

How to Write a Central Idea

1. Pair two or more concepts from your unit of study into a sentence conveying an important idea that will transfer through time and across cultures.
2. Use active, present tense verbs to convey timeless characteristic. Avoid using personal or proper nouns. Use qualifiers (may, can often) if your generalizations may not hold across all examples. (e.g. Migration may lead to cultural conflicts.)

Science	Social Studies	Economics
Order	Conflict/Cooperation	Markets
Organism	Patterns	Supply and Demand
Population	Populations	Cost
System	System	Interdependence
Change	Change/Continuity	Beliefs/Values
Evolution	Culture	Goods/Services
Cycle	Evolution	Conflict
Interaction	Civilization	Cooperation
Energy/Matter	Migration/Immigration	Perceptions
Equilibrium	Interdependence	Patterns
		Power

Put two or more of the concepts together and state your general idea.

Example: Unit of study: "Study of electric circuits" *Systems? Interaction? Energy?*

Central Idea: A system is a group of parts which interact to complete a new whole.

Lines of Inquiry: The parts of an electric circuit
The role of conductors and insulators
Other systems in nature
The role of conflict as a function in systems

OR

Central Idea: An electric circuit creates an opportunity to get a power source out to many people.

Lines of Inquiry: The structure of an electric power grid
Forms creating electrical energy: wind, water, solar, nuclear
Patterns of development as connected to opportunities for power