

Depth of Knowledge

- Depth of knowledge can vary on a number of dimensions, including
 - level of cognitive complexity of information students should be expected to know;
 - how well they should be able to transfer this knowledge to different contexts;
 - how well they should be able to form generalizations; and
 - how much prerequisite knowledge they must have in order to grasp ideas.

Source: Webb (1997).



Depth of Knowledge

- The depth of knowledge required by a learning activity or within an assessment is related to
 - the number of connections with regard to concepts and ideas a student needs to make in order to produce a response;
 - the level of reasoning; and
 - the use of other self-monitoring processes.

Source: Webb (1997).



Depth of Knowledge vs. Bloom's Taxonomy

Level 1 (Recall)	Knowledge
	Comprehension
Level 2 (Skill/Concept)	Application
Level 3 (Strategic Thinking)	Analysis
Level 4 (Extended Thinking)	Synthesis
	Evaluation

Adapted from Wyoming School Health and Physical Education Network (2002)



Depth of Knowledge Level I (Recall)

READING

- Read or recite facts
- Basic recall
- Simple understanding

WRITING

- Write or recite facts
- List ideas
- Simple spelling and vocabulary

Other key words that signify a Level I include “identify”, “define”, “recognize”, and “use”.

Source: Webb (1999).



ELA DOK Level I

Example Item

Which of these events happened **FIRST** in the lives of the characters?

- A** Jill and Steve meet at the coffee shop
- B** Jill's parents decide to stay in New Mexico
- C** Steve gets a job teaching high school in Colorado
- D** Jill and Steve visit Carlsbad Caverns together in a field trip

Source: ISTEP+ GQE Item Sampler, page 28



Depth of Knowledge Level 2 (Skill/Concept)

READING

- Comprehension and subsequent processing of text
- Analysis of inference

WRITING

- Connect ideas using a simple organizational structure
- First draft writing for a limited number of purposes and audiences

Other key words that signify a Level 2 include “classify”, “predict”, “describe”, “compare”, and “relate”.

Source: Webb (1999).



ELA DOK Level 2

Example Item

Read this sentence from the story.

Then a slow, black cloud had issued from the caverns and ascended into the heavens.

Which of these dictionary definitions of *issue* BEST fits the way the word is used in the sentence?

- A** publish
- B** terminate
- C** come out
- D** point from

Source: ISTEP+ GQE Item Sampler, page 16



Depth of Knowledge Level 3 (Strategic Thinking)

READING

- Go beyond the text to explain, generalize, and connect ideas
- Determine the author's purpose and describe how it affects the interpretation of the text
- Summarize information from multiple sources

WRITING

- Construct multiple-paragraph essays using complex sentence structure
- Support ideas with details and examples
- Edit writing to produce a logical progression of ideas

Other key words that signify a Level 3 include “assess”, “revise”, “critique”, “cite”, and “differentiate”.

Source: Webb (1999).



ELA DOK Level 3

Example Item

The narrator makes several comments that hint at the outcome of the story. Give ONE example of a statement that suggests the outcome of the story. Then explain how this example helps the reader predict the outcome of the story.

Source: ISTEP+ GQE Item Sampler, p.18



Depth of Knowledge Level 4 (Extended Thinking)

READING

- Apply information from one text to another
- Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources
- Examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of sources

WRITING

- Construct multiple-paragraph essays that demonstrate synthesis and analysis of complex ideas
- Include voice and style in compositions

Other key words that signify a Level 4 include “design”, “create”, “evaluate”, “analyze”, and “synthesize” .

Source: Webb (1999).



ELA DOK Level 4

Example Item

Read the writing prompt below and complete the writing activity.

Changes

Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa and 1993 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, wrote the following in his autobiography:

“There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered.”

Write a narrative composition in which you tell about a person who returns to a familiar environment or situation and realizes that he or she has changed, while the place itself has remained the same. Your narrative composition could be based on your own experiences, those of a person you know or have read about, or something you have made up. In your writing, describe the main character, the circumstances that took the character away from the familiar environment, and the character’s experiences upon returning to that environment.

Source: ISTEP+ GQE Item Sampler, p. 5



Suggestions for the Classroom

- Compare and contrast literary features through discussion and writing
- Read short excerpts from advanced reading levels
- Write an analysis of two selections, identifying a common theme
- Include elevated and purposeful vocabulary instruction

