Depth of Knowledge — question stems for each level

Pick a stem for the thinking you want, then check: does the answer really require that thinking? The verb alone does not set the level. Stems are suggestions from the String blog; the definitions are WebbAlign's.

Level	What the answer requires	Suggested stems	Example: area of a rectangle
1. Recall and reproduction	A fact, a definition or a memorised procedure	What is...? Define... Use the rule to find... Label...	Find the area of a rectangle 8 cm long and 5 cm wide.
2. Skill and concept	A decision about the method, or an explanation with the concept	Explain why... Compare... Show another way... What happens to... if...?	Show with a drawing why we multiply length by width.
3. Strategic thinking	Reasoning in a non-routine situation, possibly with more than one answer	Do you agree that...? Give evidence. Conjecture, then test... What is best if...? Justify.	Do equal perimeters mean equal areas? Support your answer with two examples.
4. Extended thinking	Planning, research and revision over days or weeks	Over two weeks: plan... carry out... present... Design, test and revise...	Design a school garden of no more than 60 m², and defend your design.

Before you label a question

- [ ] I judged by the thinking the answer needs, not by the verb at the start.
- [ ] I did not raise the level because the question is hard or long.
- [ ] The wording is clear; a confusing question is not a deeper one.
- [ ] Level 4 lives in a project assessed with a rubric, not on the test paper.

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