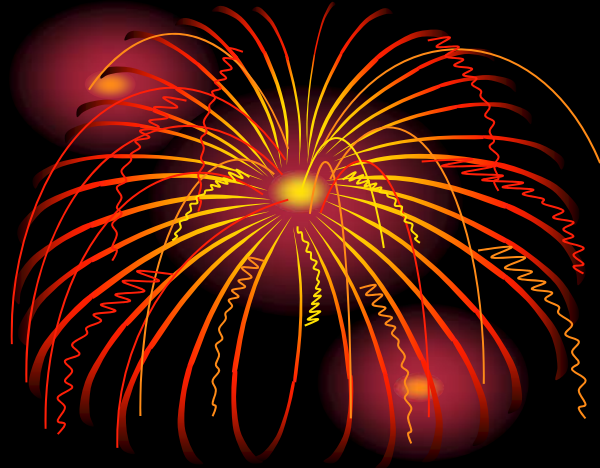




# **Dimensions of Depth and Complexity**

**By Language Services and  
Student Programs**



**Great ideas  
need landing  
gear as well as  
wings**

# Developing appropriately challenging curriculum for all students



- **Clear focus**
- **Providing opportunities for in-depth learning**
- **Organized**
- **Coherent**
- **Engaging**
- **Using old learning with new one**
- **Joyful/satisfying**
- **Choices**
- **Meaningful collaboration**
- **Products that matter**
- **Connections with real life**
- **Fresh**
- **Real, purposeful**
- **Rich**
- **Profound**
- **Problem solving**
- **Setting goals**
- **Stretches the student**

# The Power of the Teacher as Curriculum Decision Maker



- **The teacher has the power to:**
  - **Differentiate content**
  - **Differentiate process**
  - **Differentiate product**

# Dimensions of Depth and Complexity



- **The following icons are designed to facilitate the understanding of depth and complexity within content at different levels of sophistication**
- **These icons should be introduced one at a time**
- **Once various dimensions are learned by the students, the icons can be combined to extend the depth of their learning**

# Language of the Disciplines



## Key Questions

- What terms or words are specific to the work of the \_\_\_\_ (disciplinarian)?
- What tools does the \_\_\_\_ (disciplinarian) use?

## Looking at Depth:

- Specialized vocabulary
- Skills and tasks specific to the discipline
- Tools used
- Benefit to society

## Examples

- Describe the causes and effects of a historical event using the language of a sociologist, such as a group organization, group interaction, and group socioeconomic factors. (Social Studies)

# Details



## Looking at Depth:

- **Elaboration**
- **Identify attributes**
- **Parts**
- **Factors**

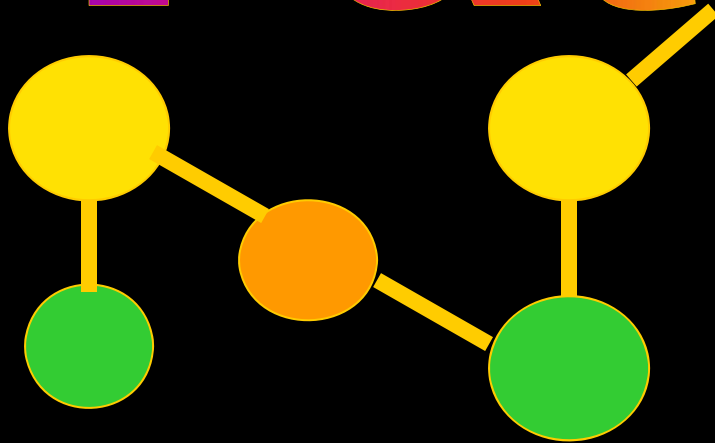
## Key Questions

- **What are its attributes?**
- **What features characterize this?**
- **What specific elements define this?**
- **What distinguishes this from other things?**

## Examples

- **Describe the many and varied details that relate to this event in History. (Social Studies)**
- **State the details affecting the operations needed to solve this problem. (Math)**

# Patterns



## Looking at Depth:

- Identify reoccurring elements or events
- Determine the order of events
- Predict what comes next

## Key Questions

- What are the recurring events?
- What elements, events, ideas, are expected overtime?
- What was the order of events?
- How can we predict what will come next?

## Examples

- Describe the patterns of erosion. (Science)
- Provide evidence to substantiate the pattern(s) of the characters' behaviors. (Language Arts)



# Trends



## Key Questions

- What ongoing factors have influenced this study?
- What factors have contributed to this study?

## Looking at Depth:

- Note factors that cause events to occur
  - Social
  - Political
  - Economic
  - Geographic
- Identify patterns of change over time

## Examples

- Describe the changes in communication over time.
- Identify trends in the characters' behaviors.

# Unanswered Questions



## Key Questions

- What is still not understood about this area/topic/study/discipline?
- What is yet unknown about this area/logic/discipline?
- In what ways is the information incomplete or lacking in explanation?

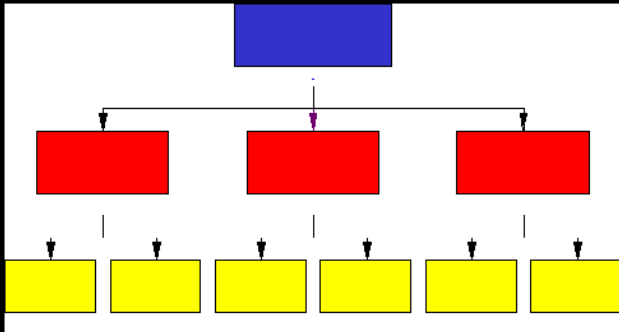
## Looking at Depth:

- Identify unclear ideas or missing information
- Discuss areas yet to be explored or proven
- Note conclusions that need further evidence or support

## Examples

- Is global warming fact or fiction?
- Is war the solution for peace?

# Rules



## Key Questions

- How is this structured?
- What are the stated and unstated causes related to the description or explanation of what we are studying?

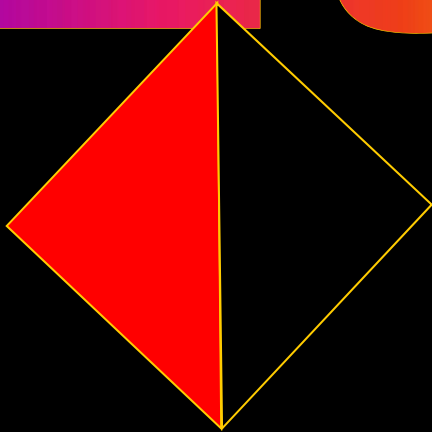
## Looking at Depth:

- State the explicit or implicit factors that govern an area of study
- The structure
- The order
- The hierarchy
- The elements that set the standards

## Examples

- Describe the implicit and explicit rules of the water cycle. (Science)
- Define the consequences of the intended and unintended rules governing the behavior of the major characters. (Language Arts)

# Ethics



## Looking at Depth:

- Identify value laden ideas
- Determine elements that reflect bias, prejudice, discrimination
- State pro and con arguments in terms of ethics

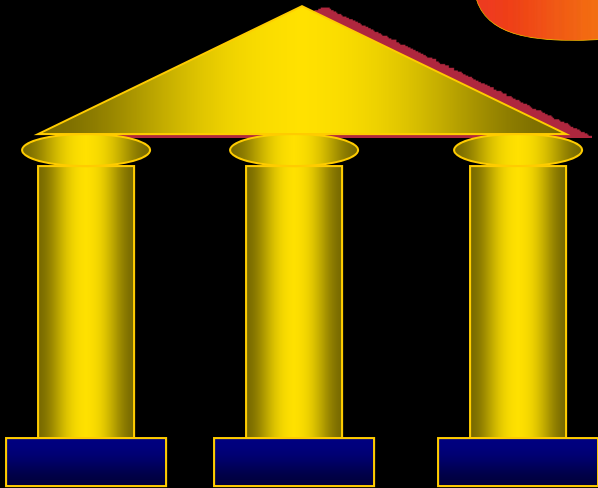
## Key Questions

- What dilemmas or controversies are involved in this area/topic/study/discipline?
- What elements can be identified that reflect bias, prejudice, and discrimination?

## Examples

- How those the ethics of the character define who he is?
- Explore the rules (if any) that media follows to get a story?

# Big Idea



## Looking at Depth:

- **Identify a rule or general statement that summarizes information or draws a conclusion based on evidence drawn from a collection of facts or ideas**

## Key Questions

- **What overarching statement best describes what is being studied?**
- **What general statement includes what is being studied?**

## Examples

- **Define the meaning of the statement “change is inevitable” by studying changes in the environment, government, and portrayal of a character in a story.**

# Over Time



## Looking at Complexity:

- Describe relationships between past, present and future
- Describe relationships within a time period
- Explain how or why things changed or remained the same

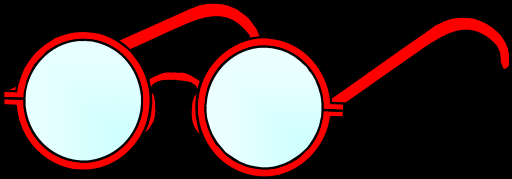
## Key Questions

- How are the ideas related between the past, present, future?
- How are these ideas related within or during a particular time period?
- How has time affected the information?
- How and why do things change or remain the same?

## Examples

- Compare changes in life styles from the time of your parents' teenage years to the teenagers of today.
- Make a timeline of the history of the United States.

# Multiple Perspectives



## Key Questions

- What are the opposing viewpoints?
- How do different people and characters see this event or situation?

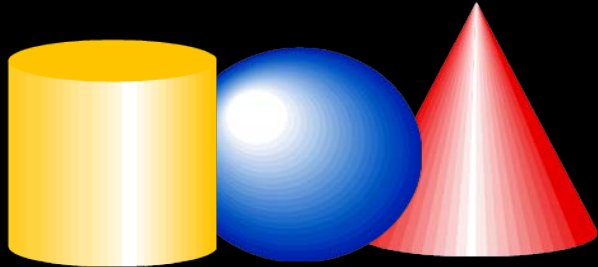
## Looking at Complexity:

- Discuss multiple perspectives related to an area of study
- Explore opposing viewpoints (pros & cons)
- Reflect on advantages of diversity within a society

## Examples

- Analyze the pros and cons of sweet drinks being sold at school.
- What are mathematicians' viewpoints on the metric system versus the standard system of measurement?

# Across Disciplines



## Key Questions

- How do experts in a discipline learn from experts in other disciplines?
- How do different people and characters see this event or situation?


## Looking at Complexity:

- Relate/integrate the area of study to include the methodology of other disciplines.
- Describe a topic's place in more than one discipline or subject area.

## Examples

- How is human behavior expressed through music and history?
- How has history affected art over time?
- How has technology affected literature?





**Applications of these  
dimensions to the content  
of a lesson or unit of study  
modify the content to more  
appropriately challenge  
gifted and advanced  
students to develop a  
deeper, more complex, and  
extensive understanding of  
subject matter**

**(Educator to Educator 2003)**