



# **INTRODUCTION TO BACKWARDS DESIGN**



# Exploration Activity-UBD

- Each of the table groups need to come up with an idea for a family vacation.
  - Where is the family going?
  - For how long?
  - How are they getting there?
  - Where are they staying once they get there?
  - What's the purpose of the trip?
  - Who's going?



# Discussion...

- What pieces/details of the family vacation did you have to figure out first?
  - Why did those parts have to get figured out first?
- What parts did you figure out next?
  - Why do you think those parts were figured out after the first ones?
- What other factors did you consider as you were planning the trip?
  
- How does this example relate to our teaching?
- How does it relate to UBD?

◦How do we make it more likely—by our design—that more students really understand what they are asked to learn?



# So, What is UBD?

- Key Concepts that drive the planning framework
  - We are more likely to be goal focused and effective when we plan by design.
  - Long term goals are more likely reached through assessment and planned instruction.
- Focus of design should be on curricular units rather than on individual lesson plans.
  - We ask ourselves:
    - What is the point of our course?
    - What needs to happen to support our long term instructional goals?
    - How do we establish desired outcomes and plan backward?



# “Planning a Class with Backward Design”

Read the article and use the “think mark” to write down three interesting quotes, questions, comments, connections...

After you’ve written down your three items, you will take your think mark with you and get up to share with three different people. (1 item with each person)

# Think with the end in mind, start with assessment

*Differs from traditional approaches to designing curriculum. Instead of planning activities or tasks first, you begin with how and what will be assessed.*

# Backwards Design

## ◦ WHY?

- To eliminate instruction that is activity oriented or coverage oriented

## ◦ WHAT?

- Identify desired results
- Determine acceptable evidence
- Plan learning experiences/instruction



# Primary Goals of UBD

## ◦ Student understanding

- Making sense of the big ideas and the ability to transfer their learning
- Goal is for students to be able to use the stuff, not just learn the stuff, we teach

## ◦ Evidence of student understanding

- Transferring learning through authentic learning and performance

*Backward design may be thought of as purposeful task analysis: Given a task to be accomplished, how do we get there?*

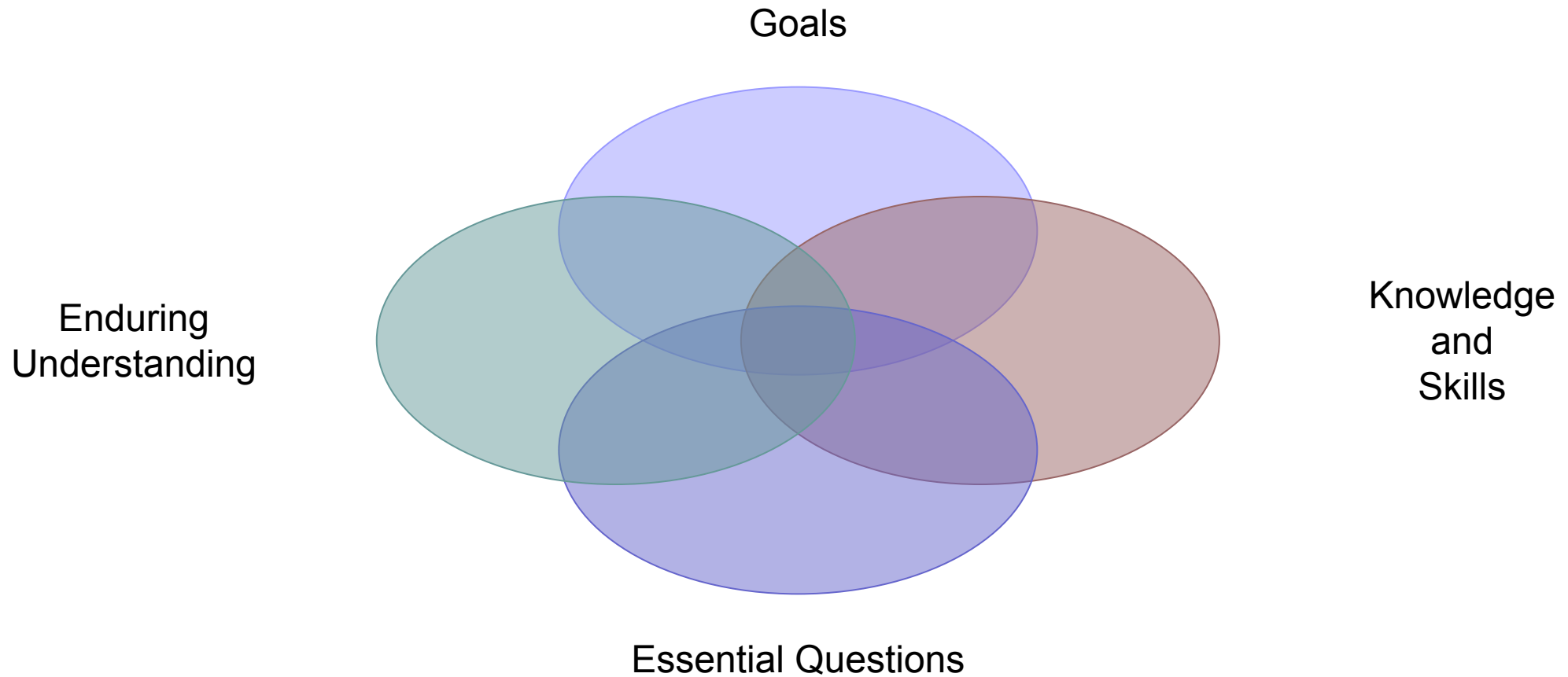
*Or one might call it planned coaching: What kinds of lessons and practices are needed to master key performances?*

- Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design*

# Stage One: Identify Desired Results

*Elements of the Design: Goals, Knowledge and Skills,  
Essential Questions, Enduring Understandings*

# Key Elements



# Essential Questions

- Open-ended questions that are thought-provoking and interpretive.
- Essential Questions are at the core of your content and often leads to, or requires further investigation.
- Essential Questions:
  - Have no obvious right answer
  - Raise more questions
  - Address concepts that are key to the discipline

# Enduring Understandings

- Enduring Understandings:
  - are *Big Ideas* that can be transferred and made into statements.
  - uncover abstract or misunderstood ideas
  - reveal ideas
- Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe advance that there are *Six Facets of Understanding*.
- When the facets are a part of the curriculum, students are able to obtain true understanding.

# Three-ring Audit Process

What concepts should students be familiar with?

**Worth Being Familiar With**

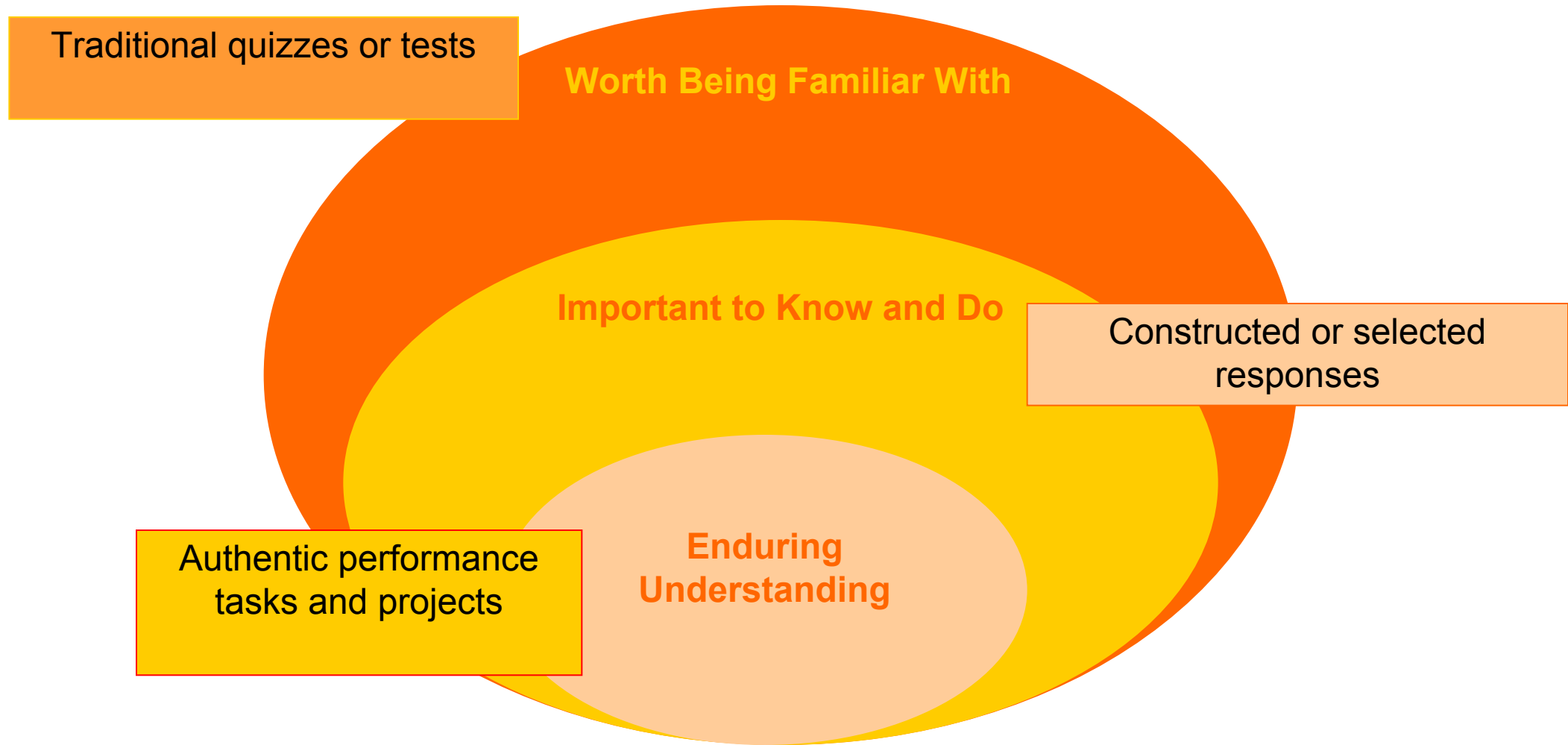
**Important to Know and Do**

What important knowledge and skills must students have for mastery?

Anchors the unit; Why is this topic worth studying?

**Enduring Understanding**

# Three-ring Audit Process Assessments

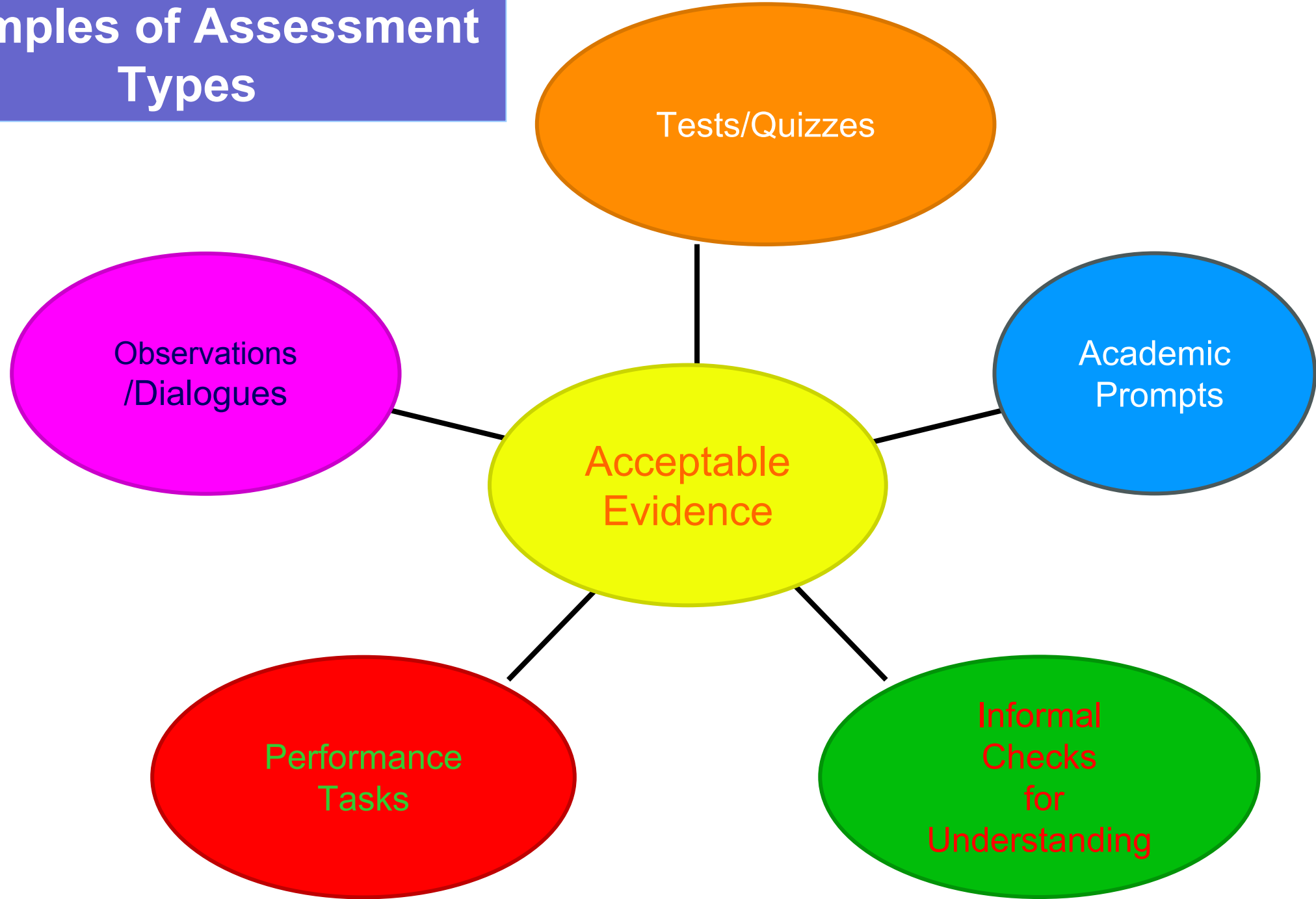




## Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence

- This stage identifies specific assessments that will be used.
- Identify the summative assessment
- What is the culminating activity that will represent the Understandings students have gained from the unit.

# Examples of Assessment Types



# Stage Three: Plan Learning Activities

- This is the Stage where specific learning activities (lessons) are planned to accompany each unit.
- The lessons designed in this stage are should be based on the desired results from Stage 1 and 2.
- *W.H.E.R.E.T.O.* is an acronym for planning steps to help meet the requirements of the unit.
  - The acronym does not represent the order to be followed

# Turn and Talk

Turn to a partner at your table and talk about the following:

- In your own words, describe Understanding by Design (UBD).
- How is UBD different than traditional course planning?
- What are the benefits of using UBD?

# Syllabus

## Essential Questions:

*How does a syllabus shape students' expectations and efforts throughout the course?*

*How does a syllabus communicate what the instructor values?*

*In what ways can a syllabus help students situate the learning they will do in the course within their college careers and in their lives?*

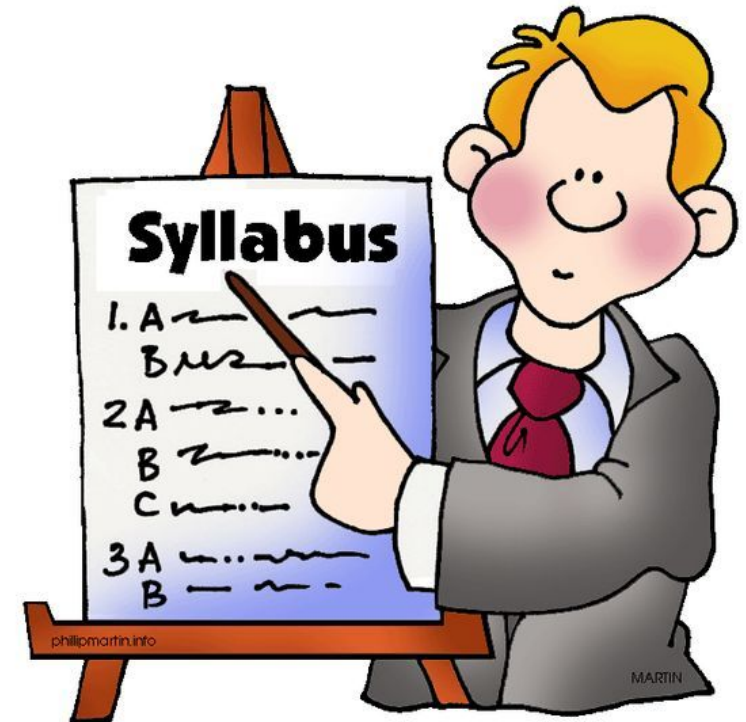
## Goals:

1. Understand the importance of a syllabus, its content, and its tone
2. Explore the major components of a syllabus and why they should be included.
3. Revise one of your own syllabi to improve it.

# Imagine that you are a student

## Examine two syllabi:

- What do you think is important in this class? Why?
- What do you expect to learn? Why?
- What expectations does the instructor have for you?
- How will you be expected to learn?
- How will your learning be assessed?
- How do you feel about being in this class?



# Generate a checklist

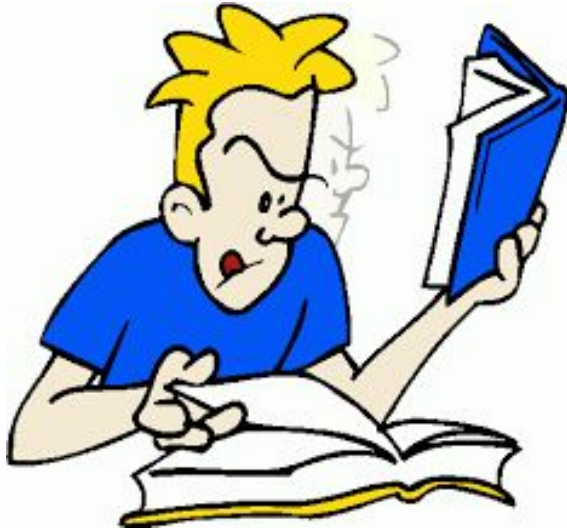
In your group, generate a checklist of items you believe should be on a syllabus:

- Include a brief rationale for why each item should be included.
- Include a good example of each of these items from the syllabi we examined, your own syllabi, or an improved version you create in your group.



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# Helping students use the syllabus



How do we get students to read, re-read, and consult the syllabus? Think alone, share with a partner, then be ready to share your ideas.





# Apply

On the Exit Ticket, describe 1-3 changes you intend to incorporate into your syllabus or distribution of your syllabus.

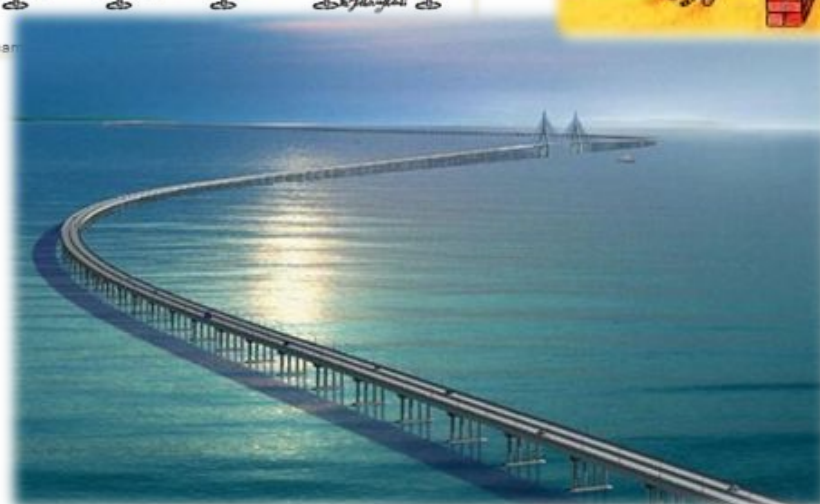
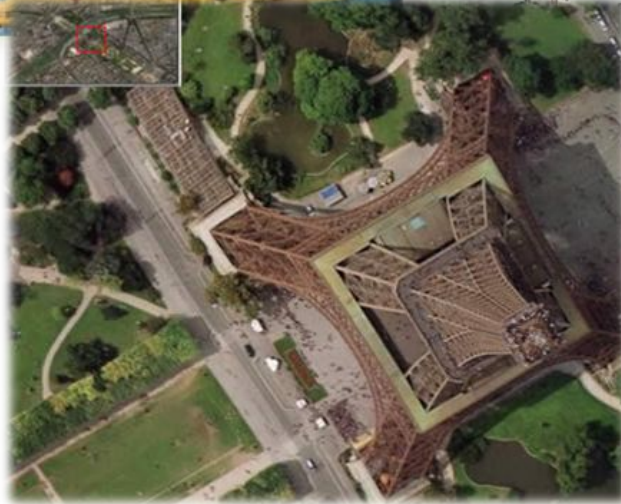
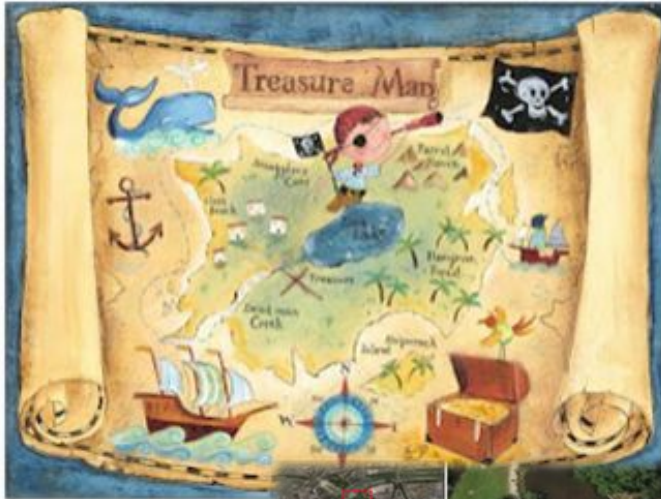


## IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

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# What is a learning outcome?



# Practice

Analyze how the calendar and course assignments match (or do not match) the outcomes and competencies for the course.

- ❑ Which assignments align to which objective or outcome?
- ❑ Which assignments don't seem to align at all?
- ❑ How do course activities relate to the assignments and/or course outcomes?
- ❑ Which course activities don't seem to relate to an assignment or course outcome?

## Activity:

Analyze a sample course calendar to locate these SLOs

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Analyze specific rhetorical contexts, including circumstance, purpose, topic, audience, and writer, as well as the writing's ethical, political, and cultural implications.
- Organize writing to support the central idea through unity, coherence, and logical development appropriate to a specific writing context.
- Use appropriate conventions in writing, including consistent voice, tone, diction, grammar, and mechanics.
- Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources to maintain academic integrity and to develop and support one's own ideas.
- Use feedback obtained from peer review, instructor comments, and/or other resources to revise writing.
- Assess one's own writing strengths and identify strategies for improvement through instructor conference, portfolio review, written evaluation, and/or other methods.
- Generate, format, and edit writing using appropriate technologies.

# Discussion

- ❑ What are you noticing about planning a course while using UbD methods, compared to how you learned to plan courses?
  - ❑ What differences do you notice, if any?
- ❑ How does UbD planning/design help students learn better and more effectively?
- ❑ How does UbD simplify your prepping for courses?
- ❑ How can an analysis of your own courses—similar to the analysis we just did—help your students to learn more effectively?
  - ❑ For example, what do you think students would notice if they conducted a similar analysis with your course calendar and course assignments?



# Next Steps

Ticket out the Door:

- ❑ What questions do you have about using UbD?
- ❑ What else do you need to know about UbD before you can start using it in the New Faculty Institute?