

Lower-level demands
(memorization):

- reproducing previously learned facts, rules, formulas, definitions or committing them to memory
- Cannot be solved with a procedure
- Have no connection to concepts or meaning that underlie the facts rules, formulas, or definitions

Lower-level demands
(procedures without connections):

- are algorithmic
- require limited cognitive demand
- have no connection to the concepts or meaning that underlie the procedure
- focus on producing correct answers instead of understanding
- require no explanations

Higher-level demands
(procedures with connections):

- use procedure for deeper understanding of concepts
- broad procedures connected to ideas instead narrow algorithms
- usually represented in different ways
- require some degree of cognitive effort; procedures may be used but not mindlessly

Higher-level demands
(doing mathematics):

- require complex non-algorithmic thinking
- require students to explore and understand the mathematics
- demand self-monitoring of one's cognitive process
- require considerable cognitive effort and may involve some level of anxiety b/c solution path isn't clear

Strategies for Modifying Tasks

Increasing the cognitive demands of tasks.

- Ask students to **create real-world stories** for “naked number” problems.
- Include a prompt that asks students to **represent the information another way** (with a picture, in a table, a graph, an equation, with a context).
- Use a task “out of sequence” **before students have memorized a rule** or have practiced a procedure that can be routinely applied.
- **Eliminate components** of the task that confine student thinking or provide too much scaffolding.
- Create opportunities for **repeated reasoning or pattern finding**
- Create a prompt that asks students to **write about the meaning** of the mathematics concept.
- Add a prompt that asks students to make **note of a pattern** or to **make a mathematical conjecture** and to test their conjecture.
- Include a prompt that requires students to **make a generalization**.
- Include a prompt that requires students to **compare solution paths** or mathematical relationships and write about the relationship between strategies or concepts.
- Select numbers carefully so students are more inclined to **note relationships between quantities** (e.g., two tables can be used to think about the solutions to the four, six, or eight tables).