social studies thematic curriculum design and assessment Full Version

social studies thematic curriculum design and assessment is a comprehensive approach that aims to create engaging, meaningful, and interconnected learning experiences for students. By organizing content around overarching themes rather than isolated topics, educators can foster critical thinking, cultural awareness, and civic responsibility. This method promotes a holistic understanding of social phenomena, enabling students to see the connections between history, geography, civics, economics, and other social sciences. Effective curriculum design and assessment are vital components in ensuring that thematic instruction achieves its educational goals, supports student engagement, and prepares learners to be informed and active citizens.

Understanding Social Studies Thematic Curriculum Design

Definition and Significance

A social studies thematic curriculum is a teaching framework that organizes content around key themes that cut across multiple disciplines within social sciences. Instead of teaching history, geography, civics, and economics separately, the curriculum integrates these areas around central themes such as community, culture, migration, or sustainability. This approach helps students see the interconnectedness of social phenomena and develop a more cohesive understanding of the world.

The significance of thematic curriculum design lies in its ability to:

- Promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Encourage active and inquiry-based learning
- Make learning more relevant by relating content to students' lives
- Foster cross-disciplinary thinking and understanding

Principles of Effective Thematic Curriculum Design

Designing an effective social studies thematic curriculum involves several core principles:

- **Relevance:** Themes should connect to students? lives, communities, and current global issues.
- **Interdisciplinary Integration:** Content should seamlessly blend elements from history,

geography, civics, and economics.

- **Developmental Appropriateness:** Themes should align with students? cognitive and social development levels.
- **Depth and Breadth:** Curriculum should explore themes in depth while covering essential content areas.
- **Flexibility:** The design should allow for adaptability based on local contexts and student interests.

Steps in Designing a Thematic Curriculum

Developing a social studies thematic curriculum involves a systematic process:

- **Identify Central Themes:** Select broad themes that are meaningful and relevant to students.
- **Define Learning Objectives:** Specify what students should know, understand, and be able to do related to each theme.
- **Plan Content and Activities:** Determine the specific topics, resources, and instructional strategies to explore the themes.
- **Integrate Disciplines:** Ensure that content from various social studies disciplines complements each other within the theme.
- **Design Assessments:** Create tools to evaluate students? understanding and skills development.
- **Implement and Reflect:** Deliver the curriculum and continually assess its effectiveness for improvements.

Assessment in Social Studies Thematic Curriculum

The Role of Assessment

Assessment plays a pivotal role in social studies thematic education by providing feedback on student learning, guiding instruction, and ensuring that educational goals are met. It helps educators determine whether students can synthesize information across disciplines, apply critical thinking skills, and develop civic competencies.

Types of Assessment

Effective assessment strategies in a thematic curriculum encompass a variety of formative and summative tools:

- **Formative Assessments:** Ongoing assessments that inform instruction and support student

learning, such as quizzes, class discussions, journal entries, and project drafts.

- **Summative Assessments:** Evaluations at the end of a unit or project to measure overall achievement, such as essays, presentations, portfolios, or exams.
- **Performance-Based Assessments:** Tasks that require students to demonstrate their understanding through real-world applications, like debates, role-plays, or community projects.
- **Self and Peer Assessments:** Opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning and evaluate peers? work, fostering self-awareness and collaborative skills.

Designing Effective Assessment Tools

Assessment tools should align with the curriculum?s learning objectives and the interdisciplinary nature of the themes:

- Use clear, measurable criteria for evaluation
- Incorporate rubrics to ensure consistency and transparency
- Include diverse assessment formats to cater to different learning styles
- Emphasize critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis over rote memorization

Aligning Curriculum and Assessment

An essential aspect of thematic curriculum design is ensuring that assessments accurately reflect the integrated learning experience. This involves:

- Embedding assessment tasks within thematic units
- Focusing on higher-order thinking skills like analysis, evaluation, and creation
- Providing opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding through projects, presentations, and discussions
- Using assessment data to inform future instruction and curriculum adjustments

Challenges and Best Practices in Curriculum Design and Assessment

Common Challenges

Implementing a social studies thematic curriculum and assessment can present several challenges:

- Ensuring coherence across disciplines and themes
- Balancing depth and breadth of content
- Addressing diverse student needs and interests

- Aligning assessments with interdisciplinary goals
- Providing adequate resources and teacher training

Best Practices

To overcome these challenges, educators should consider:

- Collaborating with colleagues across disciplines for integrated planning
- Utilizing student-centered and inquiry-based activities
- Incorporating technology and real-world resources
- Continuously reflecting on and refining curriculum and assessment strategies
- Engaging students in self-assessment and goal setting

Conclusion

Social studies thematic curriculum design and assessment are integral to creating meaningful, engaging, and comprehensive learning experiences. By focusing on overarching themes that connect various social science disciplines, educators can foster deeper understanding and critical skills among students. Effective assessment strategies are essential in measuring progress, guiding instruction, and ensuring that learning objectives are achieved. Embracing a collaborative, reflective, and student-centered approach enhances the effectiveness of thematic curricula, ultimately preparing learners to navigate and contribute positively to an interconnected world.

References and Further Reading

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Keywords: social studies curriculum, thematic teaching, interdisciplinary social studies, social studies assessment, curriculum design, formative assessment, summative assessment, civic education

Social Studies Thematic Curriculum Design and Assessment: An In-Depth Analysis

In the evolving landscape of education, social studies occupies a vital role in shaping informed, responsible citizens. At the heart of effective social studies education lies the strategic design of curricula and assessment methods that foster meaningful learning. This article critically examines social studies thematic curriculum design and assessment, exploring their foundational principles, implementation strategies, challenges, and innovative approaches. Through this comprehensive review, educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers can gain insights into creating engaging and effective social studies programs that meet diverse learner needs.

Understanding the Foundations of Social Studies Thematic Curriculum Design

Designing a social studies curriculum grounded in thematic approaches requires a nuanced understanding of its core principles and pedagogical underpinnings.

What Is a Thematic Curriculum in Social Studies?

A thematic curriculum organizes content around central themes rather than discrete topics or disciplines. This approach emphasizes interconnectedness, enabling students to see relationships among historical events, geographical factors, civic principles, and cultural phenomena. For example, themes like "Migration and Identity," "Globalization," or "Citizenship and Governance" serve as lenses through which various social studies disciplines?history, geography, civics, economics?are integrated.

Foundational Principles of Thematic Curriculum Design

Effective thematic curricula in social studies are built upon several core principles:

- Interdisciplinary Integration: Bridging disciplines to provide holistic understanding.
- Relevance and Contextualization: Connecting themes to students' lives and current societal issues.
- Student-Centered Learning: Promoting active engagement through inquiry, discussion, and project-based activities.
- Cultural Responsiveness: Incorporating diverse perspectives and fostering inclusivity.
- Development of Critical Thinking: Encouraging analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

Steps in Designing a Social Studies Thematic Curriculum

The process involves systematic planning and collaboration. Key steps include:

- Identifying Core Themes: Based on national standards, societal needs, and student interests.
- Mapping Content and Skills: Linking themes with relevant knowledge, concepts, and skills across disciplines.
- Sequencing and Scope: Determining the progression of themes across grade levels, ensuring depth and breadth.
- Developing Learning Objectives: Clear, measurable goals aligned with thematic content.
- Designing Instructional Strategies: Incorporating inquiry-based projects, discussions, simulations, and fieldwork.
- Creating Assessment Tools: Developing formative and summative assessments aligned with thematic goals.

Assessment in Social Studies: Principles and Practices

Assessment is integral to curriculum effectiveness, providing feedback on student understanding and guiding instructional adjustments.

Types of Assessment in Social Studies

Assessment methods can be broadly categorized into formative and summative approaches:

- Formative Assessment: Ongoing activities such as quizzes, reflections, discussions, and peer reviews that inform instruction.
- Summative Assessment: Summative evaluations like exams, research projects, presentations, and portfolios that measure overall achievement.

Key Principles of Effective Social Studies Assessment

- Authenticity: Tasks should reflect real-world problems and contexts.
- Alignment: Assessments must align with learning objectives and instructional activities.
- Inclusivity: Instruments should accommodate diverse learner needs and backgrounds.
- Critical Thinking Focus: Evaluations should measure analysis, judgment, and problem-solving abilities.
- Feedback-Oriented: Providing constructive feedback to support student growth.

Innovative Assessment Strategies in Social Studies

Modern assessment practices in social studies are increasingly emphasizing student agency and authentic tasks:

- Performance-Based Assessments: Debates, simulations, and role-plays.
- Portfolios: Collections of student work demonstrating progress over time.
- Project-Based Assessments: Community research projects or creating digital stories.
- Self and Peer Assessments: Encouraging reflection and collaborative evaluation.
- Rubrics and Scoring Guides: Clear criteria to ensure transparency and consistency.

Integrating Curriculum Design and Assessment: A Thematic Approach

The synergy between curriculum design and assessment is critical for fostering deep learning in social studies.

The Role of Learning Outcomes

Clear learning outcomes serve as the bridge between thematic content and assessment. They specify what students should know, do, and value after instruction, guiding both pedagogical strategies and evaluation methods.

Designing for Critical and Civic Competence

Effective social studies curricula aim to develop critical thinking, civic awareness, and social responsibility. Assessments should measure not only factual recall but also students' ability to analyze societal issues, evaluate sources, and articulate reasoned arguments.

Sample Framework for Thematic Curriculum and Assessment Alignment

| Theme | Learning Objectives | Instructional Activities | Assessment Methods |

|---|---|---|---|

| Migration and Identity | Analyze causes and effects of migration; understand identity formation | Case studies, debates, interviews | Reflection essays, presentation rubrics, simulation participation |

| Globalization | Evaluate impacts of globalization; understand interconnectedness | Research projects, simulations | Portfolio assessments, peer reviews, tests |

Challenges and Considerations in Implementing Social Studies Thematic Curricula

While the thematic approach offers numerous advantages, its implementation is fraught with challenges:

- Curriculum Overload: Balancing depth with breadth across themes.
- Teacher Preparedness: Need for professional development in interdisciplinary teaching and assessment strategies.
- Resource Limitations: Access to materials, technology, and community partnerships.
- Assessment Alignment: Ensuring assessments accurately measure complex, integrated learning outcomes.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Avoiding bias and ensuring inclusivity within themes that may have diverse interpretations.

Emerging Trends and Future Directions

Innovations in social studies curriculum design and assessment are shaping the future landscape:

- Digital Integration: Using multimedia, online simulations, and virtual field trips.
- Student-Driven Inquiry: Promoting inquiry-based learning where students select themes of interest.
- Global Perspectives: Incorporating international themes and cross-cultural comparisons.
- Culturally Responsive Assessment: Designing assessments that recognize diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Data-Driven Instruction: Using assessment data analytics to tailor instruction and curriculum adjustments.

Conclusion

Social studies thematic curriculum design and assessment represent dynamic, interconnected processes essential for fostering meaningful civic education. By emphasizing interdisciplinary integration, relevance, critical thinking, and authentic assessment, educators can cultivate learners who are not only knowledgeable but also capable of engaging thoughtfully with societal issues. Continuous reflection, professional development, and embracing innovative practices will be key to advancing social studies education in the years ahead. As societies become increasingly complex and interconnected, preparing students through well-designed curricula and assessments remains an imperative for nurturing informed, active citizens capable of navigating the challenges of the modern world.

QuestionAnswer What are the key principles of designing a social studies thematic curriculum? Key principles include integrating interdisciplinary themes, aligning with learning standards, promoting critical thinking, fostering cultural awareness, and ensuring relevance to students' lives. How does assessment in a social studies thematic curriculum differ from traditional methods? Assessment in a thematic curriculum emphasizes formative, project-based, and performance assessments that evaluate students' understanding of interconnected concepts rather than rote

memorization of facts. What role does student inquiry play in thematic curriculum design? Student inquiry encourages active learning by prompting students to explore, question, and investigate themes, making the curriculum more engaging and fostering deeper understanding. How can teachers effectively evaluate student understanding in a thematic social studies curriculum? Teachers can use a variety of assessment tools such as portfolios, presentations, reflective journals, and collaborative projects to gauge comprehensive understanding of the themes. What are common challenges in implementing a social studies thematic curriculum? Challenges include curriculum alignment, resource availability, teacher training, integrating multiple disciplines effectively, and assessing complex understanding. How can technology enhance assessment in a social studies thematic curriculum? Technology can facilitate interactive quizzes, digital portfolios, collaborative online projects, and multimedia presentations, making assessment more engaging and accessible. What criteria should be used to develop effective assessment tools for thematic social studies lessons? Assessment tools should be valid, reliable, aligned with learning objectives, capable of measuring higher-order thinking, and adaptable to diverse student needs. How can teachers ensure that assessments are culturally responsive in social studies curricula? Teachers can incorporate diverse perspectives, use culturally relevant materials, and design tasks that respect students' backgrounds to promote inclusivity. What is the significance of integrating project-based assessments in social studies thematic curricula? Project-based assessments encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and real-world application of knowledge, leading to a deeper understanding of the themes. How does formative assessment support learning in a social studies thematic curriculum? Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback, helps identify student misconceptions early, and guides instructional adjustments to improve understanding of thematic concepts.

Related keywords: social studies curriculum, thematic teaching strategies, assessment methods, curriculum development, educational planning, student evaluation, interdisciplinary learning, instructional design, learning objectives, educational assessment techniques

Charlotte and peter fiell

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are renowned figures in the world of design, architecture, and contemporary visual culture. Their collaborative work as authors, researchers, and curators has significantly influenced how we perceive design history and its impact on modern society. With a keen eye for detail and a passion for uncovering the stories behind iconic objects and movements, Charlotte and Peter Fiell have established themselves as authoritative voices in the field. This article delves into their backgrounds, contributions, notable publications, and their lasting influence on design scholarship.

Who Are Charlotte and Peter Fiell?

Background and Career Overview

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are British design historians and authors celebrated for their extensive work on design history and contemporary design trends. Their collaborative efforts have resulted in numerous influential publications that are widely used by students, professionals, and enthusiasts alike.

Charlotte Fiell's academic background is rooted in art and design history, which she has combined with her keen interest in the cultural aspects of design. Peter Fiell, on the other hand, is recognized for his expertise in design criticism and his ability to contextualize design within broader social and cultural frameworks.

Together, they have spent decades researching, writing, and curating exhibitions that highlight the evolution of design from the early modern period to the present day.

Major Contributions to Design Literature

Key Publications

The Fiells are perhaps best known for their comprehensive and visually engaging books that explore various facets of design. Some of their most influential publications include:

- **Design of the 20th Century** ? A definitive guide that chronicles the development of design over the last hundred years, covering everything from industrial design to graphic arts.
- **1000 Lights** ? An extensive survey of lighting design, showcasing innovations and iconic fixtures from around the world.
- **Furniture Design** ? An in-depth look at the evolution of furniture, highlighting key designers and movements that shaped modern interiors.
- **Design Culture: An Anthology** ? A collection of essays and case studies that examine the cultural significance of design across different eras and regions.

Their books are characterized by their rich visual content, combining high-quality photographs, detailed illustrations, and insightful analysis, making them invaluable resources for understanding the history and significance of design.

Curatorial and Exhibition Work

Beyond their publications, Charlotte and Peter Fiell have curated numerous exhibitions that have

traveled worldwide. These exhibitions often serve as visual narratives that bring their written work to life, engaging audiences with immersive experiences.

Some notable exhibitions include:

- Modern Masters: Design in the 20th Century ? Showcasing key works from influential designers.
- Lighting the Future ? Exploring innovations in lighting technology and design.
- Furniture of the 21st Century ? Highlighting contemporary trends and emerging designers.

Their curatorial work emphasizes the importance of storytelling in design and underscores the social, cultural, and technological factors that influence creative practices.

Their Approach to Design History

Interdisciplinary Perspective

Charlotte and Peter Fiell advocate for an interdisciplinary approach to understanding design. They believe that design cannot be studied in isolation but must be contextualized within cultural, political, and technological frameworks.

This perspective allows their work to:

- Connect design movements with historical events.
- Analyze the societal impact of technological innovations.
- Explore the ways design reflects cultural identities.

Visual Emphasis

A hallmark of their publications is the emphasis on visual content. They understand that design is a highly visual discipline, and their books are often praised for their stunning imagery that complements scholarly analysis.

This visual focus:

- Enhances reader engagement.
- Provides a comprehensive understanding of design objects.
- Inspires designers and enthusiasts alike.

Influence and Legacy

Educational Impact

Charlotte and Peter Fiell?s work has become standard reading in design education worldwide. Their books are frequently cited in university courses on design history, industrial design, and visual culture.

Their clear explanations and rich visuals make complex subject matter accessible to students and newcomers to the field.

Inspiring Contemporary Designers

Many modern designers cite the Fiells? publications as sources of inspiration. Their detailed case studies and historical insights help emerging designers appreciate the roots of their craft and the evolution of design principles.

Promoting Design Awareness

Through their exhibitions and writings, the Fiells have helped raise public awareness about the importance of design in everyday life. They emphasize that good design is not only functional but also culturally meaningful and aesthetically compelling.

Notable Awards and Recognitions

Over the years, Charlotte and Peter Fiell have received numerous accolades for their contributions to design scholarship and publishing, including:

- Design awards from major institutions.
- Recognition for their influence in curatorial practices.
- Honorary mentions for promoting design literacy worldwide.

Conclusion

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are pivotal figures in the understanding and appreciation of design. Their work bridges scholarly research and popular engagement, making complex design histories accessible and compelling. Whether through their meticulously researched books, inspiring exhibitions, or educational initiatives, they continue to shape the discourse around design?s role in culture and society. For anyone interested in the evolution of design or seeking to deepen their appreciation of creative innovation, exploring the work of Charlotte and Peter Fiell offers valuable

insights and inspiration.

Keywords: Charlotte and Peter Fiell, design history, design books, design exhibitions, influential designers, contemporary design, visual culture, design education, industrial design, furniture design, lighting design

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are renowned names in the world of design, architecture, and contemporary culture. Their collaborative work as authors, curators, and commentators has significantly shaped how audiences engage with design history and innovation. This dynamic duo's influence extends across numerous publications, exhibitions, and educational initiatives, making them pivotal figures for anyone interested in the evolution of design and its cultural implications. In this guide, we?ll explore their backgrounds, key contributions, notable publications, and the enduring impact they have had on the field of design.

Who Are Charlotte and Peter Fiell?

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are a married couple with a shared passion for design. Their combined expertise spans decades, during which they have authored influential books, curated exhibitions, and contributed to scholarly discussions on design?s role in society. Their work often blurs the lines between academic analysis and accessible storytelling, making complex topics approachable for both specialists and general readers.

Backgrounds and Expertise

- Charlotte Fiell: Charlotte has a background rooted in design history and cultural studies. Her focus often emphasizes contemporary design movements and their socio-cultural contexts.

- Peter Fiell: With a robust background in industrial design and architecture, Peter?s insights frequently delve into design innovation, craftsmanship, and technological advancements.

Together, their complementary skills allow them to craft comprehensive narratives that contextualize design within broader historical, technological, and cultural frameworks.

Major Contributions and Notable Works

Influential Publications

The Fiell couple has authored and edited numerous books that have become staples in the fields of design and architecture. Some of their most notable publications include:

- "1000 Chairs" (2002): An exhaustive survey of chair design, exploring its evolution from functional object to icon of style and artistic expression.

- "Design of the 20th Century" (1999): A comprehensive overview of the century's most influential designers, movements, and innovations.

- "The Story of Design" (2012): A richly illustrated narrative tracing the history of design from prehistory to the digital age.

- "Fashion Design": Exploring the trajectory of fashion as an integral aspect of cultural expression and innovation.

- "The FIELL Collection": A series highlighting iconic design pieces, offering insights into their creation and significance.

Curatorial and Exhibition Work

Beyond their writing, Charlotte and Peter Fiell have curated numerous exhibitions showcasing design history and contemporary innovation. Their curatorial approach often emphasizes storytelling, contextualizing objects within cultural and societal shifts.

Educational Impact

Their work has been influential in academic settings, inspiring curricula, lectures, and seminars that introduce students and professionals alike to the richness of design history.

The Fiell Approach to Design

The Fiell duo?s methodology combines rigorous research with engaging storytelling. They aim to:

- Make Design Accessible: Simplify complex concepts without sacrificing depth, making design history approachable for a broad audience.

- Highlight Cultural Contexts: Emphasize how design reflects, influences, and responds to societal changes.

- Showcase Innovation: Celebrate the creative process behind iconic objects, emphasizing craftsmanship, technology, and artistic vision.

- Foster Appreciation for Craftsmanship: Recognize the skill and artistry involved in design, encouraging respect for both historical and contemporary designers.

Key Themes in Their Work

- The Evolution of Design

Charlotte and Peter Fiell trace how design has evolved over centuries, influenced by technological advancements, cultural shifts, and economic factors. From early craftsmanship to mass production and digital design, they highlight pivotal moments and figures.

- The Intersection of Art and Function

Their work often explores how functional objects become symbols of aesthetic movement, reflecting societal values and individual identity.

- Sustainability and Future Trends

Recent writings emphasize the importance of sustainable design and innovation in addressing global challenges, positioning the Fiell couple as forward-thinking commentators.

- Design as a Cultural Phenomenon

They argue that design is not merely about objects but is deeply intertwined with cultural narratives, politics, and social change.

Influence and Legacy

Charlotte and Peter Fiell have played a crucial role in elevating the discourse around design, blending scholarly rigor with popular appeal. Their publications are widely used in academic courses, while their exhibitions and public talks inspire a broader appreciation for design?s role in shaping human experience.

Key Contributions to the Field

- Bridging Academic and Popular Audiences: Their work makes scholarly insights accessible, fostering a wider appreciation.

- Documenting Design History: Their comprehensive catalogs serve as essential references.

- Encouraging Critical Engagement: They challenge audiences to consider design?s impact on society and the environment.

Conclusion: The Enduring Impact of Charlotte and Peter Fiell

In sum, Charlotte and Peter Fiell have established themselves as influential voices in the study and celebration of design. Their collaborative efforts have produced a body of work that is both academically rigorous and broadly accessible, shaping how we understand the history, present, and future of design. Whether through their books, exhibitions, or lectures, they continue to inspire new generations of designers, historians, and enthusiasts to appreciate the artistry, innovation, and cultural significance of design objects and movements.

Their legacy underscores the idea that design is not just about aesthetics but a vital part of human culture?an ongoing dialogue between function, form, and society. As the world faces new challenges and opportunities, the insights and enthusiasm of Charlotte and Peter Fiell remain vital sources of inspiration and knowledge in the ever-evolving landscape of design.

QuestionAnswer Who are Charlotte and Peter Fiell in the design world? Charlotte and Peter Fiell are renowned design historians, authors, and curators known for their influential books and contributions to design education and appreciation. What are some notable works by Charlotte and Peter Fiell? Their notable works include 'Design of the 20th Century', 'Furniture Design', and 'The Story of Graphic Design', which are widely regarded as essential references in the field. How have Charlotte and Peter Fiell influenced design history? Through their comprehensive publications and exhibitions, they have significantly shaped the understanding and appreciation of modern and contemporary design worldwide. Are Charlotte and Peter Fiell involved in any design exhibitions? Yes, they have curated numerous exhibitions on design topics, showcasing their expertise and promoting design awareness in museums and galleries globally. What is the focus of Charlotte and Peter Fiell's writing? Their writing primarily focuses on the history, evolution, and cultural impact of design, covering areas like furniture, graphic design, and industrial design. Have Charlotte and Peter Fiell received any awards for their work? Yes, they have received several awards and honors recognizing their contributions to design scholarship and publishing. Are Charlotte and Peter Fiell

involved in teaching or academic work? While primarily known as authors and curators, they have also contributed to academic programs and lectures related to design history. Where can I find the works of Charlotte and Peter Fiell? Their books are available in major bookstores, online retailers, and libraries, and their exhibitions have been held at prominent museums worldwide. What impact have Charlotte and Peter Fiell had on design education? They have influenced design education by providing comprehensive resources and inspiring new generations of designers and historians. Are Charlotte and Peter Fiell still active in the design community? As of the latest information, they continue to contribute through writing, curating, and participating in design discussions and events.

Related keywords: design, architecture, interior design, furniture, lighting, visual inspiration, design authors, modern design, Scandinavian design, design books

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