

Source – Visible Thinking, Project Zero, Harvard

## Connect, Extend, Challenge

*A dialogue strategy for connecting new ideas to prior knowledge and experiences.*

Connect	Extend	Challenge
How are these ideas and information <b>CONNECTED</b> to what you <b>already</b> know?	What new ideas did you get that <b>EXTENDED</b> or pushed your thinking in <b>new</b> directions?	What is <b>still CHALLENGING</b> or confusing for you to get your mind around? What questions, wonderings or tensions do you <b>now</b> have?

### **Purpose: What kind of thinking does this strategy encourage?**

The strategy helps students make connections between new ideas and prior knowledge. It also encourages them to take stock of ongoing questions, tensions, and difficulties as they reflect on what they are learning.

### **Application: When and where can it be used?**

The natural place to use Connect-Extend-Challenge is after students have learned something new. It doesn't matter how *much* they have learned--it can be a lesson's worth or a unit's worth. The strategy is broadly applicable: use it after students have explored a work of art, read a book, engaged in a science experiment, or anything else in the curriculum. Try it as a reflection during a lesson, after a longer project, or when completing a unit of study.

### **Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this strategy?**

This strategy works well with the whole class, in small groups or individually to keep a visible record of students' ideas. If you are working in a group, ask students to share some of their thoughts and collect a list of ideas in each of the three categories. They can then share the challenges with the whole class. Or have students write their individual responses on post-it notes and add them to a group or class chart. Keep students' visible thinking alive over time by continually adding new ideas to the lists and revisit the ideas and questions on the chart as students' understandings around a topic or concept develop.