Guidelines for Sustainability units of work

A unit of work contains:
- Relevant topics and themes that interest students.
- Student learning goals which value prior knowledge.
- Engaging pedagogies that ‘personalise and connect learning’ i.e. ‘build on learners’ understandings, connect learning to student lives and aspirations, apply and assess learning in authentic contexts, and communicate learning in multiple modes’. (SA Teaching for Effective Learning Framework)
- Different learning styles (engaging ‘head, heart and hands’) e.g. inquiry, hands-on.
- The requirements of the Learning Areas of the Australian Curriculum and cross-curriculum priorities (as outlined in The Shape of the Australian Curriculum p. 13):
  - ‘Indigenous perspectives to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to learn about, acknowledge and respect the history and culture of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
  - a commitment to sustainable patterns of living
  - skills, knowledge and understandings related to Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia’
- Explicit connections with the general capabilities (of the Australian Curriculum) i.e. literacy, numeracy, ICT, thinking skills, creativity, self management, teamwork, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and social competence.
- Assessment and reporting of achievements and outcomes e.g. achievement of the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards.

A sustainability unit of work will also include:
- One or more of the Organising Ideas* for sustainability (Australian Curriculum).
- A focus on interdependence/ interconnectedness through systems, cycles and patterns.
- Key ideas/ messages for the themes and topics to develop knowledge and understanding.
- School and community resources i.e. human, physical and/or financial.
- Some form of a timeline e.g.

Past
What was the situation before? (Research and ask older people.)

Present
What is the current situation? (Research, surveys, audits.)

Future
What do we want the situation to be like (visioning), and how will we make it that way?

- A global dimension, relating local understanding, values and actions to the global situation, and vice versa.
- Comparison of perspectives e.g. Indigenous, cultural.
- Connection with values (school and other), developing and understanding spiritual and emotional connections to the topic/theme i.e. expressing values and feelings.
- Student and adult action to improve the situation (moving towards more sustainable lifestyles, and transfer learning and behaviours e.g. to families and wider community.

*Organising Ideas (the essential knowledge, understandings and skills)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems</th>
<th>World View</th>
<th>Futures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OL1 - The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth.</td>
<td>OL5 - Communities throughout the world have a common interest in maintaining environments for the future and deserve to be treated equitably. OL6 - A world view is important to ensure social justice and the effectiveness of action to improve sustainability.</td>
<td>OL7 - Sustainability action is designed to intervene in ecological, social and economic systems in order to develop more sustainable patterns of living. OL8 - Sustainable futures are shaped by our behaviours and by the products, systems and environments we design today. OL9 - Products and built systems and environments can be designed and/or managed to improve both people’s wellbeing and environmental sustainability. OL10 - Social and economic systems can be designed, managed and/or used to improve both people’s wellbeing and environmental sustainability.</td>
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<td>OL2 - All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing. OL3 - Sustainability of social and economic systems is closely related to sustainability of the environment. OL4 - All people are connected through social systems on which they depend for their wellbeing.</td>
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Future