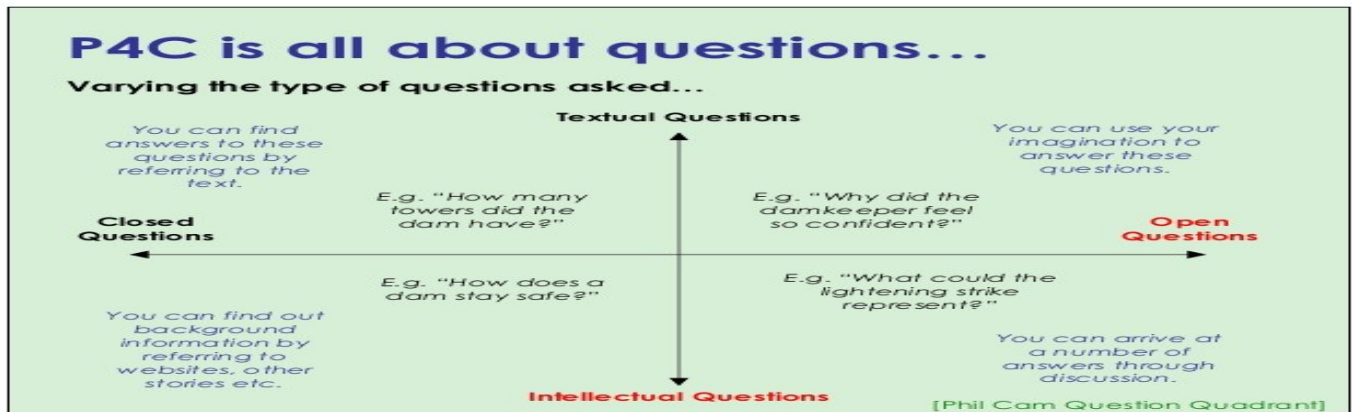


Effective Questioning



By asking these sorts of 'Socratic' questions during the session, your students will develop their own ideas more thoroughly and will learn to challenge others with similar questions.

Questions that seek clarification

Can you explain that...?
 What do you mean by that...?
 Can you give me an example...?
 How does that help...?
 Does anyone have a question...?

Questions that test implications and consequences

What follows (or can we work out from) what you say...?
 Does it agree with what was said earlier...?
 What would be the consequences of that...?
 Is there a general rule for that...?
 How could you test to see if it was true...?

Questions that probe reasons and evidence

Why do you think that...?
 How do we know that...?
 What are your reasons...?
 Do you have evidence...?
 Can you give me an example / counter example...?

Questions about the question / discussion

Do you have a question about that...?
 What kind of question is it...?
 How does what was said / the question help us...?
 Where have we got to / who can summarise so far...?
 Are we any closer to answering the question / problem...?

Questions that explore alternative views

Can you put it another way...?
 Is there another point of view...?
 What if someone were to suggest that...?
 What would someone who disagreed with you say...?
 What is the difference between those views / ideas...?

Research

Hattie suggests that 'the learning aim of any set of lessons is to get students to learn the skills of teaching themselves the content and under-standing' (Hattie, 2012). It is essential that we encourage reflection and curiosity in learning. These characteristics are considered essential in establishing students' ownership of their learning and the ability to drive their learning forward. Philosophy for children provides a framework to challenge students thinking and explore different ideas.

Skilled questioning by teachers can guide students to thoughtful and reflective answers, thus facilitating higher levels of academic achievement. The major moderator of questioning is the type of question asked—surface questions can enhance surface knowing. Higher level questions are more effective when aiming at deeper information and understanding. The use of questions, especially higher order questions can be a "powerful strategy for building comprehension" (Gadamer, 1993) and can lead to "... improved comprehension, learning and memory of the materials among school children as well..." (Craig, Sullins, Witherspoon & Gholson, 2006). So much of class time is spent by teachers asking questions of their students (often 300-400 questions per day – Brualdi, 1998), but usually these are not open, inquiry questions, they are "display questions" that the teacher knows the answer to and do not enhance understanding or thinking.

Hattie's research shows that structuring class sessions to entice, teach and listen to students questioning of students can be powerful. Questioning has an effect size of 0.46 and Philosophy in schools 0.43, thus showing that providing opportunity for pupils to ask and openly discuss questions and supporting teaching staff with questioning skills can have an impact on pupils learning.

why engage in Philosophy for Children?

- Increases cognitive ability (especially for students on the lower end of the ability range)
- Enhances mental health and wellbeing (increasing confidence, self-esteem, reflection, respect for others and feelings of inclusion)
- Improves social skills (including listening and speaking skills, being able to disagree respectfully and strengthened relationships)
- Develops critical thinking skills (demonstrated through pupils' increased questioning and discussion, and expressing a range of perspectives)
- Helps build resilience to extremism (enabling pupils to learn how to listen to other people's opinions and respond respectfully and nonaggressively when these differ to their own. Philosophy for Children also gives pupils a safe environment to discuss challenging topics).