

Guiding Students Toward Conceptual Understanding

Generalization

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**Generalizing is connecting
and moving from facts, to
concepts, to
generalizations.**

Concepts interact with each
other to create wider
generalizations.

Example

**Matter changes
depending on
temperature.**

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Generalizing helps students articulate their understanding and consolidate learning.

It reduces the cognitive load of memorizing isolated facts and prepares them to transfer their understanding to new contexts.

Example

Instead of recalling dates of every civilization, students generalize: “Civilizations organize around systems of communication and governance.”

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As students work with examples, pause and ask:

- What do all these have in common?
- What bigger idea do they show us?

Encourage connections between concepts through simple routines and tools.

Example

Using the 4Cs thinking routine or a concept map, students create a generalization that holds true across many situations.

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