Common Language Used in Summit Learning

Hello parents and Students: This is a list of common language used throughout Summit Learning. You will hear these terms on a regular basis in and out of class. Please be sure to ask your teacher for clarification as needed.

1:1 Mentoring

A key aspect of a Summit Learning environment that is an opportunity for teachers to connect with their students not only on an academic level, but also on a personal level. Teachers conduct weekly 1:1 mentoring sessions with their mentees. All students have a mentor who serves as their coach and advocate, supporting them as they develop strong character, life and self-directed learning skills.

Activity

An individual, pair, or group opportunity to practice a skill or move toward an associated checkpoint. It is a Google doc, a Google sheet, a Google slideshow file which requires the student to type into it.

Additional Focus Area

A focus area that has been identified as helpful content knowledge but is not central to the course standards, college and career readiness, and/or the course projects or concept units. Students are encouraged, but not required, to complete this focus area's content assessment. These add up to a full nine points to a student's grade in a course, and therefore, can make a difference of nearly a full letter grade. Note that unlike Power Focus Areas, students can receive "partial credit" for completing Additionals. So, if a student only completed half of her Additionals, they would still receive half of the possible points (~4.5) added to their grade.

Additional Resource

A student-facing resource or activity that is not associated with a specific checkpoint but that could be helpful to complete the project.

Challenge Focus Area

An opportunity for a student to learn more content related to the course beyond what is located in Power and Additional Focus Areas. A student might complete a challenge focus area in order to prepare for the AP test associated with that course, experience more academic rigor, and/or further develop their individual academic interests.

Check for Understanding

A self-assessment provided at the end of an objective's resources in a focus area. It is aligned with the objective and its content assessment items and it can take many formats (online interactive activity or quiz, or file with questions and answers, etc).

Checkpoint

A checkpoint...

1. Is a formative assessment.
2. Clearly contributes to the completion of the final product(s).
3. Supports cognitive skill development or conceptual understanding.
4. Is an important opportunity for the student to receive feedback.

In addition to providing other forms of formative feedback, teachers may mark checkpoints in the platform as:

- Red = checkpoint needs extensive revision, student should not move forward without significant re-work
- Yellow = student must incorporate teacher feedback in order to be on-track
- Green = student is on-track, no revision needed

Cognitive Skills

A collection of 36 higher-order thinking skills that are geared towards readiness for college, career and life. Cognitive skills apply across multiple subject matters. They are categorized within the following domains: Textual Analysis, Using Sources, Inquiry, Analysis and Synthesis, Composing/Writing, Speaking/Listening, and Products and Presentations, and they are aligned with the Common Core Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and Advanced Placement Curriculum Frameworks. Cognitive skills are taught during Project Time and assessed through a project's final products.

Cognitive Skills Rubric

The single rubric used to assess projects across all subjects and grade levels. Every project assesses a set of the cognitive skills. The rubric details nine different levels of each cognitive skill, spanning from "no evidence" (level 0) to "college level" (level 8).

Concept (math)

Each math course in the Summit Learning Platform has a unique list of concepts, which are the mathematical outcomes to be taught in the course.

Concept Rubric (math)

Each concept has a row in the 5-level concept rubric, which codifies Summit's interpretation of the range of complexity of each concept. When students show evidence of their understanding on performance tasks, teachers score their work on the rubric.

Concept Unit (math)

The collection of math tasks that leads to students learning one or multiple concepts. A concept unit does not have a minimum or maximum length of time, but most take between 2 and 5 weeks.

Conceptual Understanding (math)

The ability to reason in a setting involving application of concepts, definitions, relations, or representations.

Content

The subject-specific material (facts, definitions, information, formulas, procedural skills, basic concepts, grammatical structures) comprising each discipline. This material can be studied independently, practiced or memorized at a student's own pace. Content comprises 30% of a student's grade: 21% through Power Focus Areas, which are required, and 9% through Additional Focus Areas, which are optional, but highly encouraged. The content in focus areas is generally lower depth of knowledge, usually limited to comprehension, application, and/or analysis of content knowledge; content is deepened in projects and concept units.

Content Assessment

The ten-question assessment that a student requests when ready to show their learning of the content objectives of a specific focus area. Content assessments are computer-scored immediately upon completion; the passing score is 8/10. A student must get approval from a teacher before attempting the assessment. If the student does not pass, the student may take the content assessment again.

Diagnostic Assessment

An opportunity for a student to check what they know already or a way to gauge if they're prepared for the content assessment. Diagnostic assessments are aligned to the focus area objectives and presented in the same format as the content assessments. A student can take them without the approval of the teacher at any time.

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Essential Questions

An essential question...

1. Is open-ended; that is, it typically will not have a single, final, and correct answer.
2. Is thought-provoking and intellectually engaging, often sparking discussion and debate.
3. Calls for higher-order thinking, such as analysis, inference, evaluation, prediction. It cannot be effectively answered by recall alone.
4. Points toward important, transferable ideas within (and sometimes across) disciplines.
5. Raises additional questions and sparks further inquiry.
6. Requires support and justification, not just an answer.
7. Recurs over time; that is, the question can and should be revisited again and again.

Final Product

A final product is...

1. The culmination of the prolonged inquiry in a project.
2. An authentic summative assessment of the cognitive skills associated with the project.

There may be more than one final product in a project.

Focus Area

A chunk of content within a course that is broken down into 2-5 content objectives. Students should learn this content through the use of materials on the playlists. To demonstrate their learning of the objectives, students must pass a content assessment. This is typically at the Know, Understand, Apply levels on Bloom's hierarchy of learning.

Focus Area Key Terms

Terms that a student should be able to define and understand in order to learn the focus area's objectives.

Focus Area Objectives

The content goals of a focus area. There are 2-5 objectives per focus area.

Habits of Success

Habits of Success are the social and emotional skills that enable students to be successful at both academic and non-academic pursuits. They are: **Challenge Seeking, Persistence, Strategy Shifting, Appropriate Help Seeking and Response to Setback.**

Introductory Materials

A section of resources placed at the beginning of a focus area that guide students on how to engage with the focus area and/or the purpose of learning the content. An introductory resource might be a "hook" for learning the content, a general overview of the content, or a tool students can use as they work through the playlist.

Learning Experiences

Activities and resources that support students in developing a cognitive skill, applying relevant content knowledge, and developing conceptual understanding. The Base Curriculum includes a set of learning experiences that are associated with each checkpoint, intended to prepare students to demonstrate their skill development within the checkpoint.

Look-Fors

Descriptions of what a skill looks like in the context of a specific role.

Mentor

All students have a mentor who serves as their coach and advocate, supporting them as they develop strong character, life and self-directed learning skills.

Partial-group Workshops

Targeted learning experiences for a group of students who would benefit from teacher-driven support with a specific cognitive skill, content understanding or task. Partial-group workshops are designed around a specific student need as identified by available data.

Performance Tasks (math)

Math problems that elicit individual evidence of a student's understanding at the end of a concept unit. Students' performance tasks are scored by the teacher using the concept rubric.

Personalized Activities

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Learning experiences that are tailored to students' needs. Personalized activities can be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups; the key is that students are working in their Zone of Proximal Development as often as possible. In Summit Learning, personalized activities are the default or assumed type of learning experience unless there is a clear justification for a whole-group experience or a partial-group intervention.

Personalized Learning Time (PLT)

The time that students learn the content they need to be college-ready. They plan and prioritize their learning based on their individual goals. Students move at their own pace, and receive support from their teachers, mentor and peers.

Playlist

The collection of learning resources dedicated to supporting students in learning the focus area objectives.

Power Focus Area

A focus area that has been identified as essential content knowledge, based on course standards. It is central to college and career readiness and the course's projects/concept units. Students must pass every Power Focus Area's content assessment by the end of the school year in order to pass the course. Note that a student does NOT receive partial credit for Power Focus Areas.

Procedural Fluency (math)

Procedural fluency is the ability to apply procedures accurately, efficiently, and flexibly; to transfer procedures to different problems and contexts; to build or modify procedures from other procedures; and to recognize when one strategy or procedure is more appropriate to apply than another. Procedural fluency — often developed through focused practice on exercises, not problems — is an important part of students' math education. It enables them to focus on higher-level thinking and more advanced mathematics. It can support and solidify students' emerging conceptual understanding.

Project

A project...

1. Is a prolonged inquiry into an open-ended question(s) relevant to the discipline.
2. Aims to develop a set of cognitive skills through experiences authentic to the discipline.
3. Is aligned with key content from one or more focus areas.
4. Includes final product(s), checkpoints, activities, and resources.
5. Results in a final product(s) which demonstrates a student's ability to apply their cognitive skills and deepen their understanding.

Project Time

Project Time is the structure in Summit Learning within which students engage in project-based learning to practice cognitive skills. Students develop deeper learning skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills, as they work collaboratively on rich project-based experiences.

Resource (within a focus area)

Organized by objective, resources provide the content and/or opportunity to interact with the content needed to learn that objective.

Resource (within a project)

A static file or a static link that students can refer to in order to complete activities or the work associated with the checkpoint itself. With a resource there is one version that all students can view. A resource can be a link to a relevant website or a tool that helps a student complete an activity or a checkpoint.

Summit Learning Platform PLP

The online tool that is the technology backbone of a Summit Learning environment. The Summit Learning Platform is a free online tool that helps students track progress towards their short and long-term goals, learn content at their own pace, and reflect on their learning with mentors. It allows teachers to customize instruction to meet their students' individual needs and interests and supports stronger relationships between teachers and students.

Targeted 1:1 Check In

Teachers use data, either from the Summit Learning Platform or from observations, to determine which students need a brief meeting with them. In these check ins, teachers may coach a student on their plans for learning, give feedback on a specific piece of work, ask questions to learn more about what a student may need, or provide emotional support.

Task (math)

A math problem, or set of problems, that is used as an in-class activity. Math tasks typically range from approximately 30 minutes to 120 minutes.

Whole Group Experience

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A whole group experience is whenever the whole class is engaged in the same learning experience. Teachers use whole group experiences to...

- prime students for a set of personalized activities,
- build culture in the classroom through a circle or shared activity,
- increase student motivation/buy-in with a demonstration or shared experience,
- set a vision of high quality work with a text or example with strong teacher modeling, or
- build understanding through hearing multiple voices.