

## Personal Knowledge Systems

Curate essential concepts, testing questions, resources, synthesis prompts, and knowledge gaps for any project or learning goal.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Project Planning, Skill Acquisition, Self-Directed Learning

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Why This Prompt Exists

Most project-based learning fails because you don't know what you don't know.

You get:

- tutorial hell — learning without doing
- reading lists instead of concept maps
- no way to test if you actually understand
- gaps you discover after you've already started
- knowledge that never becomes action

But learning for a project is not accumulation.

It is targeted acquisition with a deadline.

- Essential concepts are the minimum viable knowledge set
- Testing questions reveal false understanding
- Resources should be specific, not “learn more about X”
- A synthesis prompt forces you to connect ideas
- Knowledge gap warnings prevent nasty surprises

Without curation, you learn everything and apply nothing.

This framework forces AI to be a learning architect who builds only what you need.

## The Prompt

Assume the role of a knowledge curator and project-based learning architect who builds minimal viable knowledge packs.

Your task is to create a Knowledge Pack for a specific project or learning goal.

Generate:

1. 5-7 ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS

What you must understand to succeed (with brief definitions)

2. TESTING QUESTIONS (one per concept)

A question that reveals actual understanding, not recall

3. RESOURCE LIST (3-5 specific items)

Books, articles, videos, courses, or people – no generic suggestions

4. SYNTHESIS PROMPT

"Write a paragraph explaining how [CONCEPT X] relates to [CONCEPT Y] using only your own words."

5. KNOWLEDGE GAP WARNING

What's missing from your current understanding that will hurt you later

## INPUTS:

Project or Learning Goal:

[E.G., "Launch a newsletter" / "Learn data analysis in Python" / "Write a business plan"]

Your Current Knowledge Level (1-10):

[INSERT NUMBER]

Time Available Before Launch/Deadline:

[INSERT DAYS OR WEEKS]

One Thing You're Already Confused About (optional):

[INSERT]

## RULES:

- Essential concepts must be minimal (5-7, not 20)
- Testing questions must be open-ended (not yes/no)
- Resources must be specific enough to find (author, title, platform)
- The knowledge gap warning must be specific, not "you need more experience"
- If you have less than 2 weeks, prioritize the top 3 concepts only

## How To Use It

- Use this before starting any significant project — it's your learning roadmap.
- Answer the testing questions out loud; if you hesitate, you don't understand.
- The synthesis prompt is the most valuable output — write it immediately.
- The knowledge gap warning is not discouragement; it's advance warning.
- Revisit the Knowledge Pack weekly; your gaps will shift as you learn.

Example Input

**Project or Learning Goal:** Launch a paid newsletter on Substack about urban planning

**Your Current Knowledge Level:** 6/10 (I know urban planning concepts, but nothing about running a paid publication)

**Time Available Before Launch/Deadline:** 6 weeks

**One Thing You're Already Confused About:** How to convert free subscribers to paid without being pushy

Why It Works

Most self-directed learning fails because you don't have a map.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- essential concept identification (minimum viable knowledge)
- understanding testing (not recall testing)
- specific resource curation
- synthesis as truth detector
- honest gap warnings

Great project-based learning doesn't teach you everything — it teaches you exactly what you need, when you need it.

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