Developing Source-Based Assessments for Social Studies

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Session Objectives

- Understand the need for new in-class assessments for social studies. *(5 min.)*
- Identify the necessary components of a source-based assessment. *(35 min.)*
- Develop a sample source-based question set. *(40 min.)*
- Reflect on how this session will impact your classroom. *(10 min)*

Why Do We Need New Assessments?

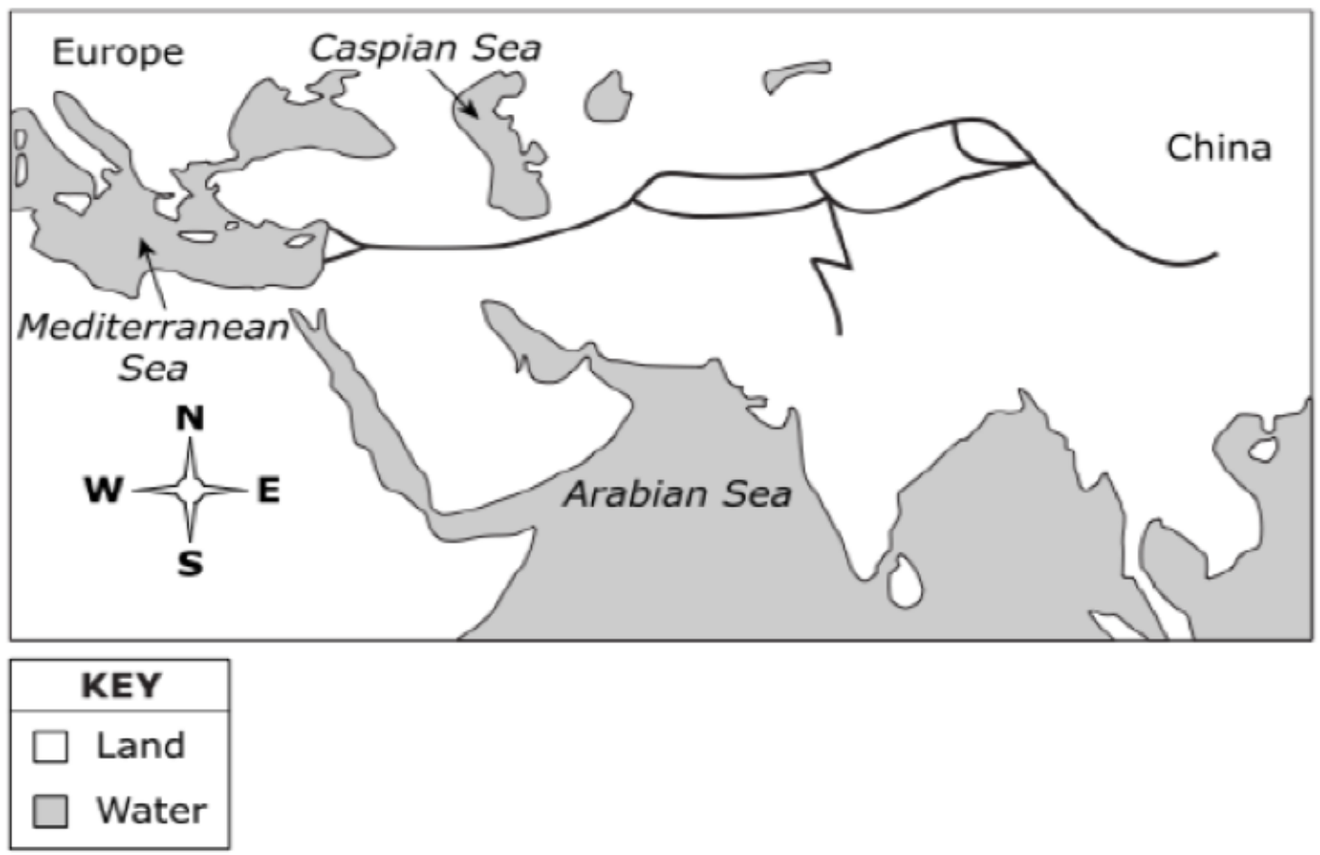
- ~~LEAP2025 has a new format.~~
- Social Studies instruction shifts to students analyzing sources instead of memorizing content.
- Teachers need a better method of assessing student knowledge of broad themes of social studies that are not normally assessed in current classroom assessments.

Shifts in New Assessments

- Questions are based on a set-based design, which include one to four related sources.
- Multiple-choice questions shift from basic recall-level questions to higher-order thinking questions, as well as the addition of multiple-select questions.
- Technology-Enhanced items require students to synthesize information from multiple sources and answer in multiple formats.
- Constructed-response and extended-response prompts are more open-ended than their previous counterparts.

Old Assessment

The Silk Road

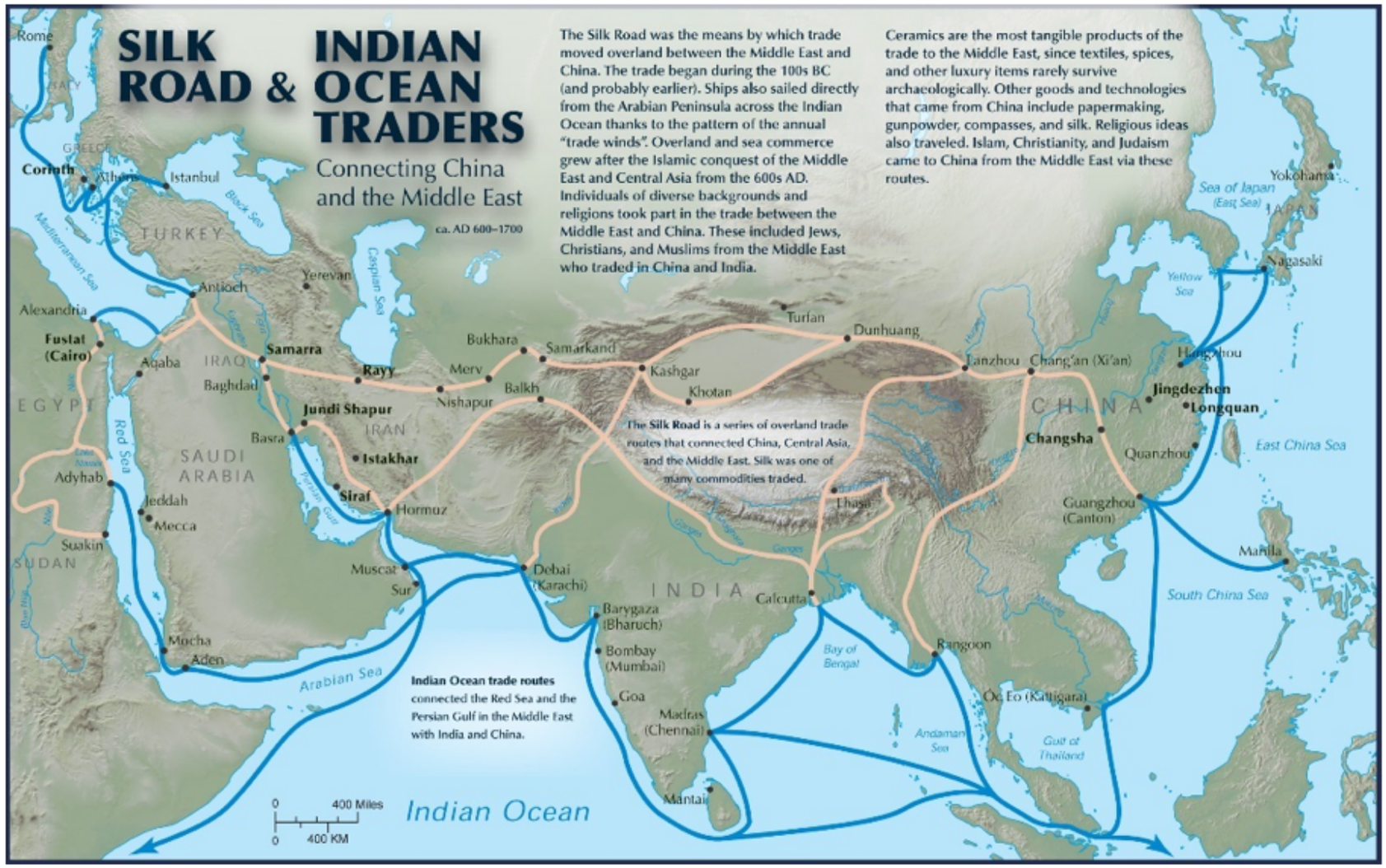


11. Which advance was spread along the route shown on the map?

A. Writing systems
B. Technological innovations
C. A more efficient way to organize labor
D. More democratic forms of government.

New Assessment

Source 1: Silk Road Trade Routes



Source: Unknown publisher

11 Using Source 1, what was the **MOST LIKELY** reason cities like Samarkand and Khotan formed along Silk Road routes in the deserts of Central Asia?

A These cities were located where fresh water and edible crops were plentiful.
B These cities had access to standardized scales to ensure trading goods was fair.
C These cities built feeder roads to connect them to the main trade routes.
D These cities were already capitals of large kingdoms when planners built the Silk Road.

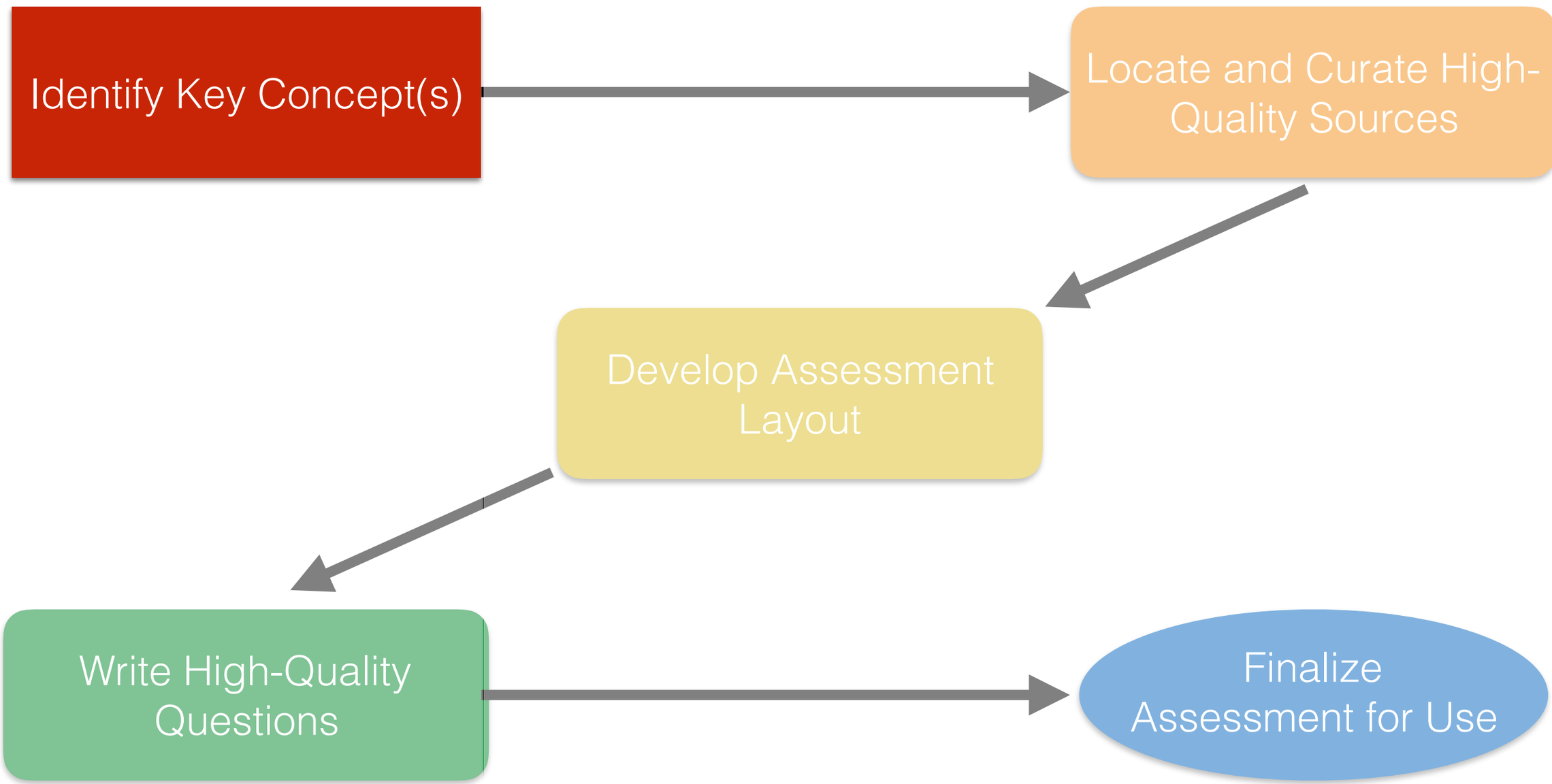
Talk About It

What do we need in order to create an effective assessment that aligns with the goals of social studies instruction?

Non-Negotiables of a High-Quality Assessment

- Questions and tasks are aligned to 2011 GLEs.
- Focus is on key understanding of content and claims.
- High-quality sources allow students to explore content.
- Layout assesses student understanding in multiple ways.
- High-quality questions allow students to demonstrate learning in the topic assessed.

Assessment Development Process



Identify Key Concepts

- Ask yourself this question: “At the end of the day, what do I want students to remember about this topic?”
- Utilize Scope and Sequence document for broad ideas for your assessment.
- Put your key concept in the form of a question and answer it in the form of claims.

American Revolution

What were the major turning points of the American Revolution?

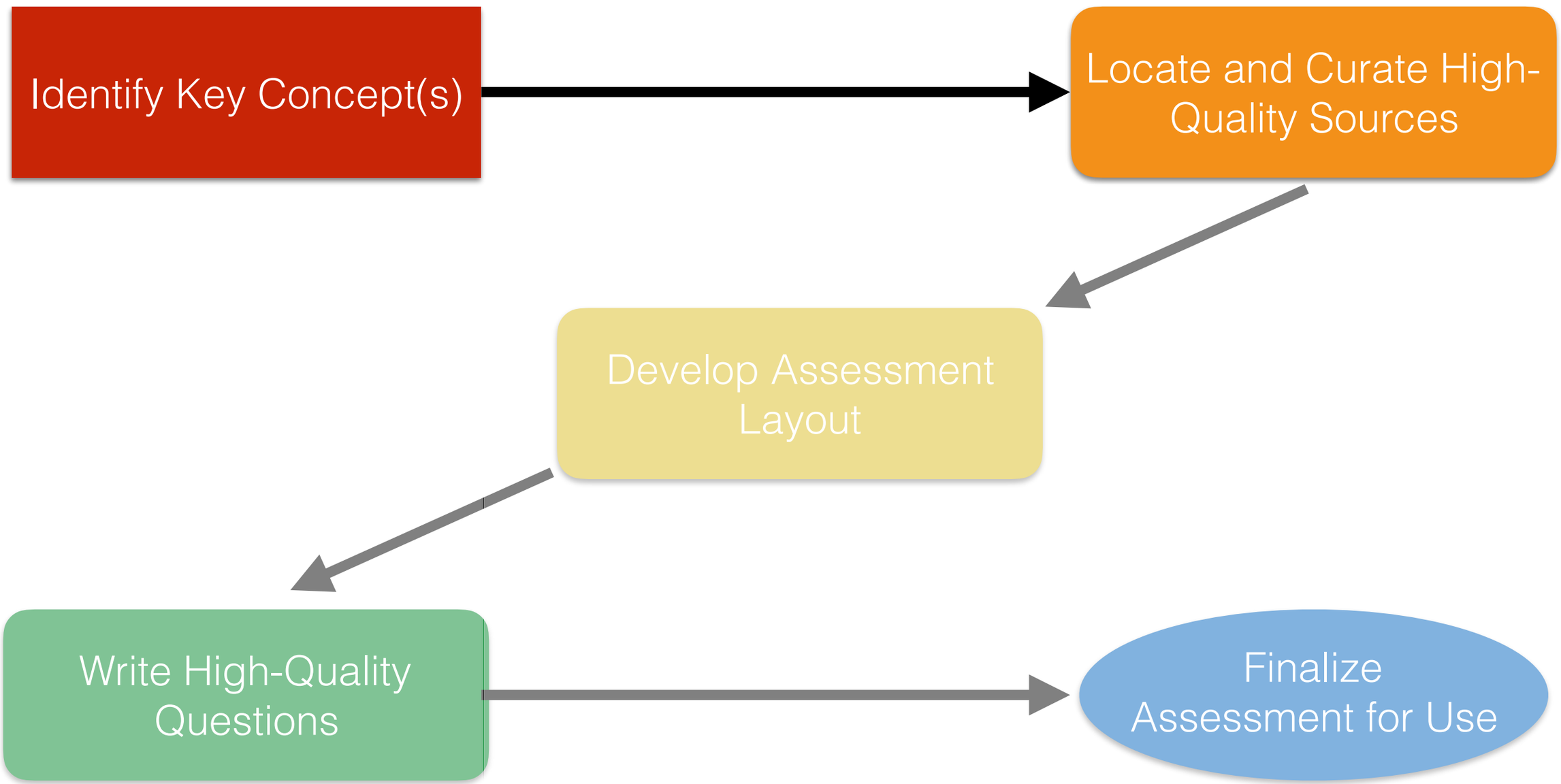
The American Revolution

- Bunker Hill showed the British that they could not defeat the Colonists in a battle where they had time to prepare defenses.

- The Battles of Saratoga ended with a large British army surrendering to the Continental Army and showing foreign countries—especially France—that the Americans' cause was worth fighting for.

- The Battle of Yorktown was the last major battle of the American Revolution. A combined French and American force surrounded the British, who could not escape after the French had defeated the Royal Navy and blocked the British escape route by sea.

Assessment Development Process



Talk About It

What should we consider when looking for sources for an assessment?

Question to ask when considering a source

Does the source earn its place in your item set?

The Elements of a Good Source

- It aligns with the concepts and claims that you have for the assessment.
- It is a source that students can use for information to answer a question and/or activate background knowledge.
- It is a part of a variety of sources within a set—try to avoid sets of only written sources.
- It is a source that is appropriate for students at their grade level.

Editing Written Sources

*Be **<u>VERY</u>** careful when editing written sources—especially in terms of copyright considerations.*

Tips for Editing Written Sources

- Consider the length of the source—choose the passage that will be **most useful** in considering questions.

- Choose sources that have Lexile scores that are within the grade-band range.

- Use footnotes to assist students in understanding unfamiliar vocabulary.

- Adapt or excerpt the text as needed to achieve readability, but strive to maintain authenticity.

Images and other Visual Sources

- Images used as sources should be authentic sources. (Avoid the use of clipart)

- Pictures used as sources should be as clear as possible for students to use for analysis.

- Maps and other graphics should be as clear as possible and focus on the content you are assessing.

Where do I find Primary Sources?

World History

- **Ancient History Encyclopedia** (http://ancient.eu)
- **Eyewitness to History** (http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/index.html)
- **Fordham University's Internet History Sourcebooks Project** (http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/index.asp)
- **World Digital Library** (http://wdl.org/en/)

Where do I find Primary Sources?

US History

- **Library of Congress' Digital Collections** (http://www.loc.gov/library/libarch-digital.html)
- **National Archives' Primary Source Service** (http://docsteach.org/)

Where do I find Primary Sources?

Louisiana History

- **Historic New Orleans Collection** (htto://hnoc.org)
- **Louisiana Digital Library** (http://cdm16313.contentdm.oclc.org/index.php)
- **LSU's T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History** (http://www.lib.lsu.edu/services/oralhistory/)

General Sites for Sources

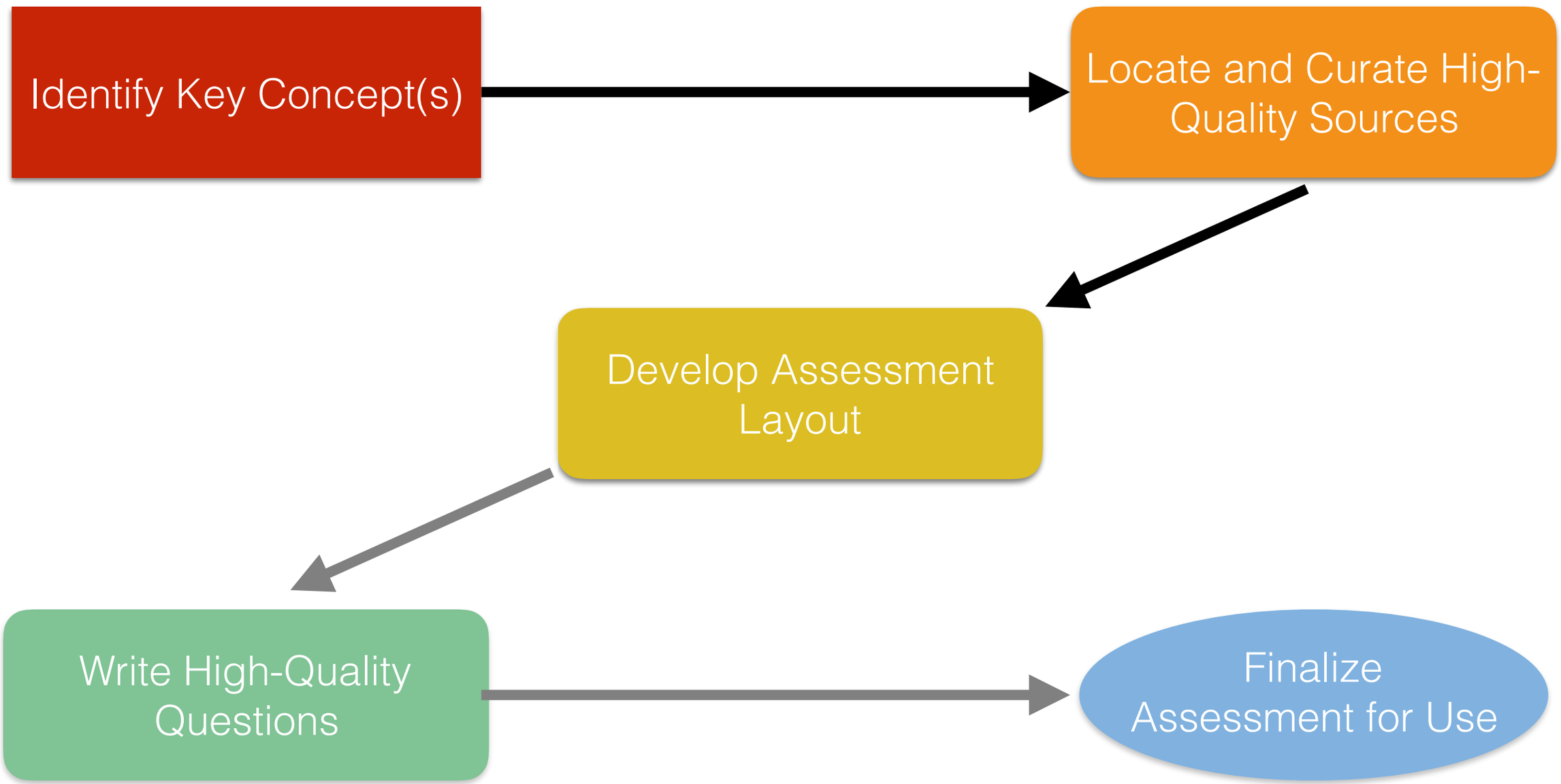
Images (Photos/Maps/Graphics)

- **Wikimedia Commons** [Images are generally copyright-free/Creative Commons]: (https://commons.wikimedia.org)
- **British Museum** [3.5 million images—mostly Creative Commons]: (http://www.britishmuseum.org/)
- **CIA Factbook** [Maps and images are public domain]: (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)
- **NASA Images** [Public Domain]: (https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/)

Text Sources

- **Internet Archive** [Whole texts of public domain books]: (http://www.archive.org)
- **Gutenberg Project** [Same as Internet Archive, but older]: (http://www.gutenberg.org)

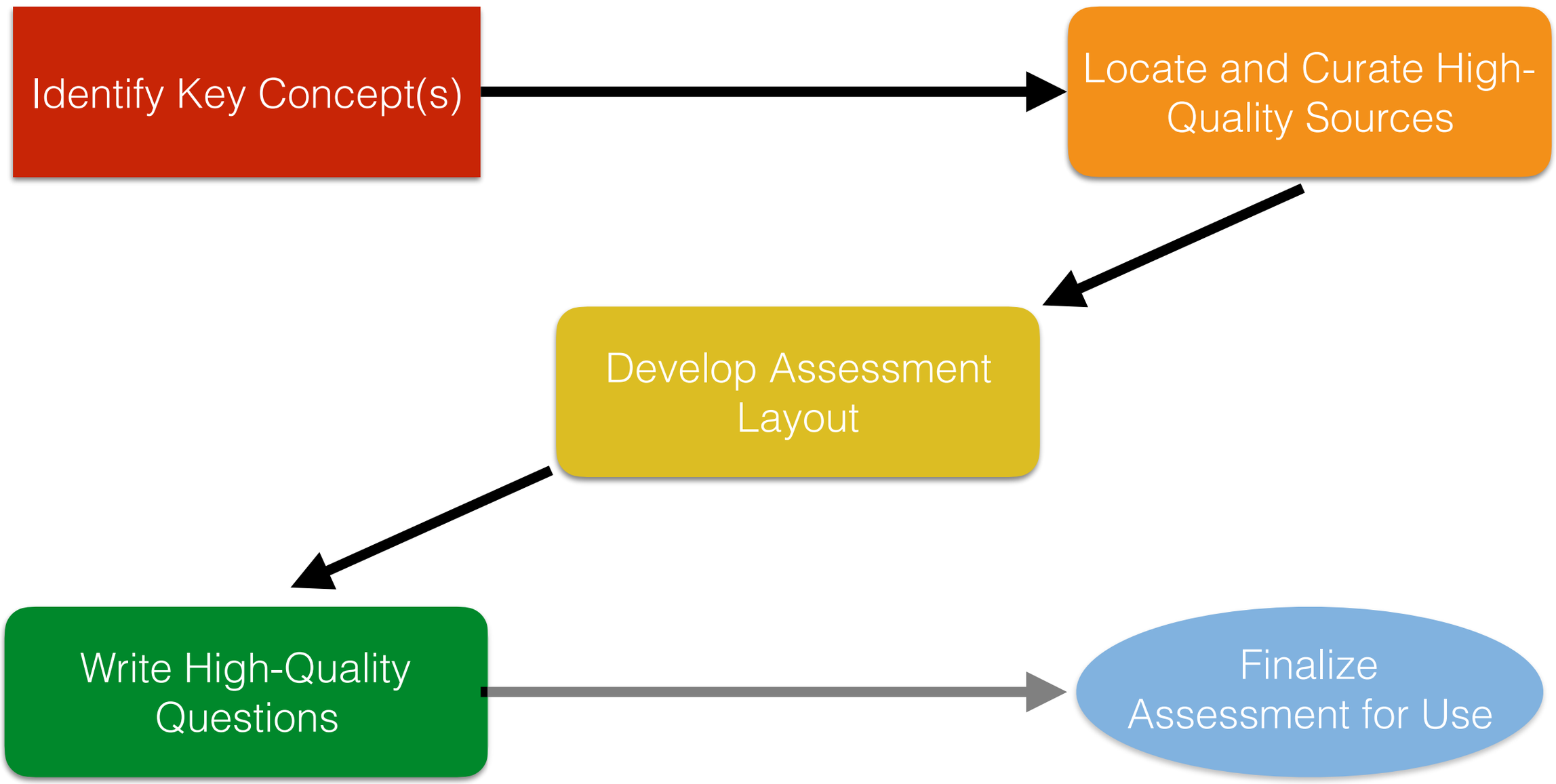
Assessment Development Process



Layout of an Effective Assessment

- Question sets aligned to sources with multiple-choice questions.
- Multiple-select questions can also be included for students to consider multiple responses.
- Each set should conclude with an item that is a culmination of the concepts explored in the topic—either through technology-enhanced item or constructed-response
- When possible include an extended-response item for in-depth assessment.

Assessment Development Process



Talk About It

What makes a good assessment question that accurately assesses student understanding of content and claims?

Rule of Thumb

If Siri can answer the question, then it is not good enough for your test.

Elements of a Good Question

- Not an ambiguous question—students know exactly what they are being asked about.
- Requires the student to use background knowledge to answer the question—even if the supplied source provides evidence to answer the question.
- Keeps the larger themes of social studies in mind even if the question is asking about a specific concept.

Writing Multiple-Choice Questions

- Make sure your questions are more in-depth than knowledge-level questions.
- Don’t fall into the temptation of writing reading comprehension questions—the sources are there for reference.
- Multiple-select questions are welcome, but don’t over-do them.

Let’s Try Writing a Question!

Use the image to write a high-quality multiple-choice question.

Talk About It

How is this new high-quality multiple-choice question different from the questions on your previous assessments?

Technology-Enhanced Items

- Utilizes technology for students to interact with images and organizers.
- Best placed as a capstone item for an item set and uses multiple sources to answer.
- Even if it’s a paper-based test, replicate the style of questions so students are used to interacting with the style of thinking.

Constructed-Response

- A brief written response that utilizes multiple sources in order to answer the question.
- Prompt assesses student understanding of the concept connecting the sources, but not as in-depth as an extended response.
- Rule of thumb is that if it can be answered with a list or easily changed to a multiple-choice item, it is not rigorous enough.
- Worth two points on state assessments.

Extended-Response

- A full essay with claims supported by evidence.
- Essay prompt is more open-ended than previous essay prompts.
- Requires students to engage with source documents while developing claims about social studies content and concepts.
- Graded on 1-dimensional rubric (Grade 3), 2-dimensional content/claims rubric (Grades 4+)

Tip for Prompts

Go back to your original guiding question and place it in a format that students can answer and supply evidence to support their claims.

Content Rubric (Grade 4+)

- Assesses how well the student understands the social studies content asked for in the prompt.
- Level of success depends on the amount of information given in the written response that answers the question asked.
- Content rubric asks for students to give content that is from the sources **<u>and</u>** their own background knowledge.

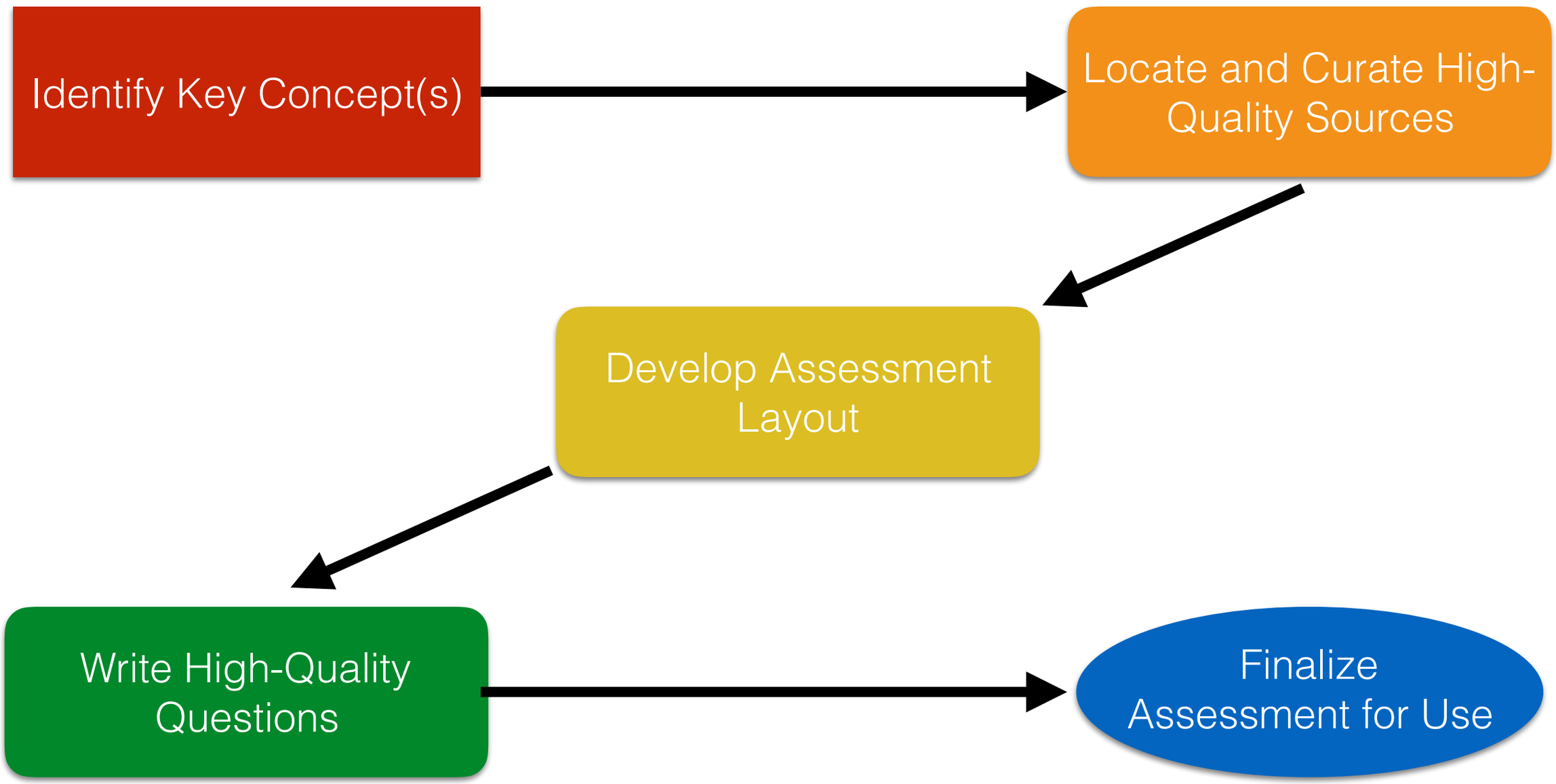
Claims Rubric (Grades 4+)

- Assesses how well the student uses social studies content to make connections to larger themes.
- Focus of rubric is on how well the students support their claim using well-selected evidence that connects knowledge to larger themes of social studies across time and place.

Seven Themes of Social Studies

1. Physical and Human Systems
2. Migration and Settlement
3. Economics and Trade
4. Politics and Governance
5. Society and Culture
6. Conflict and Compromise
7. Continuity and Change

Assessment Development Process



Final Checks for Your Assessment

- Sufficient of all GLEs covered in class.
- Questions align to GLEs and with the sources provided.
- Multiple-choice and multiple-select questions do not cue the student for possible answers to your culminating activity (TEI/CR/ER).
- All sources are cited correctly and formatting of text is uniform.

Let’s Build an Item Set!

Instructions for Activity

- Follow this link to a shared folder with a dozen sources of various types.
- Using the supplied set of sources, develop an item set with 4 multiple-choice questions, a Technology-Enhanced Item, and an Extended Response Prompt.
- Edit the sources as necessary, and align questions to relevant GLEs.

Reflections

- How do these new assessments change daily instruction?
- How do these new assessments impact teacher preparation time?
- How can teachers utilize technology to prepare students for computer-based assessments?
- How can districts assist teachers in developing assessments?

Talk About It

How will you take your learning from this session today forward into your classroom next school year?

Questions?
Comments?

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