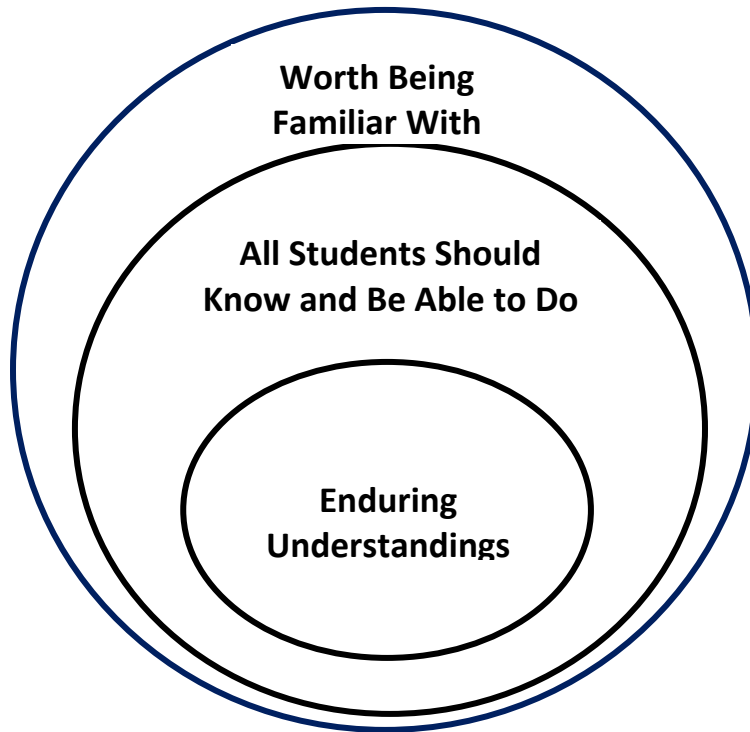


# Unpacking the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards and Objectives to Build Meaningful and Relevant 21<sup>st</sup> Century Benchmark Assessments

## The Three Circle Audit



The objectives within our standards need to be interpreted and “unpacked.” We must assist teachers in determining what is worth being familiar with (the outer circle); what all students should know and be able to do (the inner circle); and those enduring understandings that students should explore and acquire at each grade level (the center circle). We see the enduring understandings as power standards. Power standards have endurance, meaning that the knowledge and skills to which this standard relates will be used by students for several years after they use the standard at the current grade level. Power standards have leverage, meaning that the knowledge and skills identified in this standard will help students in other academic content areas. Additionally, teachers at the next grade level regard this standard as a necessary entry point for a student to begin that grade with success and confidence.

## Power Standards

Power Standards have been written to guide teachers as they pull together objectives that can be used to design rich, standards-focused project based learning experiences for students as opposed to teaching objectives in isolation. Power Standards represent the “safety net” of objectives each teacher needs to make sure that every student learns prior to leaving the current grade. Students who acquire this “safety net” of understanding, knowledge and skills will thus exit one grade better prepared for the next grade.

When teachers were first assembled to write power standards, they were asked to review the performance descriptors and the objectives within each standard, to take the content represented there, and write power standards which could be used as the basis for designing standards-focused units of study or project-based

learning experiences. The teachers were given two questions: What essential understandings and skills do students need? Which objectives can be clustered or incorporated into others?

In our work with teachers we have learned that objectives can be clustered, bundled or chunked in several different ways within a grade level, and each separate grouping provides different types of learning experiences for students. In other words, there is no one correct way to cluster or chunk the objectives in any subject at any grade level. When teachers from two or more content areas work collaboratively to integrate their content, learning skills and technology tools objectives, the outcome can be very dynamic authentic learning experiences for students.

The Office of Instruction has developed a process for chunking, bundling, clustering or identifying critical topics at each grade level in each content area. This **process** is described in the attached document.

### **What knowledge, skill or understanding is required within each objective?**

An aligned and balanced assessment system is critical to the success of a standards-focused PBL experience. To assist with the development of an aligned assessment system within each project, we support the identification of learning targets for each objective. We further support the teachers' review of the **depth of knowledge** measure for each objective. These measures are available for all reading, English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies objectives. Studying the depth of knowledge required in each objective will allow the teacher to validate that the student's learning experiences within the project are designed to develop the expected depth of knowledge for each objective.

As teachers study each objective and examine the depth of knowledge of the objective, they also identify the **learning targets** within the objective. There are four types of learning targets (knowledge, reasoning, skills and products). At this point the teacher examines the content objective to determine what students are required to know and be able to do. For example, let's consider an objective that reads "Compare and contrast democracies with other forms of government." This is a reasoning target. It requires knowledge of what a democracy is and knowledge of other types of government—purposes and how power is acquired, used, and justified; and how government can affect people. It also requires practice in comparing and contrasting – a reasoning target—using the knowledge of different forms of government.

### **Types of Learning Targets**

This list helps us understand the different kinds of classroom learning to be developed and assessed as students work toward achieving state standards.

Master Factual and Procedural Knowledge: some to be learned outright; some to be retrieved using reference materials

Use Knowledge to Reason and Solve Problems: analytical or comparative reasoning; synthesizing; classifying; induction and deduction; critical/evaluative thinking

Demonstrate Mastery or Specific Skills: speaking a second language; giving an oral presentation; working effectively on a team; science process skills

Create Quality Products: writing samples; term papers, artistic products; research reports; shop projects; science exhibits

Acquire Positive *Affect/Dispositions*: positive self-concept; desire to learn/read/think critically; positive attitude toward school; good citizenship; respect toward self and others; flexibility; perseverance

### **Example from State Writing Standard**

**Students will use styles appropriate for their audience and purpose, including proper use of voice, word choice and sentence fluency.**

Knowledge and Understanding: Writers must possess appropriate understanding of the concept of style as evidenced in voice, word choice, and sentence fluency. They need to know what voice, word choice, and sentence fluency are, why they are important, and the ways they can vary. They need to understand various audiences and purposes for text and how these might influence style. In addition, students must possess knowledge of the topic they are to write about.

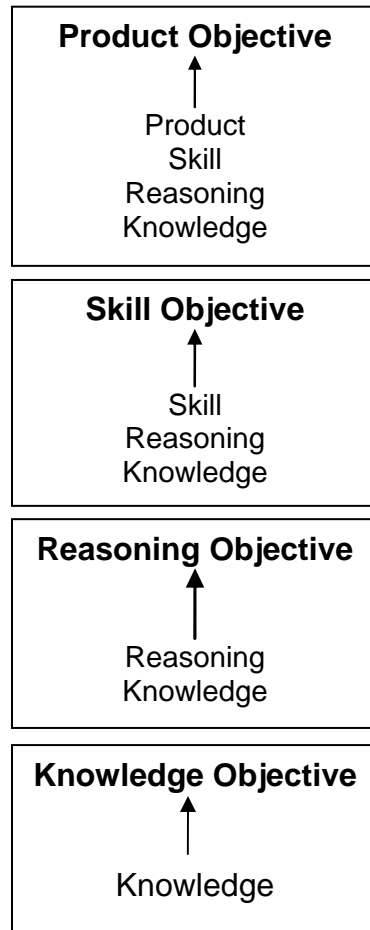
Reasoning: Writers must be able to reason through voice, word choice, and sentence fluency choices for novel audiences and purposes. They also must figure out how to make appropriate voice, word choice and sentence construction decisions while composing original text for various audiences and purposes.

Performance Skills: Students will either write longhand or will compose text on a keyboard. Each requires its own kind of skill competence.

Products: The final evidence or competence will be written products that present evidence of the ability to write effectively for different audiences and purposes.

## Deconstructing Standards

When deconstructing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards and Objectives we must make notes of the targets underpinning each objective.



# The UbD “Three-Circle Audit” Process with Classroom Assessment for Learning

As our teachers think about assessing student performance related to specific objectives in the classroom, they must examine the three-circle audit which produced the power standards; they must consider the knowledge, skill or understanding required within each objective; they must consider the depth of knowledge of the objective and the types of learning targets within the objective. We then recommend they look at this diagram to determine the best method of assessment to be used for each objective.

