# WHAT IS CONCEPT-BASED TEACHING





Concepts are generalized ideas or notions that can give teachers a lens or perspective with which to explore the facts and skills in a chosen subject area. Concepts are at the center of what facts and skills are taught in the classroom. Concept based teaching lends itself very well to transferring knowledge and skills through various disciplines as it creates a common thread through the subject areas. According to the work of Lynn Erikson (2011), concept-based teaching "facilitates the transfer of understanding through time, across cultures and across situations" (p.99).

The diagram below depicts how a grade 5 teacher may use the concept of adaptation to create a common thread between four subject areas:

#### ADST:

Skills are developed through practice, effort, and action

#### Science:

Concept: Multicellular organisms change and interact with their environment ADAPTATION Canadian society and

### **Social Studies:**

**Immigration** and multiculturalism continue to shape identity

#### **Physical and Health Education:**

Personal choices and social and environmental factors influence our health and well-being

## **BENEFITS OF CONCEPT-BASED TEACHING:**

- Creates an easy point of entry for teachers to link various disciplines through one common lens
- Encourages students to be more flexible with their thinking
- Provides an opportunity to explore topics in non-traditional ways
- Helps students move toward deeper conceptual understanding
- Encourages students to think critically