Education & Learning / Curriculum Design

Create visual curriculum maps showing alignment across units, standards, and assessments — program-level coherence for vertical articulation.
Difficulty: Advanced
Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini
Use Case: Program Planning, Vertical Alignment
Updated: June 2026
Why This Prompt Exists
Individual courses are coherent, but the program is not. Skills taught in Grade 3 are assumed in Grade 4 but never reinforced. Standards are covered in one unit and never seen again.

You get:

- gaps in the curriculum (skills never taught)
- redundancy across courses (same content repeated)
- misalignment with standards (some standards not covered)
- students unprepared for next level (prerequisite skills missing)
- no vertical articulation between grade levels

But curriculum maps provide visibility:

- units: what is taught and when
- standards: which standards are covered in each unit
- assessments: how and when students are assessed
- gaps: standards not covered or skills missing
- redundancies: content repeated across multiple units

Without mapping, the program is invisible.

This prompt creates visual curriculum maps showing alignment across units, standards, and assessments.

The Prompt

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Assume the role of a curriculum coordinator who creates program-wide curriculum maps.

Your task is to document alignment across units, standards, and assessments.

Generate:

1. PROGRAM PARAMETERS
   - Program name: [e.g., "6th Grade Science"]
   - Grade level(s): [e.g., "Grade 6"]
   - Number of units: [X]
   - Standards framework: [e.g., "NGSS", "Common Core", "State Standards"]

2. UNIT OVERVIEW MAP

| Unit | Title | Duration | Priority Standards | Key Assessments | Resources |
|------|-------|----------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | [name] | X weeks | [standards] | [assessments] | [texts] |
| 2 | [name] | X weeks | [standards] | [assessments] | [texts] |
| 3 | [name] | X weeks | [standards] | [assessments] | [texts] |
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| 4 | [name] | X weeks | [standards] | [assessments] | [texts] |

3. STANDARDS ALIGNMENT MATRIX

Standard	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Total Coverage
Std A	X	—	X	—	—	2 units
Std B	—	X	X	X	—	3 units
Std C	—	—	—	X	X	2 units
Std D	X	X	—	—	X	3 units

4. VERTICAL ARTICULATION MAP (across grade levels)

Skill/Concept	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Notes
[skill A]	Introduce	Practice	Apply	Master	Spiral progression
[skill B]	—	Introduce	Practice	Apply	Delayed start
[skill C]	Introduce	Practice	Practice	Apply	Extended spiral

5. ASSESSMENT MAP

Assessment	Unit	Type	Standards Assessed	Format	Scoring
[name]	1	Formative	A, B	Quiz	Points
[name]	2	Summative	B, C, D	Test	Percent

| [name] | 3 | Performance | D, E | Project | Rubric |
| [name] | End | Summative | All | Final exam | Percent |

6. GAP ANALYSIS

Standard/Skill	Current Status	Issue	Recommendation
[standard]	Not covered	Gap	Add to Unit X
[standard]	Covered in 1 unit only	Insufficient reinforcement	Add to Unit Y
[skill]	Redundant in Units 2,3,4	Overlap	Reduce to 2 units

7. RESOURCE MAP (by unit)

Unit	Core Text	Supplemental	Digital	Hands-on	Assessment
1	[text]	[materials]	[tools]	[activities]	[tests]

8. COMMON CURRICULUM MAPPING MISTAKES

Mistake	Why It Fails	Correct Approach
No vertical articulation	Students unprepared for next level	Map skills across grades
Standards not mapped	Can't verify coverage	Tag each unit with standards
No gap analysis	Missing content undetected	Identify and fill gaps
Redundancy not addressed	Wasted instructional time	Remove

duplicate content |
| Assessment misalignment | Testing what wasn't taught | Align assessments to standards |

INPUTS:

Program name and grade level(s):
[PASTE NAME AND GRADE]

Number of units:
[E.G., "6 units per year"]

Standards to cover:
[PASTE STANDARDS LIST]

Existing unit topics (if any):
[PASTE LIST]

Grade levels for vertical articulation (if applicable):
[E.G., "Grades 3-5", "K-12"]

RULES:
- Every standard should be covered at least once (gap analysis required)
- Priority standards need multiple exposures (2-3 units minimum)
- Skills should spiral with increasing depth (introduce → practice → apply → master)
- Assessments must align with standards (test what was taught)
- Map across grade levels for vertical articulation (not just within a

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grade)
- Identify and address redundancies (don't teach the same thing in
multiple units)
- Update the curriculum map annually (review and revise)
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How To Use It

- Every standard should be covered at least once — gap analysis reveals missing content.
- Priority standards need multiple exposures — 2-3 units minimum for reinforcement.
- Skills should spiral with increasing depth — introduce → practice → apply → master across grades.
- Assessments must align with standards — test what was taught, not something else.
- Map across grade levels for vertical articulation — not just within a single grade.
- Identify and address redundancies — don’t teach the same thing in multiple units without purpose.
- Update the curriculum map annually — review and revise based on student data.

Example Input

Program name and grade level(s): “7th Grade Mathematics”

Number of units: “6 units per year”

Standards to cover: “Ratios and Proportional Relationships, Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, Statistics and Probability”

Existing unit topics: “Ratios, Proportions, Integers, Equations, Inequalities, Geometry, Statistics”

Grade levels for vertical articulation: “Grades 6-8”

Why It Works

Individual courses may be coherent, but the program often isn’t. Skills are missed, repeated, or misaligned. Curriculum maps make the invisible visible.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- unit overview mapping (what is taught in each unit)
- standards alignment matrix (which standards are covered where)
- vertical articulation (skills across grade levels)
- assessment mapping (how and when students are assessed)
- gap analysis (standards not covered or insufficiently reinforced)

Failure modes this prevents:

- gaps in the curriculum (skills never taught)
- redundancy across courses (same content repeated)
- misalignment with standards (some standards not covered)
- students unprepared for the next level (prerequisite skills missing)

This improves on: Siloed course planning. Curriculum mapping ensures program-wide coherence.

Related to: CD-01 (Learning Objectives) for outcomes; CD-02 (Scope and Sequence) for ordering; CD-03 (Unit Plan) for details; CD-04 (Assessment Blueprint) for testing.

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See also Unit Plan Designer