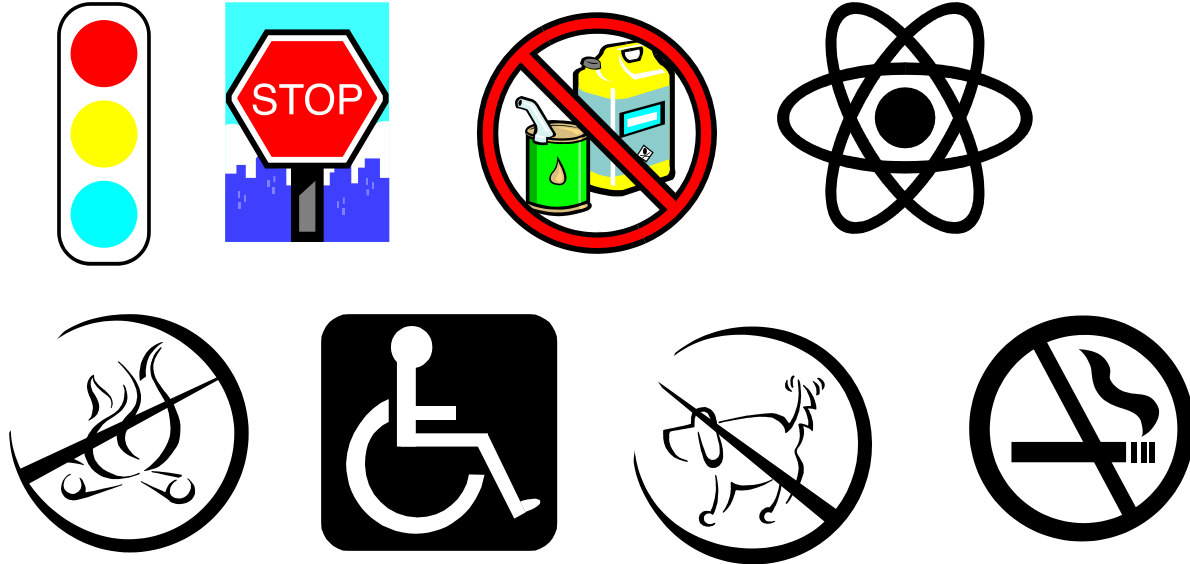


DEPTH AND COMPLEXITY ICONS – LESSONS

Shared by Mary Bales Maxey

To introduce the depth and complexity icons, explain to the children that in our real world we use a variety of symbols that stand for words. Show the following icons – have students tell what words these icons represent:



Have students think of others to add to the overhead or draw on the board. Explain that these are called “icons”, and that scholars use special icons to help them “dig deeper” and understand better.

Day 1~ LANGUAGE OF THE DISCIPLINES



*Show the icon for “**language of the disciplines**”. Tell the class that they are going to play a game with you. You will act out a role, and they will guess your profession.

Example: (You as a lawyer)

“Your honor, my brief has been filed and I am ready to begin. If the court has no objection, I wish to call Mr. Brady as my first witness.”

(You as a chef)

“Madame, I have prepared the entrée especially for you using the finest olive oil. I par-boiled the potatoes and then julienne the green beans. The soup du jour is French onion and the dessert is flan.”

(You as a doctor)

“Nurse, please prepare the syringes for the boosters. Pull the charts also and let me know the date of the last injection. Also, bring my green scrubs and make sure my favorite stethoscope is handy.”

*Explain that each profession has specialized vocabulary. In school, each subject area has special vocabulary also.

Activity: Assign each group a different subject area (math, art, reading, social studies, PE, language arts, science). Have them list as many special **"language of the discipline"** words as possible for each subject area. (Example: music: rhythm, beat, lyrics, treble, piano, orchestra, choir, horn maestro, soprano).

Share and Evaluate: Have each group share their list with the class, invite others to add to the lists. Post the lists.

*Encourage students to notice and use **"language of the disciplines"** during lessons by pointing to the icon.

Day 2~ DETAILS



Show the icon for **"details"**. Draw a huge flower on the board. Label the inside: Luther Jones Elementary. Have the students give you details that tell about LJE (example: great students, good teachers, Marlins). Draw another flower. This time fill in the details and have the students tell you what the main idea (big circle) should be. (Example: 4th grade teacher, loves cows, has a twin sister, = Mrs. Maxey!)

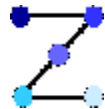
Activity: Assign pages from the Social Studies text to different groups. Have them create a **"details"** flower to share the information with other groups. (This could be done with any discipline.)

Share and Evaluate:

Have each group share their details icon/drawing with the whole class.

*When questioning students, point to the details icon when you want students to be more specific, or to justify their thinking.

Day 3~ PATTERNS



Show the icon. Explain that it is a "Z" with circles or dots on it, and that they make a zigzag pattern.

Ask students to point out **"patterns"** in the classroom. Explain that there are also "patterns of behavior" or that events can form **"patterns"** that can help us predict or solve problems.

Activity: Tell the story of the three little pigs (or have a student do so). Ask students to point out **"patterns"** of behavior or events in the story.

Extend: Have students share **"patterns"** of behavior or events from their own lives. Did they learn anything from these **"patterns"**?

*In order to get students to dig deeper, when a **"pattern"** becomes apparent in a study – point to the icon and have students recognize the **"pattern"**.

Day 4~ UNANSWERED QUESTIONS



Draw the icon. Explain the meaning: unanswered = not told.

In other words, there may be some things you know – yet questions remain without answers.

Activity: Ask students to respond to the following question as you list their responses on the board or overhead: What do school children eat for breakfast?

(List all – cereal, toast, eggs, tortillas, etc.)

Next, ask what do school children in China eat for breakfast? (If anyone knows, then pick another country!) This is an example of an **“unanswered question”**. Have students list ways they could find information to answer the question.

*Use the icon at the beginning of a study to find out what students know/want to know (the good old KWL chart). Use it again during a study to clear up ambiguity and identify missing information. Use at the end of a study to extend students independent learning opportunities.

Day 5~ ETHICS



Show the icon. Point out that one half is black and one half is white. This could be related to good/bad or right/wrong. Remember – the good guys wear _____ hats; the bad guys wear _____ hats!

Tell the story of Cinderella. Have students find examples of **“ethics”** in the story.

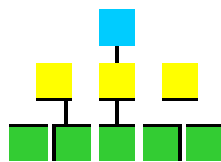
Was Cinderella treated **ethically** (fairly)? Why or why not?

Activity: Assign each small group a short fable. Have them read the fable then discuss ethical issues raised.

Share and evaluate: Have each small group share their fable and the ethical issues.

*Use the ethics icon to have students judge behavior. Use vocabulary such as bias, prejudice, and discrimination.

DAY 6~ RULES



Teach students to draw a simplified version of the icon. Explain that this symbol stands for **“rules”**. Play a game of Simon Says. Have students list the **“rules”**.

Have them explain what would occur if the **“rules”** were not followed.

Explain that laws are **“rules”** that grownups must follow.

Brainstorm a list of laws or **“rules”** their parents must follow.

Tell the following story:

Pat was playing at recess. He came running up to the teacher with a bad scrape on his knee. What rules might have been broken that resulted in an accident? What rules could be added to prevent such an accident?

*The **“rules”** icon can be used in editing, or working math problems.

It can also be used to dig deeper in social studies and science.

Day 7~ THE BIG IDEA



Draw the icon. Explain that just like the flower, this one can also be used to emphasize the main idea or as we call it, **"THE BIG IDEA"**. The theme can be written in the top as an overarching statement. Discuss the Parthenon and why this represents the **"Big Idea"**.

Explain that **"THE BIG IDEA"** is the one thing that ties all our learning together.

Ask students if they have ever heard of "the big top"- a huge circus tent. Ask what kinds of things go on inside the big top. Then ask, "What is the **"BIG IDEA"?**" (It's a circus!). Explain that our classroom is like a big top with lots of things going on inside, but that our **"BIG IDEA"** is (*patterns, systems, change, interdependence, structure, relationships*). Briefly introduce the generalizations, but explain that we will use these one at a time to help us dig deeper into the **"BIG IDEA"** of (*patterns, systems, change, interdependence, structure, relationships*).

*Point to the icon during/after lessons to help students create comfortable patterns of learning.

Day 8~ Trends



Show students how to draw this icon (line graph). Use examples of line graphs from the newspaper or Social Studies text. Discuss what **"trends"** are being shown on the graphs.

Explain that during a Presidential Election year, politicians study voting **"trends"** of past elections. (Examples: how women vote, how cultural groups vote, how older people vote, how Southerners vote, etc.) How would this information help someone plan a campaign for President?

Activity: Have students collect data for one week on the kinds of items purchased from the canteen in the cafeteria. Then have students explain any **"trends"** they notice. Can any predictions be made?

*Point to this icon to have students dig deeper in determining cause and effect, hypothesizing, and relating information.

Day 9~ Over Time



Show how to draw a simple clock face.

Refer to your class schedule. Ask, "How does our class work change over the course of a day?" Accept all scholarly responses.

Draw a time line on overhead or board. (It will be for teacher's life). Place dates along the line. Fill in the information under each date. Read the events aloud to your students. Ask students to make statements about events on your timeline. Do they notice any patterns or trends? Did anything remain the same? How does the past influence the present or future?

Activity: Have students write an autobiography. They should tell about important events in their lives. (Brainstorm: moves, births, deaths, illnesses, vacation, holidays, school events.)

Share and evaluate: Have students share their autobiographies with a partner or small group. Whole group discussion can take place on the importance of telling things in order.

*The “over time” icon is used to make content more complex. It helps students think creatively. They will learn to use it to relate, sequence, and order events.

Day 10~ DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW



Point to the icon, teach students to draw it.

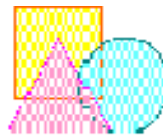
Put on sunglasses. Tell students that you are blind. Then have them describe particular classmates, animals, and foods to you. Explain that in order for them to make good descriptions, they must think from the “point of view” of a blind person. For example, they cannot describe a student as having brown hair (a blind person sees no color); rather they could describe the person as having short and curly hair (it can be felt).

Explain that by seeing other “**points of view**”, it helps them to think about a problem in creative ways.

Activity: Have students get out art materials (paper, crayons). Tell them they are to draw and design a drinking cup for four different people: a baby, a teacher, a doctor, and a janitor.

Share and evaluate: Have students share in small groups. Display and discuss. *Use this “**points of view**” icon to help students remember to see all sides of an argument. Remember the old saying, “One man’s trash is another man’s treasure”.

Day 11~ ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES



Draw the icon. Explain that the different shapes could stand for different disciplines (art, music, math, science social studies, etc.) They all overlap because our BIG IDEA overlaps every subject area we study; it travels “**across the disciplines**”.

Use the skill of cause and effect. Can cause and effect be taught in reading? Have students tell how. What about in math? Ask for examples in other disciplines also.

*Use the “**Across the Disciplines**” icon to have students extend their thinking; most skills are not specific to one discipline.

DAY 12

Now all the icons have been taught. Have your scholars practice drawing and labeling the icons. Encourage students to use the icon vocabulary in class and to use the icons in group work. Remember to use the icons when making “retrieval charts” (graphic organizers).

GOOD LUCK!