
2.6: Backwards Mapping

Student Objective

Students will analyze a project, breaking it down into major components and then into smaller tasks, as well as analyze the resources needed to accomplish the tasks and thereby complete the larger project.

Overview

When approaching any project, students often encounter two problems: not planning enough or planning inappropriately for the given situation. Regardless of time given to complete a project, too many students choose to begin the night before or create a plan that does not adequately match the task at hand. As students become more adept at planning, they become more effective at learning. Teachers can support their students by brainstorming ideas at the start of a project, assignment, or exam announcement.

Materials/Set-Up

- Handouts:
 - 2.6a: Backwards Mapping Plan
 - 2.6b: Backwards Mapping Group Plan

Instructional Steps

1. When first introducing students to the concept of backwards mapping, provide them with a plan to follow by demonstrating how more complex assignments can be broken down into manageable chunks.
2. When teaching students how to independently backwards map, provide a complex project with a minimal number of formal deadlines.
3. Have students use the Backwards Mapping Plan or Backwards Mapping Group Plan to analyze the project.
4. Have students determine what tasks need to be completed.
5. Students will then analyze the tasks that need to be completed and create task completion dates.
 - Students should be aware that not all tasks will have a formal deadline, but in the cases where they don't, they should create their own deadlines.
6. Have students periodically take out the Backwards Mapping Plan and analyze their progress.

→ Extension

- To integrate technology, utilize calendar and task manager apps to track completion of major project components.

Backwards Mapping Plan

Complex assignments can be broken down into manageable chunks. Analyze your task using backwards mapping and determine what tasks need to be completed. Once you have organized this information, periodically refer back to your Backwards Mapping Plan in order to analyze your progress.

Name: _____ Project: _____

Major Project Components 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	Project Due Date:	
	5. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
	4. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
	3. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
	2. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
Potential Calendar Conflicts _____ _____ _____ _____	1. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>

Post-Submission Response: Upon submitting your project, reflect and comment on the strengths of your plan and what you would do differently next time.

Backwards Mapping Group Plan

<p>Project: _____</p> <p>Group Members:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Major Project Components</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>
<p>Potential Calendar Conflicts</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Project Due Date:		
5. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Group Member(s) Responsible</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
4. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Group Member(s) Responsible</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
3. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Group Member(s) Responsible</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
2. <i>Tasks to Complete:</i>	<i>Group Member(s) Responsible</i>	<i>Complete Tasks By:</i>
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Post-Submission Response: Upon submitting your project, reflect and comment on the strengths of your plan and what you would do differently next time.