

DEVELOPING GRADE 10 LITERATURE SCHOOL CURRICULUM THROUGH AN INTEGRATED APPROACH INCORPORATING EXPERIENCE AND CAREER ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

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Received June 10, 2025. Revised July 2, 2025. Accepted December 19, 2025.

Abstract. The development of the school curriculum is one of the key tasks of modern education, aimed at effectively implementing the curriculum within specific pedagogical contexts. The application of integrated teaching in curriculum development is a new, appropriate, and feasible approach that both optimizes teaching time and ensures a coherent knowledge system. Based on a wide range of theories related to curriculum development, integrated teaching, and practical experiences in organizing integrated educational activities, this article proposes an integrated model of the school curriculum for the subject *Literature – Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities* with specific integrated topics for Grade 10 students. Accordingly, the article also outlines several implementation strategies for applying this curriculum model in teaching practice, with the aim of meeting the requirements of differentiation and career orientation at the upper secondary level.

Keywords: Curriculum development, integrated teaching, Literature, Experience and Career Orientation activities, grade 10.

1. Introduction

The educational curriculum is a dynamic entity that is continually updated and developed to meet practical demands. Traditionally, curriculum development followed a centralized approach, where the responsibility for designing and organizing the curriculum lay with central authorities. However, in the context of rapid advancements in science and technology and evolving career trends, democratic tendencies in education have emerged. These changes have led to a shift toward a decentralized curriculum development model. Directive 791, issued by the Ministry of Education and Training on February 23, 2013, formally introduced the task of school-based curriculum development and initiated pilot programs at six educational institutions nationwide. The introduction of the 2018 Vietnamese General Curriculum, with its open and flexible orientation, marked a turning point making curriculum development a common and pressing requirement across the entire Vietnamese education system. From that point on, local authorities and individual schools have been empowered to actively participate in developing their own curricula within the frameworks set by the national curriculum.

The evolving demands of society have laid the groundwork for the emergence of integrated teaching, beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In his seminal work “*Integrated Pedagogy or How to Develop Competencies at School*” (1996), Xavier Roegiers emphasized the urgency of integrated education: “*The needs of our society require us to adopt an interdisciplinary and*

transdisciplinary perspective” [1]. Extensive educational research and practice have shown that students learn more effectively when knowledge is acquired in a coherent and integrated manner. Integrated learning themes create problem-based learning contexts, requiring students to synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems. Recognizing this, Vietnam’s 2018 General Curriculum advocates for integration as a key instructional orientation. This approach aims to equip students with the ability to holistically apply knowledge and skills to real-life situations, thereby fulfilling the overarching goals of developing individual qualities and core competencies. Based on the requirements for curriculum development and the proven advantages of integrated teaching, this study proposes a school curriculum model that features integrated themes combining the subject of Literature with Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities.

2. Content

2.1. Curriculum development

The term “*curriculum development*” first emerged in 1820. However, it was not until the mid-20th century that it began to be used professionally in the United States and other countries having developed education systems. The rapid global development of education has made curriculum development an urgent and central concern in the field of educational science. Jack C. Richards (2001) proposed a method for developing language education programs based on a structured system of guiding questions, and identified the core elements that must be considered during the curriculum design process [2]. Do Ngoc Thong (2011), in his study of the “*Literature Curriculum in Vietnamese Secondary Schools*” affirmed the pressing need for curriculum development to meet the demands of the real-world context: “*Each time a curriculum is developed, it is an opportunity to review, analyze, and evaluate in order to adjust and supplement the existing curriculum, ensuring that the curriculum is always up-to-date and meets the requirements of the country in the new context and international integration*” [3].

Educational curriculum can be categorized into multiple levels. At the national level, the curriculum is often referred to as the framework curriculum, which includes the requirements and compulsory subjects, constituting the “hardware” that all schools within the country must adhere to. This framework serves as the legal, foundational, and core element ensuring a synchronized and unified development of education nationwide. However, in reality, each region or educational institution has specific conditions related to infrastructure, strategic goals, learner characteristics, among others. These characteristics require a flexible application of the national curriculum to achieve maximum compatibility and effectiveness. Based on this framework, schools and local authorities may enrich their programs with specialized learning content; adjust the sequencing of knowledge strands; and integrate or embed content from multiple subjects to form comprehensive educational activities. In other words, curriculum development enables the adoption of teaching methods and organizational forms that are suited to the actual human and material resources available. As Nguyen Vu Bich Hien stated, “*A school’s curriculum encompasses the ways in which a school implements the national curriculum in practice. The school curriculum is closely linked to local needs, priority industries, and available resources. It is designed under the consultation of the school council*” [4; 46].

The process by which schools “*contextualize the national education curriculum to make it optimally suitable for the realities of each educational institution*” [4] is referred to as school-based curriculum development. This process simultaneously ensures alignment with the orientations and requirements of the national curriculum while also taking into account the specific characteristics and needs of individual schools. Various scientific works have proposed models for curriculum development, such as the ADDIE model developed by the Center for Educational Technology at Florida University, the curriculum development process of Tim

Wentling or Do Ngoc Thong. Synthesizing these perspectives, Nguyen Duc Chinh outlined a five-step process in “*Curriculum Development in education*” [5], which serves as a cyclical process in which each phase is interrelated and directly influences the others. Essentially, school-based curriculum development is a specific application of the national curriculum, contextualized to the particular characteristics and realities of a given educational institution and the participation of various stakeholders. From this perspective, Kettunen (2015) have proposed stakeholder involvement frameworks in the form of concentric circles. At the center are internal stakeholders, including the school itself, teachers, and students; surrounding them are external stakeholders, such as partners, clients, alternative learning organizations, and economic forces. These external actors bring diverse and multidirectional influences that enhance the practical relevance and broaden the scope of school-based curriculum development. [6].

2.2. Integrated Teaching

The concept of *Integration*, originating from Latin, refers to the re-establishment of unity or wholeness from separate parts. According to *The Vietnamese Dictionary* by Hoang Phe, “*integration refers to the assembling or linking of components within a system based on the perspective of forming a unified whole*” [7]. In the field of education, the concept of “integration” emerged around the 18th century to represent a comprehensive educational philosophy aimed at fostering the holistic development of individuals and counteracting imbalanced or fragmented personal growth. Integrated teaching is a modern instructional orientation that has been studied and defined in numerous educational works and documents. In the 2018 Vietnamese General Curriculum, integrated teaching is defined as “*a teaching orientation that fosters students’ ability to mobilize and synthesize knowledge and skills from various fields in order to effectively solve problems in both learning and real-life contexts, which is implemented throughout the process of knowledge acquisition and skill development*” [8]. From this definition, it can be seen that integrated teaching, based on the mobilization of content, knowledge, and skills across multiple domains, helps students develop the capacity to effectively address real-life situations. It enables them to apply knowledge, skills, and values in challenging contexts, thereby fulfilling not only the goal of “learning to know” but also “learning to do” and “learning to live together”.

2.3. Experience and Career Orientation Activities

According to *The Vietnamese Dictionary* by Hoang Phe, the term “*trải*” is defined as “*to have experienced, to have known, or to have endured something*”, while “*nghiệm*” refers to “*having gone through something and recognizing its truth in reality*” [7]. Therefore, “*experiential learning*” or “*experiential activities*” can be understood as activities involving direct engagement with real-life contexts, through which learners reflect and internalize lessons or experiences. In education, the idea of linking learning with practice and experience was addressed by researchers such as John Dewey and David Kolb as early as the previous century. In Vietnam, Experiential Activities or Experiential and Career Orientation Activities were previously implemented as “*extracurricular activities*” under the 2006 General Curriculum. However, in the 2018 General Curriculum, these activities were formalized as mandatory educational components to be implemented across all three educational levels. This educational activity is structured around four core content strands, including self-orientation, social orientation, nature orientation, and career orientation, and aims to “*utilizing knowledge and skills from different subjects and educational areas to engage with real-life experiences in schools, families, and communities, and to participate in career-oriented and community service activities*” [8].

2.4. Foundations for Integrating Literature with Experiential Learning and Career Orientation Activities in Curriculum Development

There are numerous potentials and opportunities to integrate Experiential and Career-Oriented

Activities into the Literature curriculum, based on the inherent similarities and mutual complementarity between the subject and this educational activity. First and foremost, the experiential approach serves as a particularly important method for engaging with the world of literature and for developing the core skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are central to the Literature curriculum. Furthermore, the contents of experiential and career-oriented activities are engaging and vibrant, characterized by both practical relevance and aesthetic richness. These activities are closely associated with issues pertaining to individuals, families, and communities, thereby holding strong potential for integration with artistic and humanistic disciplines. Practical observations indicate that the teaching contents of Literature and Experiential, Career-Oriented Activities reveal numerous overlapping and complementary content areas. These overlaps demonstrate the feasibility of mutual reinforcement and integration, facilitating the development of interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary themes and learning projects that fulfill the expectations of both fields.

2.5. Illustration of School-Based Curriculum Development Integrating Literature and Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities for an Educational Institution

In this study, we illustrate the process of school-based curriculum development for a hypothetical public upper secondary school located in Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam. The school is of medium size, comprising approximately 30 classes. Through a needs analysis, several key aspects were identified. Firstly, the school has over 1,200 students, with 400 tenth-grade students divided into nine classes. The students are dynamic and have a strong interest in Literature as well as in participating in Experiential Activities. As the school is situated in a major urban center, the students have access to advanced science and technology resources and demonstrate proficiency in foreign languages. The teaching staff consists of approximately 50 teachers, among whom the Literature subject group includes eight members, with five of them directly responsible for teaching Literature at the tenth-grade level. The teachers possess strong subject-matter expertise, meet professional standards at a high level, and exhibit both sound pedagogical understanding and an openness to modern teaching methods and techniques. Moreover, the school is located in Hanoi, one of the most developed urban centers in Vietnam in terms of economy, culture, and society. At the same time, Hanoi is also a city with a thousand-year cultural heritage, home to numerous cultural landmarks, tourist attractions, and traditional craft villages, providing favorable conditions for implementing Experiential and Career-oriented activities. Regarding the labor market, Hanoi is densely populated and features a vibrant and diverse employment landscape, offering students a wealth of opportunities to explore various career fields. Therefore, we propose a set of integrated learning topics, which serve as the core component of Literature school curriculum. The lessons and learning outcomes within these topics are derived from the Grade 10 Literature textbook (Volumes 1-2, Canh Dieu series), published by Hue University Publishing House:

Table 1. Integrated learning topics combining Literature and Experiential & Career-Oriented Activities

Topic	Lesson	Requirements	Integrated Content
1. The Eternal Echo of Gongs: From Mythology and Epics to Folk Theater (18 periods)	Reading: + Heracles in Search of the Golden Apples + The Victory of Mtao Mxay + Xuy Van Feigns Madness + Kim Nham <i>cheo</i>	- Analyze and evaluate key narrative and structural elements of mythological and epic texts. - Analyze key thematic and formal elements of folk theater as <i>Cheo or Tuong</i> . - Identify and correct inappropriate language styles. - Write an argumentative essay on a societal issue.	- <i>Traditional education on national and local culture and history (through Mythology, Epics, Cheo, and Tuong)</i> - <i>Community-oriented content</i>

	<p>Writing: Write an argumentative essay on a social issue</p> <p>- Speaking and Listening: Discuss a controversial topic</p>	<p>- Present about a social topic. - Participate in discussions on controversial issues. - Develop admiration and respect for heroic figures. * Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities: - Self-Orientation: Develop positive personal thinking and critical thinking skills. - Career Orientation: Identify the relevance of school subjects to prospective future careers.</p>	<p>(through presenting social issues and selecting appropriate language).</p>
<p>2. Horizons of Poetry (17 periods)</p>	<p>Reading: + <i>Autumn Sentiments</i> (Do Phu), <i>Self-Lament</i> (H.X.Huong) +<i>The Homeland</i> (N.D Thi), <i>Island Soldiers Singing Love Songs on the Island</i> (T.D.Khoa)</p> <p>Writing: Write a research report on a literary work.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening: Present a research report.</p>	<p>- Analyze and evaluate the thematic and artistic values of classical poetry written in the regulated verse form. - Identify, and revise word order errors in writing and speaking. - Write a research report on a poem or a poetic issue. - Present a research report on a poem or a poetic issue. - Appreciate the love of nature, homeland, and country. * Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities: - Social Orientation: Show respect for cultural and traditional values. - Career Orientation: Recognize the qualities and skills you need to develop to match the job field you plan to pursue.</p>	<p>- Traditional education on national and local culture and history (appreciation and empathy for previous generations). - Content about nature (poems about nature). - Career-oriented content - Self-oriented content: Development of critical and positive thinking skills</p>
<p>3. The Diverse World of Information (13 periods)</p>	<p>Reading: <i>Thang Long, Dong Do, Hanoi – a Constant in Vietnamese Culture</i> (Tran Quoc Vuong); <i>Hung Temple Festival</i> (laodong.vn)</p> <p>Writing: + Write rules or instructions for a public place. + Write a personal essay.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening: Give a presentation on a cultural site</p>	<p>- Recognize some types of synthesized informational texts. - Identify and use citation and annotation methods in texts; - Analyze the role of some nonverbal communication tools. - Write instructions for public places; Write essays about oneself. - Discuss a cultural site. - Appreciate and preserve national cultural identity; demonstrate positive and progressive attitudes. * Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities: - Social Orientation: Promoting appropriate public behavior; Exhibit respect for and a sense of responsibility in preserving local cultural and historical sites. - Career Orientation: Identify the qualities and competencies for the intended occupational group.</p>	<p>- Traditional education on national and local culture and history; Content related to nature. - Self-oriented content. - Community-oriented content.</p>

<p>4. Nguyen Trai - Sword on his back, brush in his hand (14 periods)</p>	<p>- Reading: + <i>Nguyen Trai: Life and Career</i> + <i>Binh Ngo dai cao (Nguyen Trai)</i> + <i>Precious Sword of Remonstrance, Passage 43 (Nguyen Trai)</i></p> <p>Writing: Write an argumentative essay on a social issue.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening: Discuss a social issue.</p>	<p>- Apply knowledge of history and culture, as well as authorial background and literary genre to read representative works by <i>Nguyen Trai</i>.</p> <p>- Practice analyzing the figure of speech in texts.</p> <p>- Write an argumentative essay on a moral or ideological issue.</p> <p>- Discuss a social issue.</p> <p>- Foster patriotism and pride in national history, and admiration for the Vietnamese national and cultural hero <i>Nguyen Trai</i>.</p> <p>* Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities:</p> <p>- Self-Orientation: <i>Understand and express the concept of life perspective through specific actions and behaviors.</i></p>	<p>- <i>Traditional, cultural, and historical education content (when studying Nguyen Trai as a national figure).</i></p> <p>- <i>Community-oriented learning (when discussing social issues).</i></p>
<p>5. The Whispers of Storytellers (15 periods)</p>	<p>Reading: + <i>The Rebellion of Arrogant Soldiers</i> + <i>The Figure at the Chau River Wharf (Suong Nguyet Minh)</i> - <i>The Drumbeat at Ancient Palace (La Quan Trung)</i></p> <p>Writing: Write an argumentative essay about a literary work.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening: Evaluate a narrative literary work.</p>	<p>- Identify and analyze the thematic values of novels and short stories.</p> <p>- Recognize the characteristics, functions and usage of intercalated rhetorical devices.</p> <p>- Write argumentative essays that analyze and evaluate a literary narrative work.</p> <p>- Introduce and critically assess a narrative work.</p> <p>- Appreciate the value of peace.</p> <p>* Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities:</p> <p>- Social Orientation: <i>Demonstrate gratitude to and empathy for previous generations and those who have endured loss and suffering.</i></p> <p>- Career Orientation: <i>Identify the qualities and competencies for the intended occupational group.</i></p>	<p>- <i>Traditional, cultural, and historical education content; evoking gratitude to, respect for, and emotional connection with previous generations.</i></p> <p>- <i>Self-oriented content: Development of critical and positive thinking skills</i></p>
<p>6. The Art of Persuasion (16 periods)</p>	<p>Reading: + <i>Identity is a lifelong journey (N.S. Dung)</i> + <i>The Pure Wind Sways the Bamboo Branch (Chu Van Son)</i> + <i>Do Not Cause Harm (K Casey)</i></p> <p>Writing: Write a persuasive essay encouraging others to abandon a habit or misconception.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening:</p>	<p>- Recognize and analyze argumentative texts. Identify the author's purpose, viewpoint, as well as the impact of the text.</p> <p>- Identify and analyze the coherence and cohesion.</p> <p>- Write persuasive essays encouraging others to abandon a habit or misconception.</p> <p>- Introduce and evaluate the beauty of literary works.</p> <p>- Preserve and promote noble humanistic values.</p> <p>* Integrating Requirements of Career-Oriented Activities:</p> <p>- Self-Orientation: <i>Develop positive personal thinking and critical thinking skills in evaluation.</i></p>	<p>- <i>Self-oriented content: Development of critical and positive thinking skills (When evaluating a narrative object or issue).</i></p> <p>- <i>Content related to community - Career-oriented content</i></p>

	Evaluate a literary work.	- <i>Career Orientation:</i> <i>Identify the qualities and competencies for the intended occupational group.</i>	
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The six topics above, on the one hand, follow a dual trajectory, aligned with genre-based progression, requiring students to understand the characteristics of different genres. On the other hand, they revolve around enduring, universal themes such as Patriotism, Nature, Human fate or Cultural figures such as Nguyen Trai. Literature lessons are integrated not only within the subject itself but also across disciplines through alignment with content strands of Experiential and Career Orientation Activities. This integrated approach ensures that, throughout the learning process, students are able to fulfill the requirements of both Literature and the Experiential and Orientation Activities.

2.6. Proposed implementation approach for the School Curriculum in Literature Integrated with Experiential and Career Guidance Activities

To meet the required 105 instructional periods per year for both the Literature subject and the Experiential and Career Orientation Activities, as outlined in Vietnam’s 2018 General Curriculum, we propose two models for implementing an integrated school curriculum. Firstly, both the Literature and Experiential and Career Orientation Activities curriculums can run simultaneously and in parallel. While each maintains its own structure, they intersect at designated integration points to facilitate collaborative learning activities and generate shared assessment products. The second proposed plan is delivering the full Literature curriculum along with 70 periods from the Flag-Raising lesson and Homeroom activities. The remaining 35 periods of Experiential and Career Orientation Activities will be integrated into the Literature subject. At the end of each integrated topic, it is necessary to design assessment tools for the measurement of both Literature and Experiential and Career Orientation Activities.

Besides, the implementation of the school-based curriculum must take into account the realities of specific contexts. For example, when teaching folk poetry in Literature and community values, and career orientation in Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities, we prioritize the design of trips and experiential learning activities tailored to the context of a school located in Hanoi. These include visits to cultural and historical sites such as the Thang Long Imperial Citadel, the One Pillar Pagoda, and the Temple of Literature; traditional craft villages such as the Bat Trang pottery village, and cultural forms like traditional “cheo” theatre in Dan Phuong. In addition, we anticipate external factors that may affect the implementation of the curriculum, such as public holidays, school breaks, or natural disasters in order to design contingency weeks. At the end of each term, it is necessary to increase review sessions and reduce the number of experiential activities, thereby ensuring students have sufficient time to consolidate academic knowledge. It can be said that the implementation phase plays a particularly important role in ensuring that alternative solutions are in place, and that the program is carefully organized and well-prepared, allowing the curriculum to run smoothly and efficiently, minimizing unforeseen disruptions and ensuring consistency in implementation. However, real-world conditions are dynamic and subject to unexpected changes. Therefore, the implementation plan presented here should be regarded as tentative a “best-case scenario” and the curriculum must be implemented flexibly, with ongoing adjustments based on practical changes.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, the development of a school-based curriculum is a process of concretizing the national curriculum to both fulfill the goals of unified national education and ensure the highest degree of alignment with the specific conditions of each educational institution. Through the analysis and proposal of integrated learning topics, we conclude that incorporating Experiential

and Career Orientation Activities into the school-based Literature curriculum presents a new, practical, and effective approach with high potential for application. This approach is especially relevant at the upper secondary level, where differentiation and career orientation are key priorities. Hence, learning should not be limited to familiar school-based tasks but should extend to diverse and complex real-world scenarios. Integrated learning topics offer fertile ground for advancing this goal. By engaging in integrated activities and developing interdisciplinary learning products, students are encouraged to synthesize knowledge, skills, and values, applying them comprehensively to solve complex, real-life problems, thereby meeting the expectations of contemporary educational practice.

However, this approach also requires specific considerations. Each subject or educational activity has distinct characteristics. For example, the Literature curriculum is structured around the four strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening, while Experiential and Career Orientation Activities follow four thematic strands: Self Orientation, Social Orientation, Environmental Orientation, and Career Orientation. Additionally, assessment in Literature typically employs a quantitative grading system, whereas Experiential and Career Orientation Activities use qualitative, criterion-referenced assessment. Therefore, despite the clear benefits of integration, successful implementation requires curriculum developers to skillfully align the objectives, content, instructional methods, and assessment strategies of both areas and explicitly reflect them in detailed educational plans. When this is achieved, the integrated curriculum will not only reinforce coherence and synergy between knowledge domains but also maintain the integrity and specificity of each subject and educational activity.

***Acknowledgements:** Doan Hai Anh was funded by the Master, PhD Scholarship Programme of Vingroup Innovation Foundation (VINIF), code VINIF.2024.ThS.17. This article was conducted within the framework of The 13th Scientific conference for Youth professionals 2025 at Hanoi National University of Education.

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