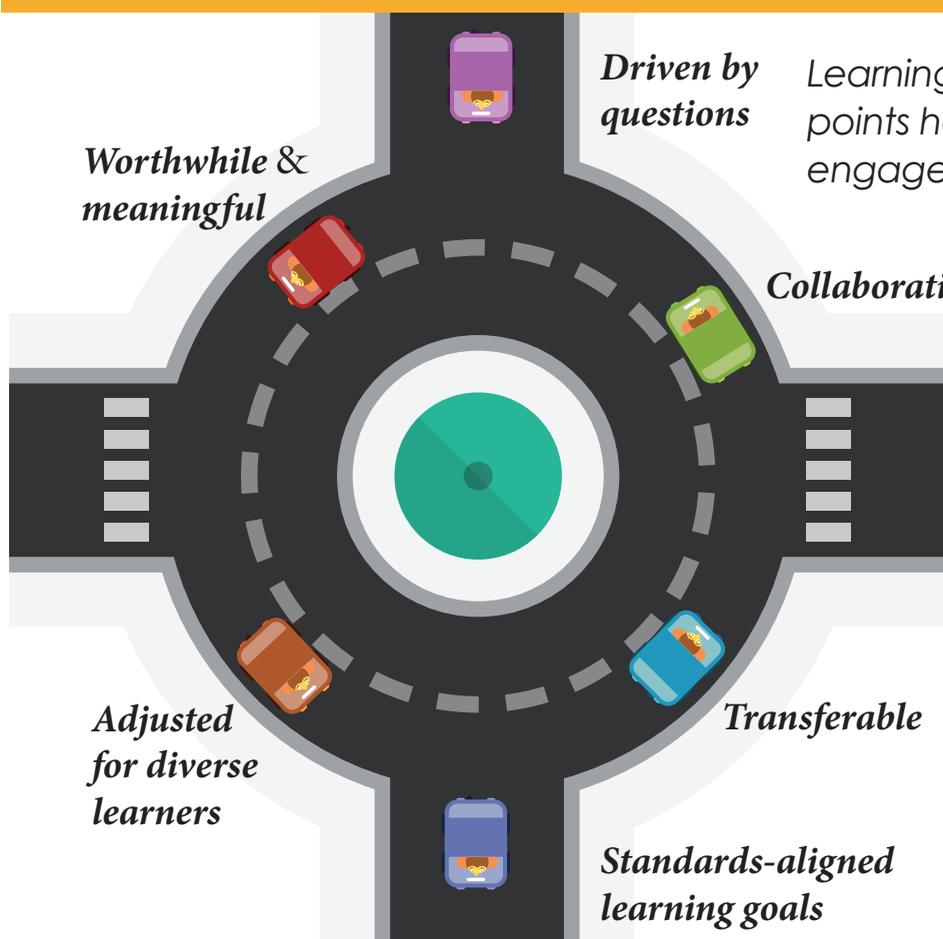


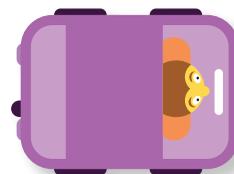
# IMPLEMENTING QUALITY INSTRUCTION

## *Essential Question:*

**How do we facilitate deeper learning experiences for each student?**



*Driven by questions* Learning is cyclical. Multiple entry and exit points help assure appropriate levels of engagement and challenge for all students.



### **Challenging Questions**

Carefully crafted questions elicit critical and creative thinking, spark curiosity, and increase engagement. Students need the challenge of questions that don't have easy or immediately available answers if they are to learn deeply. These questions require students not only to master applicable content from the Standards, but to analyze, apply, and make sense of that content from their own perspectives. Over time, students can learn to generate their own meaty questions as they design investigations, analyze evidence, or pursue solutions to real-world problems.

### **POSSIBLE STARTERS FOR DEEPER LEARNING QUESTIONS:**

- How might you \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is the evidence for \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is a different way to \_\_\_\_\_?
- Why is \_\_\_\_\_ important?
- How could you prove that \_\_\_\_\_?
- What might happen if \_\_\_\_\_?



## QUESTIONS THAT DRIVE DEEPER LEARNING...

...don't have obvious or "google-able" answers, but require students to seek and evaluate information.

...require students to create something—a theory, conclusion, plan, or product.

...are accessible to all students.

...have multiple correct answers or methods of responding.

...require the use of thinking skills to apply or analyze information.

...are relevant and/or interesting to students.

...may take a few minutes, a class period, or even several weeks to answer.

...provide a platform for teamwork and peer-to-peer feedback.

...often lead students to more questions.



### **Help students learn to “fail forward.”**

Create a classroom environment where mistakes and failed attempts are seen as checkpoints that lead to new ideas and improved skills. Provide them with specific feedback that helps them improve their next attempt.

### **Consider rigor.**

Find the balance between too challenging and not challenging enough, remembering that each student will have different strengths and areas for growth.

## **Worthwhile and Meaningful Learning Experiences**



Would our students volunteer to come to our classrooms? Create learning experiences that students look forward to and value.

### **Make it student-directed.**

Ensure that students have choices and, when possible, are involved in designing their own path toward the learning goal.

### **Reach beyond content delivery.**

Connect content to students' lives and what they already know, always remembering that this may be different for each student.

### **Make process the centerpiece.**

Spend time helping students “learn how to learn,” figuring things out just like people do in the real world.

### **Ensure quality interactions.**

Make sure that students' ideas and opinions are acknowledged by teachers and fellow students. Teach students to respectfully question and build upon each other's ideas.

### **Model curiosity.**

Sometimes a teacher's own attitude and enthusiasm is enough to ignite student interest. Our lessons should first be interesting to us!

### **Establish caring relationships.**

Increasing one-on-one time with students and building caring relationships give students a sense of belonging and, in turn, help to build their capacity to engage in learning experiences.

### **Allow students to grapple with real problems and issues.**

Help students do work that contributes to their school, families, or community.



## ***Adjusting for Diverse Learners***



- Never assume that students have the skills or prior knowledge needed for success. Pre-assess so that instruction and/or scaffolding can be provided where needed.
- Sometimes students have preconceptions or misconceptions that interfere with new learning. Listen and examine student work to uncover and correct these.
- Use graphic organizers, outlines, self-monitoring checklists, and other supports to help students make sense of information.
- Use protocols for routine tasks to save instructional time, help students build routines, and encourage independence.
- Model your thinking out loud and encourage students to verbalize their thinking as well.
- Create many opportunities for movement. Movement can enhance learning and help students focus.
- Ensure that students have choices.
- Provide access to learning materials at a variety of levels of difficulty.

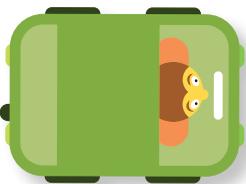
## ***Transferable***

How would we answer a student who asked, “Why do I need to know this?”



In order for learning to be meaningful, both teachers and students need to be clear on the ways it transfers to environments and situations beyond the classroom. ***Try these ideas to help students see how their learning is useful:***

- Identify the skills that are required for study of the discipline and the types of thinking it demands. Model and teach these skills throughout the year. Each time students need to apply these skills, notice, name, and reinforce them.
- Always require students to extend their thinking by elaborating, explaining, and justifying.
- Help students identify how the skills they are using in class can be applied elsewhere, in other content areas, in the world of work, and in community life.
- Give students opportunities to communicate with people they admire who use these same skills in their work.

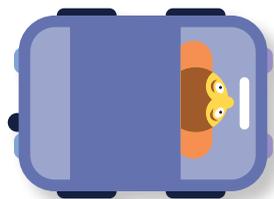


## ***Collaboration***

Working with others builds communication and teamwork skills and strengthens social and emotional development. As students brainstorm, exchange, and evaluate ideas, they increase their capacity to solve challenging problems and complete difficult tasks. Teams achieve at

higher levels and retain content longer than students working individually. Collaboration also strengthens creative thinking, as students are exposed to multiple ways of looking at the same problem or question. The meaningfulness in collaboration comes largely from the peer relationships that are forged (and often tested) through teamwork. As teachers provide supports that help students work productively through confusion and conflicts, the teamwork skills so essential to success beyond school are developed.

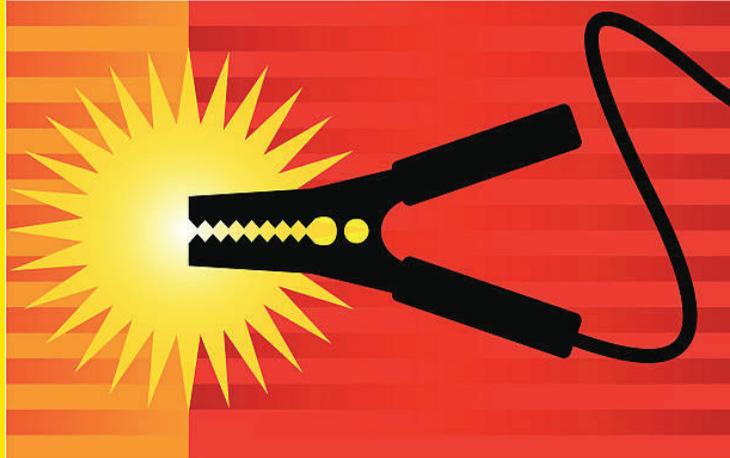
## Learning Goals Aligned with Standards



To design high-quality learning experiences, teachers should consider “unpacking” identified Standards of Learning to determine specific and measurable learning goals. This way, they can more purposefully design aligned instruction and assessments that are derived from and extend the Virginia SOLs.

Virginia SOL	Aligned Learning Goals <i>Students will be able to...</i>
<p><b>Bio.3</b> The Student will investigate and understand that cells have structure and function</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast the structure and function of prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells</li> <li>• Determine how the structure of a eukaryotic cell's organelles influences their function.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Math 4.9</b> The student will solve practical problems related to elapsed time in hours and minutes within a 12-hour period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert between hours and minutes in order to perform operations.</li> <li>• Assess the reasonableness of a problem's result.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Writing 8.7</b> The student will write in a variety of forms to include narrative, expository, persuasive, and reflective with an emphasis on expository and persuasive writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support an argument using evidence and logic</li> <li>• Adjust evidence, style, and tone to address a specific audience</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hist/Social Science 1.3</b> The student will describe the stories of influential people in the history of Virginia and their contributions to our Commonwealth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the impact of the individuals' contribution to Virginia</li> <li>• Hypothesize how your life would be different without this contribution.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Patterns, Functions, and Algebra 7.13</b> The student will solve multi-step linear equations in one variable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the preservation of equality to problem solving</li> <li>• Model real world scenarios using one and two step linear equations</li> </ul>
<p><b>SI.5</b> The student will present information orally and in writing in Spanish, using a variety of familiar vocabulary, phrases, and structural patterns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conjugate the verb “gustar” in the present tense</li> <li>• Construct simple written sentences expressing likes and dislikes</li> </ul>

***Classroom Sparks:  
Which of these might work  
with your lesson?***



***Building in quality instruction components will set the stage for deeper learning for students. But that's not all! Give lessons an extra spark and help to capture student interest by incorporating these tips – just be sure they support the lesson and don't distract from it!***

Create opportunities for students to move. Movement can enhance learning and help students get through the sometimes long classroom hours.

Inject humor, but not sarcasm. Be willing to laugh with your students (and, sometimes at yourself!)

Consider using music as a way to signal transitions, illustrate ideas, and just provide a few minutes of entertainment.

Change locations. Is there another place you might teach this lesson? In the gym? In the hallway? Outside?

Invite your students to write to you about whatever they want--- and write back!

Let students see your creative side. Model what creative thinking looks and sounds like--even if sometimes it's silly!

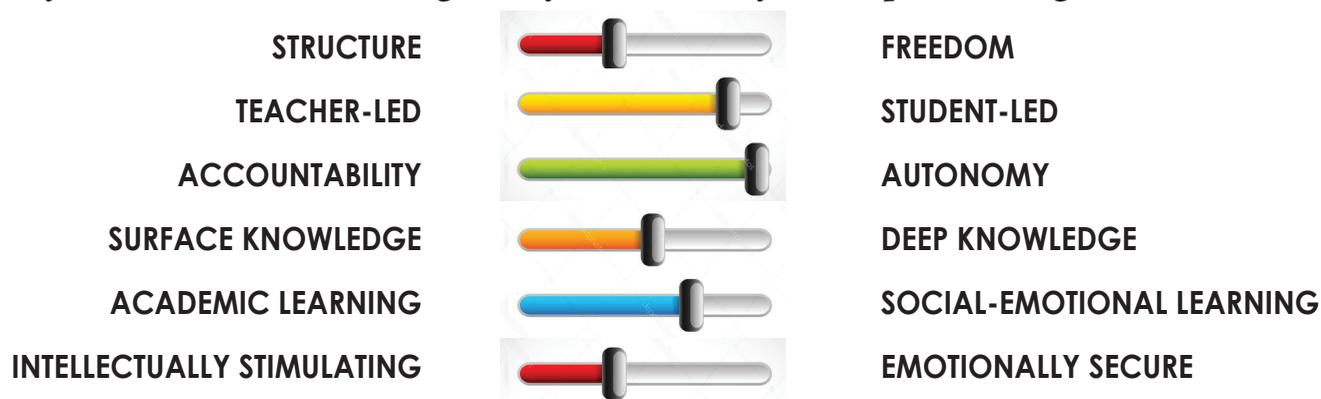
Surprise your students once in a while.

When everyone is getting tired and losing energy, take a break. Set a time and do nothing for two minutes.

Find ways for students to help each other and others.

Remember to have fun! Learning can be joyful. When you are having fun, your students will as well.

*As teachers, we are called to continually adjust the sliders shown below, balancing the changing needs of students while embracing those factors that reflect deeper learning classrooms.*



*The PROFILE OF A CLASSROOM provides basic frameworks and prompts to guide teacher decision making. Content is based on these learning principles and pedagogies developed by Virginia educators. Access the documents at [VASCD.org](http://VASCD.org)*

### ***Learning should...***

- ...uncover student strengths through meaningful learning experiences.
- ...be defined by success criteria that are clear, attainable and cultivate future success.
- ...provide regular opportunities for students to make authentic contributions and connections.
- ...be active, driven by investigation, relevance, and application.
- ...foster productive struggle, persistence and growth through a feedback spiral.
- ...occur through meaningful interactions, partnerships, and shared decision making.
- ...ensure that all learners see themselves in the curricular experience.
- ...lead to maximum growth for every student regardless of background or limitations.

### ***Teaching should...***

- ...emphasize worthwhile experiences using essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in pursuit of a solution or product creation.
- ...leverage interdisciplinary thinking and application to the world outside of school, including to career opportunities.
- ...utilize collaborative structures for learning and assessment with self, peers, and/or experts.
- ...include purposeful checkpoints where students set goals, evaluate progress, and plan next steps.
- ...structure time, space, and grouping with student needs in mind.
- ...cultivate classrooms communities where learners feel safe and confident.
- ...tailor learning experiences to be developmentally appropriate, aligned to learning science, and responsive to individual needs.



*The Profile of a Virginia Classroom is a partnership between VASCD ([vascd.org](http://vascd.org)) and the Virginia Department of Education, with support from Jobs for the Future.*