



Support units: Professional practice
Overview

Strategies for developing questions

A number of strategies and resources you can use in your engagement with students are shown below.

1. At the beginning of a new unit or an appropriate lesson ask students to write down a list of questions that they would like to know or would expect to know the answer to by the end of the unit or lesson.
2. Use questions (or parts of questions) from past tests or examinations in an integral way within your lessons not just in the context of a particular test or examination.
3. Use the **Development compass rose**
<http://www.teachandlearn.net/teachglobal/cc/u2/a3/development_compass.pdf> to structure questions about photographs.
4. Record an interview with a politician concerning a geographical issue. Play it to older students and assess how effectively they answer the questions posed.
5. Let students choose the questions to decide how a piece of work should be assessed. For example:
 - Students work in pairs to write and present a news report of the effects of a natural hazard
 - After setting the task you can ask students what they should look for when listening to the presentation.
 - A list is made.
 - At the end of the activity the list is examined again and any changes discussed.
 - The piece of work is then submitted for peer assessment.
6. Encourage students to use websites to ask questions of experts. **Volcano World**
<<http://volcano.oregonstate.edu/>> has experts who respond to questions on volcanology. **Ask Jeeves**
< <http://uk.ask.com/>> offers help on most topics by indicating other websites which will answer your question.
7. Use games that are based on questions.
8. Show a slide and invite students to ask any questions they want to about the slide. This gives students the opportunity to find out things that they want to know, and obviously works best with slides that you have taken or know very well.
9. Show a slide and ask a suitable question: 'What is this?', 'What caused it?', 'Where is this?'. Students have 20 questions to find out the answer. You can only answer yes or no.

10. Use 'living graphs' on **Thinking through geography** <<http://www.geoworld.co.uk/pupilresources.htm>> to improve understanding in graphicacy. Ask students to make up their own statements and then swap them with other students.
11. Praise students who ask questions about work they do not understand. Praise those who challenge when complex words or terms (which many of the class would also not understand) are used. Give a surprise reward for a thoughtful or useful question and see if there is an effect on the questioning approach of the rest of the class.
12. Students read a short, but significant, newspaper article. Ask them to convert each statement into a question by putting question marks instead of full stops. Then challenge them to consider the content in this modified way.
13. Go through a whole lesson without answering a single student's question or making a definitive statement. It will not be easy but it will alert you to the status of questions and answers in your classrooms.

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