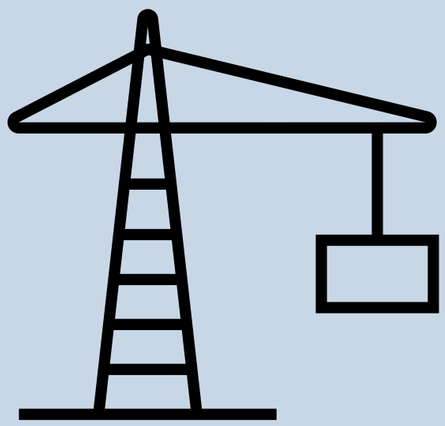
Questioning Techniques

Decide on your goal or purpose for asking questions.

- Your goal should help you determine what levels of questions you ask.
- Choose the material which you consider the most important.
- Write your main questions in advance in your plan of instruction (POI).
- Arrange your list in some logical sequence (specific to general, lower level to higher level, or a sequence related to content).



Effective questions are crucial for engaging classroom discussions.

- Questions should not contain the answers or lead students toward an answer. Instead, encourage open dialogue by asking neutral questions.
- Think about possible answers students might provide. This helps you plan questions that allow flexibility and diverse expressions.

Lower-Level Questions

Use these to measure how much students remember, understand, or apply and are most appropriate for:

- Evaluating students' preparation and comprehension.
- Diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses.
- Reviewing and/or summarizing the content.

Why do I need more than one level of questioning?

- Begin with higher-level questions to challenge students’ thinking.
- If student answers are incorrect or not enough, shift to lower-level questions to gauge understanding.
- Once students can answer lower-level questions, gradually reintroduce higher-level questions with re-teaching.

Remember

Exhibits memory of previously learned material by recalling fundamental facts, terms, basic concepts and answers about the selection.

Question Stems:

- What is...?
- Can you select?
- Where is...?
- When did ____ happen?
- Who were the main...?
- Which one...? - Why did...?
- How would you describe...?
- When did...?
- Can you recall...?
- Who was...?
- How would you explain...?
- How did ___happen...?
- Can you list the three...?
- How is...?
- How would you show...?

Understand

Demonstrate an understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptors and stating main ideas.

Question Stems:

- How would you classify the type of...?
- How would you compare...? contrast...?
- Will you state or interpret in your own words...?
- How would you rephrase the meaning?
- What facts or ideas show...?
- What is the main idea of...?
- Which statements support...?
- Which is the best answer...?
- What can you say about...?
- How would you summarize...?
- Can you explain what is happening...?
- What is meant by...?

Apply

Solve problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different, or new way.

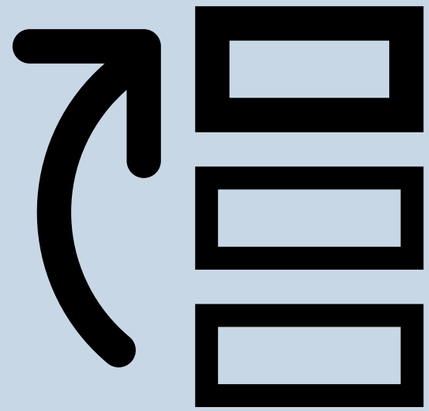
Question Stems:

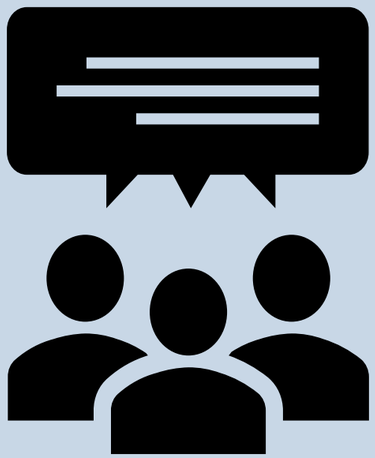
- How would you use...?
- How would you solve...using what you've learned...?
- What examples can you find to...?
- How would you show your understanding of...?
- How would you organize...to show...?
- How would you apply what you learned to develop...?
- What approach would you use to...?
- What other way would you plan to...?
- What would result if...?
- Can you make use of the facts to...?
- What elements would you use to change...?
- What facts would you select to show...?
- What questions would you ask during an interview?

Higher-Level Questions

These questions involve the ability to analyze, evaluate, or create, and are most appropriate for:

- Encouraging students to think more deeply and critically.
- Problem-solving.
- Encouraging discussions.
- Stimulating students to seek information on their own.





Responding to Questions

- Allow students 5-10 seconds to think before responding to questions
- Show genuine interest in students' answers, whether correct or incorrect.
- After a student responds, involve the rest of the class.
- If a student provides an inaccurate or weak answer, ask a follow up question to guide them to a stronger response.

Analysis

Examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.

Question Stems:

- What are the parts or features of…?
- How is _____ related to…?
- Why do you think…?
- Can you list the parts…?
- What conclusions can you draw…?
- How would you classify…?
- How would you categorize…?
- Can you identify the different parts…?
- What evidence can you find…?
- What is the relationship between…?
- Can you make a distinction between…?
- What is the function of…?

Evaluation

Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, the validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria.

Question Stems:

- Do you agree with the action or outcome of…?
- What is your opinion of…?
- How would you prove/disprove…?
- Would it be better if…?
- What would you recommend…?
- How could you determine…?
- How would you prioritize…?
- How would you justify…?
- What judgment would you make about…?
- What would you cite to defend the actions…?
- What data was used to make the conclusion…?
- Based on what you know, how would you explain…?

Synthesis

Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.

Question Stems:

- What changes would you make to solve…?
- How would you improve…?
- Can you elaborate on the reason…?
- Can you propose an alternative…?
- How would you adapt…to create a different…?
- What could be combined to improve/change…?
- Can you predict the outcome if…?
- Can you construct a model that would change…?
- How is…related to…?
- What are the parts or features of…?
- Can you list the parts…?
- What inference can you make…?
- How would you classify?
- Can you make the distinction between.?