

**An excerpt from Chapter Two: Essential Understandings** (adapted to match Australian curriculum) terminology

Glass, K.T. (2012). *Mapping Comprehensive Units to the ELA Common Core Standards, K–5*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin

When curriculum and instruction require students to process factual information through the conceptual levels of thinking, the students demonstrate greater retention of factual information, deeper levels of understanding, and increased motivation for learning. —H. Lynn Erickson (2007, p. 2)

Concepts.

When creating essential understandings, consider the concept or word that serves as an umbrella term that encompasses the facts. A concept is “a mental construct that frames a set of examples sharing common attributes . . . concepts are timeless, universal, abstract, and broad” (Erickson, 2002, p. 164).

Concepts are expressed as nouns and can be one or two words, such as conflict, changing perspective or persuasion. Put another way, the New York State Department of Education (1999) provides this definition: “Concepts represent mental images, constructs, or word pictures that help people to arrange and classify fragmented and isolated facts and information” (p. 8).

**Example Subject and Macro concepts:**

Science	Humanities	Mathematics	CAPA	English
adaptability	change	patterns	balance	relationships
change	democracy	order	form	form
conservation	citizenship	function	pattern	perspective
diversity	conflict	systems	perspective	conflict
energy	diversity	change	unity	culture
equilibrium	exploration	proportion	function	diversity
systems	systems	symmetry	change	identity
<b>Macro Concept (multidisciplinary)</b>				
change connection form function	identity interdependence movement order	pattern perspective systems community		transformation power causation time

Adapted from: from *Mapping Comprehensive Units to the ELA Common Core Standards, 6–12* by Kathy T. Glass. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin 2013.