Transform your classroom in 8 words or less!

What is the relationship between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

Conceptual thinking produces transferable understandings that transcend one unit of study. Sounds great! So, how can you get started?

First: Ask students about the relationship between two concepts. Check out Lynn Erickson’s list of examples in [Tuesday’s post](http://edtosavetheworld.wordpress.com/2013/04/23/the-power-of-a-conceptual-lens/). Allow them to develop some hypotheses about the relationship between the concepts based on prior knowledge.

Second: Give students multiple chances to test their ideas about these concepts. Give them pieces of text to read or share a video. Have them analyze a timeline or chart or graph. Or have them conduct a short experiment. This new information or experience should help them learn more about the concepts.

Third: Have them write about how their understanding of the concepts is changing. After each small text or video or math problem ask students to explain what they are thinking about the concepts. Ask them: how does this new information challenge, support, or complicate the ideas you started with? This way students can see the progress of their learning! A good way to track their progress is by using [this rubric](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BxEIbbMhzQHoMldjd1J6QldrTmc/edit?usp=sharing).

Fourth: Have them transfer their understanding to a new situation. Give them a new problem, experiment, or event to examine. Ask them to apply their understanding of the concepts to “figure out” the new topic. For instance, if my students were studying liberty and security in World War II, I might give them a news article about a modern international conflict and ask them to make predictions about liberty and security.

Close your eyes and think about what you’re already planning to teach tomorrow. Could you frame your lesson with a question about conceptual relationships? Could you stop at various points in your lecture or reading or activity to come back to the concepts? Could you ask students to track their progress throughout by writing down how their ideas are changing?