

Questioning

Key Principles and Goals

Definition

Questioning challenges students and teachers to use good questions as a way to open conversations and further intellectual inquiry. Effective questioning (by the teacher and by students) deepens classroom conversations and the level of discourse students apply to their work. Teachers use this strategy to create opportunities for students to investigate and analyze their thinking as well as the thinking of their peers and the authors that they read in each of their classes.

Questioning will

- help students practice thinking out loud.
- provide a way for students to engage with content and each other.
- empower students to develop college-level discussion skills.
- improve listening and speaking skills.
- promote student-to-student and teacher-student interaction.

Teachers will

- keep questioning focused and on topic.
- use wait time and pacing to encourage all students to engage.
- ask questions of varying difficulty from basic remembering to higher levels of critical thinking like evaluating and creating.
- encourage student-to-student questioning as well as student-to-teacher questioning.
- use questioning as a formative assessment to gauge where students are in their understanding of the topic.

Students will

- learn from each other's questions to construct new knowledge.
- engage in questioning at various levels of increasing difficulty.
- make connections to prior knowledge and experience.
- work collaboratively to develop higher-level questions.
- become active and reflective listeners and speakers.

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- Promotes student-to-student interaction

Getting Started...

- Tie questions to the student, the text, and the world
- Use a variety of formats to engage all students in answering questions
- Encourage student-to-student questions by allowing think time after a student answers a question
- Set protocols for classroom questioning that give opportunities for all students to ask and answer
- Model question generating and thinking aloud
- Encourage follow-up questions and feedback
- Assist students who struggle with a question by using rephrasing, prompting, and cueing methods
- Make questions succinct by using a simple format and the fewest number of words
- Make questions clear so students can translate them into their own language
- Encourage students to build off of other students' questions and answers
- Prepare quality questions that help students think about, internalize, and utilize information productively
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand a student question

Ultimately, it...

- Encourages critical thinking skills
- Can be used across content areas and grade levels
- Affects how students learn
- Creates opportunities to connect learning with real life experiences and prior knowledge
- Can create a culture of respect for all perspectives
- Helps students and teachers become active listeners