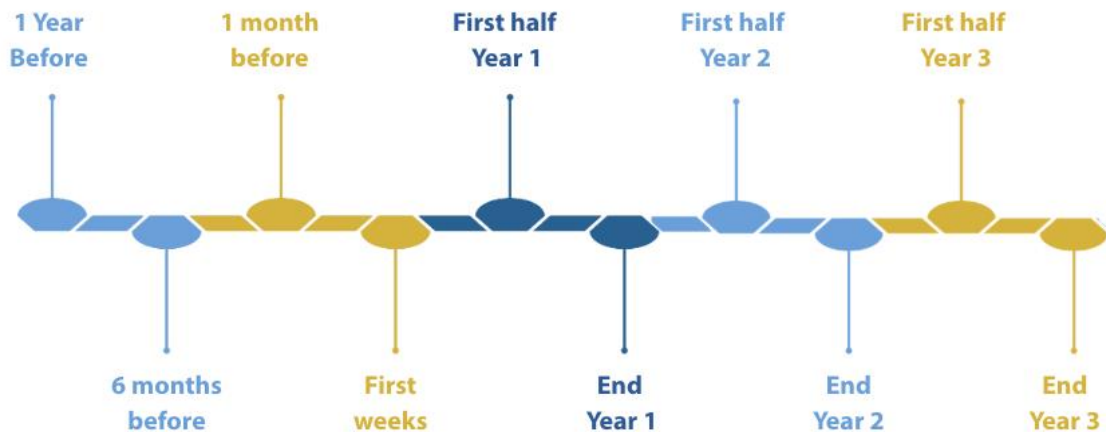


This progression is not about moving through stages perfectly. It is about building understanding step by step, gaining confidence along the way, and gradually creating learning environments where students can think deeply, act meaningfully, and grow as capable, caring members of their communities.



To explore the four stages outlined here in greater depth, you are invited to access the PYP Essentials modules on the IB Exchange (IM-000000V8). These modules offer additional guidance, opportunities for practice and reflection, and a planning template to support you as you move through each stage of the process.

A Roadmap for Your First Four Years



Implementing the Primary Years Programme is a gradual journey of learning, reflection, and growth. While experiences vary, many educators notice similar patterns as they become more confident in PYP practice. This roadmap is designed to guide and support you along the way, helping you focus on what matters most at each stage and making the PYP more manageable over time.

Each checkpoint begins with a guiding theme that highlights the main purpose of that stage in your journey. These checkpoints are then explored through a set of eight “In Practice” lenses that connect professional learning with everyday classroom experiences.



Your Learning



Anchor Moments



Key Resources



What This Might Look Like



Working with Students



What This Might Sound Like



Impact Evidence



Pause and Reflect

Your Learning: This section highlights the professional understandings that typically develop at this stage of your PYP journey, helping you focus on what matters most right now rather than trying to take on everything at once.

Key Resources: Here you will find suggested supports for your learning. These may include IB documents and workshops, guidance from experienced practitioners, and resources from influential voices in the field. Think of this section as your professional toolkit.

Working with Students: These moments translate professional learning into classroom practice, showing how your growing understanding shapes student experiences, interactions, and learning opportunities.

Evidence of Learning: This element highlights visible signs of growth in both teaching and learning, helping you notice students' thinking, engagement, and progress through authentic classroom evidence.

Anchor Moments: These brief reflective pauses highlight common surprises, misconceptions, and insights that experienced PYP educators often discover over time, helping you anticipate important mindset shifts.

What This Might Look and Sound Like: Short classroom snapshots bring ideas to life by illustrating how PYP practices may appear in real learning environments, making abstract principles more concrete and relatable.

Pause and Reflect: Just as we would expect to provide important consolidation time for our students, you will be prompted throughout this module to stop and reflect on your learning.

Take some time now to think about the lenses you might use that will best support you, now and into the future. Everyone's journey into the PYP is different, but using a guide like this can help you see where you are, where you might be going next, and why each step matters.

PYP Roadmap for Teachers

Phase	Time Period	Your Learning	Key Resources	With Students	Evidence of Learning	Anchor Moment	What This Might Look Like	What This Might Sound Like	Pause and Reflect
Phase 1: Mission & Learner Profile	One Year Before Starting: A Conversation About Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how IB philosophy connects to beliefs about teaching and learning Recognizing the role of international-mindedness in shaping school culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IB mission and philosophy documents Introductory IB publications and orientations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imagining how international-mindedness shapes culture Reflecting on values-based education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal philosophy reflections Notes on global perspectives 	Recognizing alignment between IB philosophy and personal beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated readings Reflection journals Global visuals Planning notes 	<p>"I've been reading about the IB mission. It emphasizes developing internationally minded people, not just academic success."</p> <p>"It influences how we view students and learning."</p> <p>"This aligns strongly with why I became a teacher."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does IB philosophy align with my values? What does international-mindedness look like in practice?
	Six Months Before Starting: Discovering the Learner Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the learner profile as a foundation for developing student identity and behaviour Recognizing how the learner profile shapes relationships, culture, and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Principles to Practice Learner profile resources on the IB Exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Envisioning learner profile impact on classroom culture Considering internationally minded teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional reading notes Reflections on learner profile 	The learner profile begins to feel practical and actionable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated readings Reflection notes Learner profile visuals Planning drafts 	<p>"These learner profile attributes go beyond posters. They describe habits we want students to develop."</p> <p>"They help shape classroom culture."</p> <p>"I can imagine students using words like open-minded and principled in daily learning."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which attributes resonate most? How might IB principles influence my approach?
	One Month Before Starting: Preparing for Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how the PYP framework translates into classroom practice Recognizing the role of routines and structures in supporting inquiry and independence Beginning to see how collaborative planning supports clarity and consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches to Teaching PYP Playlist Induction and curriculum documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing inquiry-focused environment Planning inclusive routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting notes Draft unit and setup ideas 	The framework starts connecting to classroom practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted materials Shared plans Draft ideas Prepared classroom 	<p>"The PYP Playlist clarified how inquiry fits together."</p> <p>"Planning collaboratively will make it even clearer."</p> <p>"I'm beginning to see how routines can support independence rather than compliance."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What feels clear or unfamiliar? What questions should I bring to my team?
	First Weeks: Establishing Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how classroom culture is shaped through daily interactions and routines Recognizing the role of shared language in building a learning community Recognizing how teacher behaviours influence student attitudes, relationships, and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner profile visuals and documents Mentor and school culture supports Planning discussions and reflection tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing learner profile language Co-constructing norms and inclusive routines Encouraging student reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students using learner profile vocabulary Early reflections and culture observations Routine and behaviour development 	Learner profile language and reflection begin shaping classroom interactions and shared expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner profile posters and displays Morning meetings and class agreements Reflection routines and observation notes 	<p>Teacher: What does it mean to be caring?</p> <p>Student: Helping someone when they're stuck.</p> <p>Teacher: That's an important part of our learner profile.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is the learner profile shaping culture? Which routines support independence? How naturally is shared language used?

Phase 2: Transdisciplinary Learning & Concepts	<p>First Half Year 1: Connecting Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how transdisciplinary learning connects subjects through shared concepts Recognizing that collaborative planning improves the coherence and quality of learning Beginning to see learning as interconnected rather than subject-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of Inquiry Unit planners (see https://teach.link/XhDycP) Collaborative planning IB curriculum documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building school and classroom community Encouraging reflection and respectful dialogue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting international-mindedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction observations Dialogue monitoring Student work samples 	Learning becomes more connected and meaningful as students begin linking ideas across subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group discussions Shared planning Concept displays Student work collections 	<p>Student: This connects to what we learned in science. Teacher: What connection do you see? Student: Both are about systems working together.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How visible are IB values? Where can conceptual understanding improve?
	<p>End Year 1: Thinking Conceptually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding that conceptual understanding is more important than content coverage Recognizing that central ideas drive learning and unit design Understanding how coherence across subjects strengthens student understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and Sequence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit planners Concept maps Visible thinking routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching concept-focused units Asking deeper conceptual questions Supporting connections across subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion notes Conceptual growth records Revised unit plans 	Students move beyond facts toward conceptual understanding and confidently engage in conceptual discussions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student concept maps Big-question discussions Thinking routine displays Revised planners 	<p>Teacher: How are these ideas related? Student: They're different examples of change over time. Teacher: So what bigger idea connects them? Student: Systems can evolve.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do units support conceptual understanding? How does engagement influence planning?
Phase 3: ATL Skills & Agency	<p>First Half Year 2: Growing Independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding that ATL skills support independent learning and student agency Recognizing the role of reflection and goal setting in improving learning Understanding how teacher decisions influence levels of student independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATL frameworks Progression documents Reflection tools Goal-setting templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting student choice and voice Guiding reflection and goal setting Encouraging independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student goals and reflections Independence observations 	Students begin setting goals and making learning choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice in tasks Reflection journals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATL displays Conferences 	<p>Teacher: What's your goal for this unit? Student: To organize my research better. Teacher: What strategy might help? Student: Using a checklist.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much ownership are students taking? How can structures support agency?
	<p>End Year 2: Students as Self-Managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing that student agency develops through structured support and intentional design Understanding how choice and collaboration strengthen ownership of learning Seeing the shift from teacher-directed to increasingly student-driven learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATL planning tools Journal templates Portfolio structures Professional learning communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explicit ATL teaching Supporting goal setting and monitoring Collaborative investigations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning journals and portfolios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection records Skill development notes 	Students independently manage learning and collaborate effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student journals Group investigations Observation notes Peer observations 	<p>Student: We divided the tasks so everyone has a role. Teacher: How will you know if your collaboration is working? Student: We'll reflect after each meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do structures support ownership? How are the ATLs shaping teaching and planning?

Phase 4: Inquiry as an Approach to Learning & Teaching

<p>First Half Year 3: Inquiry in Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding how inquiry develops through sustained investigation over time Recognizing how balancing guidance and independence strengthens student agency Understanding the relationship between inquiry, concepts, and deep learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquiry frameworks Progression continuums Inquiry journals Leadership dialogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating investigations Supporting authentic application Encouraging researchable questions Diverse presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conceptual explanation records Inquiry documentation Process journals 	<p>Students independently conduct inquiries and explain understanding clearly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student investigations Varied presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquiry walls Process journals 	<p>Student: Can we investigate how pollution affects animal habitats? Teacher: How could you research that? Student: We could compare different ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does facilitation support deep inquiry? Are students demonstrating independence and understanding?
<p>End Year 3: Transfer and Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing that conceptual understanding is demonstrated through transfer and application Understanding how inquiry, concepts, and assessment work together Seeing the PYP as an integrated, whole-school approach to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of Inquiry Refined planners Assessment tools Review protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-led investigations Real-world applications Supporting transfer of learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained inquiry projects Application evidence Agency reflections 	<p>Students lead inquiries, transfer learning across contexts, and increasingly see themselves as capable contributors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student-driven projects Authentic applications Transfer presentations Curriculum refinement 	<p>Student: We used what we learned about systems to design this solution. Teacher: Where else could that thinking apply? Student: In city planning and environmental protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does planning empower agency? Do experiences support transfer and action?

Using the PYP Roadmap Checklist for Teachers

Effective teaching in the PYP develops over time through reflection, collaboration, and purposeful action. While every classroom context is different, many teachers notice similar patterns as they grow in confidence and clarity in their practice.

The accompanying checklist translates the roadmap into classroom practice. Organized around the same four phases, it focuses on the key actions and indicators that support effective implementation in the learning environment. While the roadmap emphasizes professional learning and understanding, the checklist highlights what this looks like in action.

It brings together both the broader view of teacher development and the practical steps needed along the way. Use it as a reflective and practical tool to:

- Recognize current strengths and progress
- Identify priorities for development
- Guide instructional decisions and next steps

As shown across the four phases, development in PYP teaching is not linear or fixed, but grows over time through collaboration and purposeful action.

This checklist is designed to support that ongoing journey, providing clarity and direction while allowing for flexibility based on your deepening understanding and your students' needs within your classroom context.



PYP Roadmap Checklist for Teachers	
Phase 1 — Mission & Learner Profile	
Learning and Building Understanding	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the philosophy of the IB
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the IB mission and international mindedness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read From Principles to Practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the Learner Profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore the PYP Playlist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participate in school induction sessions
Beginning to Plan and Collaborate	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engage in initial planning conversations with team members and the PYP coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin collaborative conversations about teaching approaches
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop shared language with colleagues
Establishing Classroom Culture	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin to build a classroom culture using the Learner Profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce learner profile language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Model curiosity, respect, and open-mindedness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-construct classroom norms using learner profile language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop relationships and a sense of community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Connecting Philosophy to Practice
Connect IB values to classroom practice	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a learning environment that supports inquiry and independence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan routines that support inclusion and student independence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage early student reflection connected to learner profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support student reflection on international mindedness
Reflecting and Adjusting Practice	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on classroom routines and learning experiences
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust practices based on student response

Christine Orkisz Lang, 2026

PYP Roadmap Checklist for Teachers

Phase 1 — Mission & Learner Profile

Learning and Building Understanding

<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the philosophy of the IB
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the IB mission and international mindedness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read From Principles to Practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about the Learner Profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore the PYP Playlist
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participate in school induction sessions

Beginning to Plan and Collaborate

<input type="checkbox"/>	Engage in initial planning conversations with team members and the PYP coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin collaborative conversations about IB's Approaches to Teaching
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop shared language with colleagues

Establishing Classroom Culture

<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin to build a classroom culture using the Learner Profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce learner profile language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Model curiosity, respect, and open-mindedness
<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-construct classroom norms using learner profile language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop relationships and a sense of community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Connecting Philosophy to Practice

Connect IB values to classroom practice

<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a learning environment that supports inquiry and independence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan routines that support inclusion and student independence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage early student reflection connected to learner profile attributes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support student reflection on international mindedness

Reflecting and Adjusting Practice

<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on classroom routines and learning experiences
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust practices based on student response

Phase 2 — Transdisciplinary Learning & Concepts

Learning and Building Understanding

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learn about the transdisciplinary themes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learn about the Programme of Inquiry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learn about central ideas and lines of inquiry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learn about specified and related concepts |

Planning for Concept-Based Learning

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Plan concept-based units |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop central ideas and lines of inquiry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Connect subject content using Scope and Sequence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Make connections among subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Explore big ideas across disciplines |

Collaborative Planning and Professional Learning

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop confidence in collaborative planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Participate in collaborative planning discussions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Improve conceptual clarity through team discussions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Discuss feedback from the PYP coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Attend a Category 1 workshop |

Teaching for Conceptual Understanding

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask and discuss conceptual questions with students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Use concept maps and visible thinking routines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Teach units with a focus on conceptual understanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Reflect on student engagement and learning |

Using Evidence to Refine Practice

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Collect and review student work samples |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Keep notes from student discussions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Reflect on the effectiveness of unit design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Revise plans based on classroom experience |

Phase 3 — ATL Skills & Agency

Learning and Building Understanding

<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about ATL skill categories and clusters
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about student agency and voice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about reflection and goal setting

Designing for Agency and Independence

<input type="checkbox"/>	Support growing student independence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Design structures for meaningful student choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set goals with students and support them in monitoring progress
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish learning journals and process portfolios

Teaching and Developing ATL Skills

<input type="checkbox"/>	Explicitly teach ATL skills
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate ATL development into learning experiences
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revisit plans to strengthen ATL development

Collaborative Learning and Inquiry

<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate on shared investigations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Design and evaluate collaborative work products
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discuss student independence and agency with team members

Reflecting and Improving Practice

<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on and adapt teaching to better support student agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish routines for collaborative reflection on student growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Participate in peer observation cycles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engage in professional learning networks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend a Category 2 workshop

Phase 4 — Inquiry Approach

Learning and Building Understanding

- Learn about inquiry cycles and inquiry progression across grade levels
- Learn about deep conceptual understanding

Designing for Inquiry and Conceptual Depth

- Design learning experiences around student questions
- Develop meaningful and researchable questions
- Incorporate investigations and authentic application
- Strengthen alignment between concepts, inquiry, and assessment

Facilitating Inquiry and Student Agency

- Facilitate inquiry rather than directing learning
- Support sustained student-led investigations
- Provide opportunities for students to present understanding in diverse ways
- Support students in applying learning to real-world contexts

Supporting Reflection and Independence

- Adjust teaching to balance guidance and student independence
- Support student reflection, action, and engagement in learning
- Develop inquiry documentation and process journals

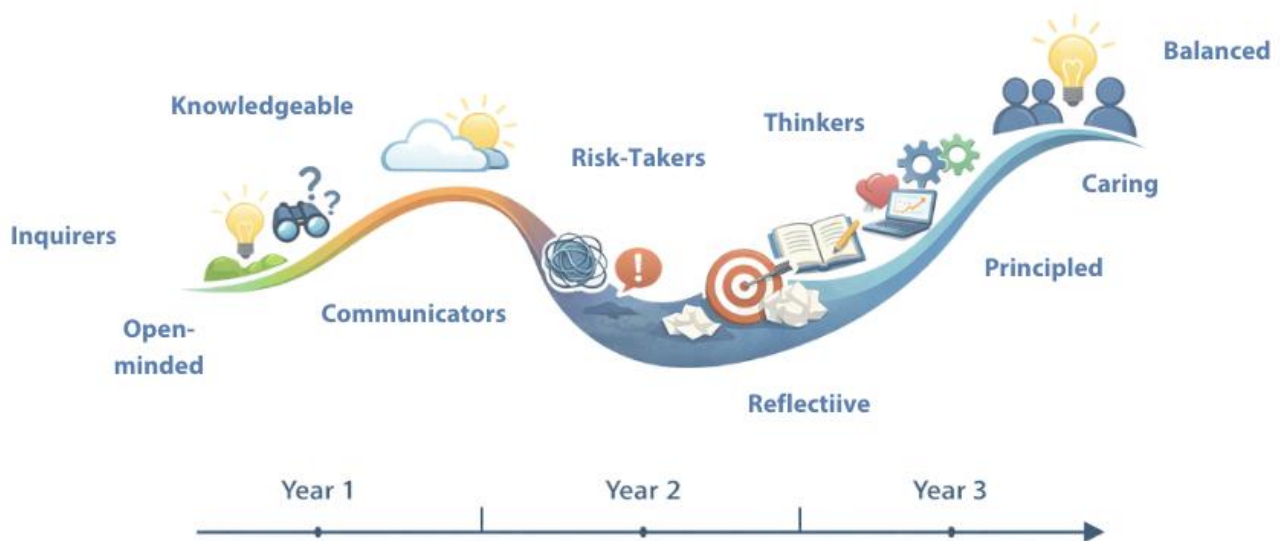
Refining Practice Through Collaboration

- Refine units through multiple teaching cycles
- Collaboratively improve the Programme of Inquiry
- Engage in dialogue with coordinators and leadership around inquiry

Professional Learning

- Attend the Essentials for Inquiry course

Understanding the Implementation Dip



When educators first begin working with the PYP, there is often a strong sense of excitement and curiosity. As teachers learn more about the programme, they quickly realize how many elements they are trying to bring together: concepts, inquiry, learning skills, assessment, and student agency. What first felt inspiring can start to feel complex and demanding.

At this stage, it is completely normal for confidence to dip. As described by Michael Fullan (2007), this “implementation dip” is a natural part of professional growth whenever we take on meaningful change.

This experience also reflects many of the Learner Profile attributes shown in the diagram. Teachers often begin as Inquirers and Open-minded professionals, eager to explore new ideas and possibilities. As their understanding grows, they become more Knowledgeable and rely on being strong Communicators, working closely with colleagues to make sense of new practices. When challenges arise, they show what it means to be Risk-takers, trying new approaches even when they are unsure how things will turn out.

This dip is not a sign that something is going wrong. In fact, it usually means the opposite. Teachers are beginning to see the programme more clearly and are holding themselves to higher standards of practice. Over time, collaboration and repeated planning cycles help the different elements connect more naturally. Teaching becomes clearer, more coherent, and more sustainable.

The roadmap in this guide is designed to support you through each stage of that journey, offering structure and reassurance as confidence gradually returns.

Next Steps



Wherever your starting point was, wherever you find yourself now, and in whatever order you choose to explore the guidance offered here, know that embarking on the journey to implement the PYP thoughtfully and effectively with your students or within your school is something to be proud of. The PYP represents some of the most engaging and forward-thinking approaches to teaching and learning available today, and choosing to grow within this framework is a commitment to creating richer learning experiences for young people. If parts of the programme feel familiar, that is a good sign. Much of the PYP reflects practices that thoughtful educators have long valued, now brought together with a shared language and structure.

At the same time, this journey asks a great deal of educators. There is much to understand, to try, to refine, and to sustain. By engaging with its ideas, you have already taken an important and courageous step forward.

Designing this roadmap series was both a professional and personal journey. Deciding which elements to group together and how to sequence them in a way that feels supportive, realistic, and sustainable required careful thought. My hope is that the structure provided here allows you to gradually build clarity and understanding across all the key dimensions of the PYP, whether you are exploring these ideas independently or alongside colleagues.

Meaningful implementation does not happen overnight. It grows through experience, reflection, and the steady willingness to keep learning. Trust the process. Notice your progress. Celebrate small steps forward.

If at any point you need further guidance, clarification, or support, remember that you do not have to navigate this journey alone. Reach out to the many thoughtful and experienced educators around you. Learning alongside others, sharing questions, and exchanging ideas are powerful ways to bring the PYP to life in a way that feels authentic and achievable in your own context.

Wishing you confidence, curiosity, and many rewarding moments of learning as your journey unfolds.



*Your students benefit from your dedication every day,
and many will carry the impact of your care and commitment with them
long into the future.*

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