

GLOBAL COHORTS · GATHERING PLACES UNIT

Your IDU Co-Planning Guide

For your Individuals & Societies and Design teachers

This is the planning conversation that makes your Gathering Spaces unit a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit, not a program you each run in parallel.

Before you begin

This guide is the planning conversation between the two of you. It turns Banyan's four-week Gathering Spaces program into a unit your school can point to as a collaboratively planned MYP interdisciplinary unit (IDU).

It's built with that requirement in mind. It doesn't guarantee any outcome in an IB evaluation; that judgment belongs to your evaluator. The IB asks for everything in each section below.

What's built for you

Banyan provides all of this. You don't need to plan or recreate any of it:

- Four weekly, facilitator-led live sessions (~45 minutes each), run by Banyan, with no homework for students
- Your partner classroom match, the platform, and all session materials
- The four-week arc (session names vary across Banyan's own materials; this guide uses Week 1–4 throughout to avoid that inconsistency)
- Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (primary), Globalization & Sustainability (secondary)
- The student artifacts described in Section 2

What you still decide, together

How your two subjects' objectives connect to that core, and how you'll judge students' work together against the MYP interdisciplinary criteria. That's everything from here on.

How much time this takes

As little or as much as you both want. Banyan built this to flex: some schools get through the sections below in one 45 to 60 minute sit-down, others find it easier as two or three shorter check-ins.

How to use the “Decide together” boxes

Sections marked DECIDE TOGETHER need both of you in the room at the same time, in person or on a call. Fill them in separately and stitch them together afterward, and you lose the point: that's the difference between planning your IDU together and each of you adapting a template alone. Draft everything else on your own first, then review it together.

What happens each week

A quick reference so this guide stands on its own. For exact scripts, timing, and facilitator notes for each session, use the four Teacher Overviews you already have for this unit.

Week	Focus	What students create	Your role
Week 1	Meet partner schools, watch three short gathering-place clips, brainstorm ideas as a group.	A 30–60 second Padlet video naming something their community needs a place to do together.	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute video-recording segment.
Week 2	Fast-paced rounds building the gathering place: purpose/audience, main feature, activity, feeling/atmosphere, and name.	A complete blueprint posted to Padlet: purpose/audience, main feature, activity, feeling/atmosphere, and name, with a sketch or described layout.	Classroom management; help groups stay on task during the rounds and during Padlet posting.
Week 3	Reveal of an AI-generated rendering of each group's gathering place; record a pitch; explore real gathering places near partner cities.	A ~45–60 second recorded pitch for the gathering place, plus one written question posed to a partner classroom. (This pairing adds to the pitch; see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during the ~15-minute recording segment.
Week 4	Premiere of pitches; answer partner questions live by school; post one written comment on a partner gathering place; reflect as a group.	One written comment on a partner school's gathering place, and a short cultural reflection on what the spaces reveal. (This pairing may add to Week 4; see Section 2.)	Classroom management; help during the premiere and comment-posting.

This pairing adds one required line to the Week 3 pitch, plus a second written prompt in Week 4. Section 2 explains exactly what and why.

1. Your statement of inquiry

Key Concepts: Culture (Individuals & Societies) / Connections (Design) · Global Context: Personal & Cultural Expression (secondary: Globalization & Sustainability)

DECIDE TOGETHER

Work through this together before you use the example below. This step makes the unit collaboratively planned, rather than something you each adapted on your own:

- Individuals & Societies: what does your curriculum teach about how communities gather, or about local-to-global systems, that connects to a space designed for people to come together?
- Design: what does your curriculum emphasize about the design cycle (inquiring into a need, developing, creating, evaluating) that connects to the blueprint, main feature, and pitch students build?
- Compare your two answers: where do they overlap, and where do they push against each other? Don't stop at the overlap. Pick one specific choice your students will make (a name, a symbol, an image, a story detail) and ask what changes about its meaning when you look at it through your OTHER subject's lens. That shift, not the shared topic alone, is your real Purpose of Integration.

Example statement of inquiry: *“The design of a shared space reflects what a community values. Comparing a designed gathering place to real ones shows whether a design serves the need it claims to.”*

Example purpose of integration

Individuals & Societies: students research how communities gather in real, existing spaces: the purposes, systems, and values that shape those spaces.

Design: students run the full design cycle on an original gathering place: inquiring into a need, developing the blueprint, creating the concept, and evaluating it.

Synthesis: students combine real research on how communities gather with a genuine design-and-evaluate process to create a gathering place that's tested against real community needs, something neither lens produces alone.

Treat this as a model, not a script; your own students' gathering-place ideas may point somewhere more specific. This pairing is Gathering Spaces' signature pair: the full Design cycle, grounded in real I&S research.

2. Map your subjects onto the artifacts

Artifact	Criterion	Subjects
Gathering-place blueprint (Week 2)	B – Synthesizing	I&S content / Design blueprint
Pitch video (Week 3, ~45–60 sec)	A – Evaluating	I&S / Design
Systems reflection (Week 4)	C – Reflecting	I&S
Design reflection (Week 4)	C – Reflecting	Design

Week 1's idea video is a warm-up. It isn't mapped to a criterion, and it shouldn't be cited as evidence of collaborative planning.

HOW YOUR SESSIONS ARE CUSTOMIZED FOR THIS PAIRING

The Week 3 pitch asks students to present their gathering place in about 45 to 60 seconds. That's the base task. Banyan customizes your cohort's sessions on top of it for this pairing, so Criterion A (Evaluating) has real joint evidence instead of a loose thematic connection:

- One required line added to the pitch, wiring the two subjects together at Design's own “evaluate” step: “Now that you've compared your design to two real gathering spaces, evaluate whether your blueprint serves a real community need as well as they do. What's one thing you'd change?” This is what makes Design's evaluate step run on real comparative content (Criterion A(ii)) instead of the two subjects just sitting side by side (A(i)).
- A change to Week 4: alongside the standard cultural reflection, your cohort's session adds a second written prompt posted to Padlet, specific to Design: “Because of this project, I understand something new about designing for a real community need: _____. Because of that, one thing I'd want to test or change in my next design is: _____.” That forward-looking second sentence covers Criterion C's ‘future action’ strand.

3. Your disciplinary grounding

This is the part IB cares most about: why two teachers are involved at all. It protects the integrity of what each of you teaches. Draft your own column, then review both together.

Prompt	Individuals & Societies	Design
What factual, conceptual, or procedural knowledge from your curriculum will students need for this unit?		
Which of your subject-group objectives does this unit address?		
What related concept(s) from your subject connect to Culture / Connections? (name 1–2 from each of your subjects' official concept lists that fit)		
How will you help students weigh the benefits and limits of your discipline's perspective on this topic?		
DECIDE TOGETHER Once you've both filled in your columns, sit down together and check whether each piece feeds into the other's, or whether you're running two parallel mini-units that happen to share a topic. If it's the latter, spend 10 minutes adjusting it now, before the unit runs.		

4. Inquiry questions

Adapt the starting questions below freely. IB expects factual, conceptual, and debatable questions that both subjects can explore.

DRAFT LANGUAGE: a starting point, not an approved or required version

Factual: What elements (purpose, main feature, activity, feeling, name) make up a gathering place? What real gathering spaces exist near your partner schools, and what are they for?

Conceptual: How does the design of a space change how a community uses it? What is gained or lost when a gathering place is designed for one purpose but used for another?

Debatable: Should a gathering place be designed around what a community says it needs, or what a designer thinks it needs? Can a designed space ever replace one that grew naturally over time?

DECIDE TOGETHER

Keep, cut, or rewrite these together so they work for both subjects. A question only one of you could teach into isn't doing its job here.

5. Agree now on how you'll assess together

This section is about agreeing on your approach before the unit runs. The joint grading happens later (see Section 7); deciding your approach now makes that step faster.

DECIDE TOGETHER

For the pitch's added evaluative line (see Section 2): what would a strong answer look like, from both an Individuals & Societies and a Design angle? Sketch a shared, rough sense of what 'fully evaluates' looks like in a student's answer.

6. Record of collaborative planning

Fill this in together, and keep it. It's your evidence of collaborative planning if a school is ever asked for it during an IB evaluation.

Teachers (name, subject)	
Date(s) you met	
Format used (one session / two check-ins / other)	
Statement of inquiry, final wording	
Key adjustments you made to the starting materials in this guide	
YOUR CONNECTION, IN YOUR OWN WORDS This matters more than the checkboxes above. In 2 to 3 sentences, describe the specific connection you found between your two subjects for this cohort: what you decided, not just that you met. This is your strongest evidence of collaborative planning. 	

7. After the unit: score Criterion A together

Once students finish their work, sit down together with a sample of it (the pitches' evaluative lines) and decide together on a best-fit achievement level for Criterion A. Budget 20 to 30 minutes for this after the unit ends.

A different pairing?

This guide is written for Individuals & Societies + Design, the pairing we recommend for Gathering Spaces. If your school is using a different pairing, ask Banyan for the matching guide: Individuals & Societies + Language & Literature, Individuals & Societies + Arts, or Arts + Design.

Sources

This guide is built on "Interdisciplinary teaching and learning in the MYP" (International Baccalaureate Organization, updated through October 2023), using its guidance on the purpose of integration, statement of inquiry, disciplinary grounding, and the Criterion A joint-assessment

requirement. We checked the Criterion A/A(ii) and Criterion C/C(ii) framing against real IB ID eAssessment preparation materials (M25 cycle) to confirm what interdisciplinary evaluation and reflection require. This guide does not guarantee IB evaluation outcomes for any school.