The Prompts of Depth and Complexity

An overview for Porter Ranch Community School

The prompts of Depth and Complexity are meant to enhance a learners ability to think critically. Students will dig deeper (depth) and understand concepts with greater complexity.

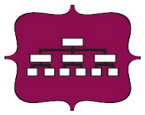
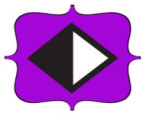
Depth & Complexity Icon Chart

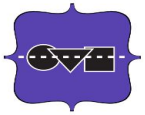
Depth	*Icon*	*Definition*	*Example*
Language of the Discipline		What vocabulary terms are specific to the content or discipline?	Tools Jargon Icons Acronyms Special phrases Terms Slang Abbreviations
Details		What are the defining features or characteristics? Find examples and evidence to support opinions and ideas.	Parts Factors Attributes Variables Distinguishing Traits
Patterns		What elements reoccur? What is the sequence or order of events? Make predictions based on past events.	Predictability Repetition
Unanswered Questions	???	What information is unclear, missing, or unavailable? What evidence do you need? What has not yet been proven?	Missing Parts Incomplete Ideas Discrepancies Unresolved issues Ambiguity
Rules		What structure underlies this subject? What guidelines or regulations affect it? What hierarchy or ordering principle is at work?	Structure Order Reasons Organization Explanation Classification "Because..."
Trends		Note factors (Social Economic, Political, Geographic) that cause events to occur. Identify patterns of change over time	Influence Forces Direction Course of Action Compare, Contrast and Forecast
Ethics		What moral principles are involved in this subject? What controversies exist? What arguments could emerge from a study of this topic?	Values Morals Pro and Con Bias Discrimination Prejudice Judging Differing Opinions Point of View Right and Wrong Wisdom
Big Ideas		What theory or general statement applies to these ideas? How do these ideas relate to broad concepts such as change, systems, chaos vs. order, etc? What is the main idea?	Draw conclusions based on evidence Make generalizations Summarize Theory Principle Main Idea
Across the Disciplines		Relate the area of study to other subjects within, between, and across disciplines.	Connect Associate Integrate Lind Ideas Cross-Curricular study
Changes over Time		How are elements related in terms of the past, present, and future? How and why do things change? What doesn't change?	Connecting points in time Examining a time period Compare and Contrast
Different Perspectives		How would others see the situation differently?	Different roles and knowledge Opposing viewpoints

Based upon the work of Sandra Kaplan

Ways to ask some questions at home...

Name	Icon	Sentence stems to get me thinking about this icon
Big Ideas		The big idea of this was ___ because ___ The evidence that supports the main point is ____ The importance of what we are studying is ____ This was mostly about ___ The universal theme is ___ because ___
Details		The most important ideas were ___ The things that distinguish this topic from another are ___ The attributes of this are ___ The features that characterize this are ___ The important clues that help me understand the big idea are ___
Language of the Discipline		The words that are specific to this work are ___ The new terms I encountered were ___ The tools that experts in this discipline would use include ___ Definitions for these terms are ___ These words could be broken into the categories ___ because ___
Unanswered Questions		The unknown details of this were ___ Something unexplained by this was ___ I am uncertain about ___ because ___ The missing information is ___ Some evidence that might answer these questions are ___
Multiple Perspectives		Other people might view this issue by saying ___ Another point of view would be ___ This would be different if it was viewed by ___ because ___ An expert on this topic might say ___ I would report this differently if I were ___ by saying ___

Rules		The rules that seem to be present are ___ because ___ The statements of truth (all/ most of the time) about this are ___ I could categorize the rules ____ into these categories: The usual course of action/ behavior are ___ The methods/ steps that must always be followed are ___
Ethics		The ethical issues I found include ___ Some controversies in this were ___ I noticed bias when ___ Some examples of "appropriate" behavior are ___ Morals and values that are present are ___

Patterns		I would describe the patterns to be ___ It can be predicted that ___ will come next because ___ A recurring theme seems to be ___ The details that help me understand the patterns are ___ I know this can be replicated because ___
Trends		The general direction of the information shows ___ The tendencies are ___ The data shows support for ____ The most significant trend I see is ___ because ___ The relationship among these trends is ___ because ___
Change Over Time		I can describe the past, present and future of this by saying ___ A time that this topic/idea was different was ___ Because of the past, I predict that ___ will change because ___ At the start I noticed ___ but now I see ___ Because of the way ___ developed, it is likely that ___
Across the Disciplines		This topic also relates to ___ because ___ An idea from this that can be seen in other subjects is ___ The relationship between ___ and ___ show ___ Experts in this discipline would also need help from ___ because ___