

Questioning - Guide for Teachers

High Quality Questioning Strategy

How Should it be used?

When should it be used?

Ways to adapt for students with SEND

Hinge Questions are key diagnostic questions used to check for understanding at a critical point in the lesson.

They act as a “hinge” — the lesson can only move forward if most students grasp the concept.

1. Plan a single, carefully worded multiple-choice or short-response question.
2. Ensure the question reveals misconceptions clearly.
3. Pose the question to the whole class at the “hinge point.”
4. Collect responses quickly (min whiteboards, clickers, hands up, digital polls).
5. Adjust teaching based on responses

- At key transition points in the lesson.
- Before moving from input to independent practice.
- Before moving from input to independent practice.
- When teaching a threshold concept that underpins later learning.
- To uncover misconceptions before progressing.

1. Provide visuals or simplified language in the question.
2. Offer multiple-choice answers with reduced options if needed.
3. Allow extra time for processing and responding.
4. Provide scaffolds (e.g., key vocab prompts).
5. Use varied response modes (drawing, symbols, physical cues).

Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce

is a structured questioning approach to maximise engagement and accountability.

1. **Pose** a carefully chosen question to the class (open-ended or probing).
2. **Pause** to allow thinking time (3–10 seconds, longer if needed).
3. **Pounce** by directing the question to a specific student (no hands up).
4. **Bounce** the response to another student for elaboration, agreement, or challenge.
5. Repeat to build a chain of dialogue across the room.

- During whole-class questioning.
- To increase participation and accountability.
- When developing reasoning and deeper thinking.
- To build collaborative discussion chains.

1. Give advance warning to students who may be anxious.
2. Provide sentence stems or prompts for responses.
3. Use visual cues or written questions alongside verbal ones.
4. Allow extra wait time before “pouncing.”
5. Give options for shorter/alternative responses if needed.

Say it Better is a questioning technique where the teacher takes a student’s partial, unclear, or informal answer and helps them revise it into stronger academic language—either by modelling it or guiding the student to improve it themselves.

1. Listen to the student’s answer: Identify if the response is correct but vague, imprecise, or casual.
2. Prompt a revision: “Can you say that better?”
3. Support improvement: Offer scaffolding if needed (sentence stems, vocabulary, or examples). If the student struggles, you or a peer can model a stronger version.
4. Have the student repeat or rephrase: Ensure they say the improved version out loud to reinforce learning.

- After a correct but vague answer (e.g., “He was mad” → “He was frustrated because...”)
- When a student uses informal language in an academic setting
- When introducing or reinforcing content-specific vocabulary
- During discussions or written work prep to elevate thinking and expression

1. Ask direct questions - 'Could you improve this by using the word ...'
2. Support improvement
3. Have the student repeat or rephrase
4. Very specific praise - 'I really like how you used the word ... in your answer.'
5. Give additional time to process your response – allow some silence.

Think, Pair, Share

is a cooperative learning strategy where students:

- **Think** independently about a question or problem,
- **Pair** up to discuss their ideas with a partner, then
- **Share** their thoughts with the whole class.

It promotes engagement, deeper thinking, and better communication through peer questioning

1. Pose a question Ask a thoughtful or open-ended question that requires more than a yes/no answer.
2. Think (independent time) Give students quiet time to reflect and jot down ideas. Example: “Take 30 seconds to think about your answer.
3. Pair (partner discussion) Students turn and talk to a neighbor, exchanging ideas. Encourage active listening and respectful conversation.
4. Share (whole-class) Invite individuals or pairs to share out with the group. Use cold calling, volunteer responses, or a few selected voices.

- To launch or conclude a lesson
- After a key question or complex concept
- To break up teacher talk and increase student voice
- To support all learners, especially English language learners or those needing more processing time

1. Additional time at every stage to allow processing.
2. Circulation with support – particularly in partner discussion.
3. Prior warning if you will call on them particularly in whole-class phase.
4. Offer alternative perspectives either through other students or for you to do.

ABC Questions

is a structured talk routine used to improve student dialogue. It gives students clear roles when responding to others in a discussion:

A – Answer the question

B – Build Upon someone’s answer (add detail, give an example, or agree with reasoning)

C – Challenge the response respectfully (disagree or offer a different perspective)

1. **Pose a discussion-worthy question** Open-ended or opinion-based questions work best. Example: “*Why did the character make that decision?*”
2. **Call on a student to Answer (A)** They give their initial response.
3. **Invite a second student to Build Upon (B)** Ask: “*Who can build on that idea?*” They might expand, give evidence, or restate in clearer terms.
4. **Invite a third student to Challenge (C)** Ask: “*Who wants to challenge thinking?*” They respectfully disagree or offer a counterpoint.
5. **Facilitate the flow** Use sentence stems to support: **Build:** “*I’d like to add...*” / “*Another example is...*” **Challenge:** “*I see it differently because...*” / “*What about when...?*”

- During whole-class discussions
- In Socratic questioning or debates
- When analysing literature, data, or perspectives
- To develop critical thinking and collaborative talk skills

1. Have key words prepared or sentence stems – particularly when requiring inference.
2. Ensure focus is maintained when others are talking to allow everyone to be heard.
3. Write down key ideas as discussion occurs.
4. Allow additional processing time.
5. Have the ‘core’ question written down.

Hinge Questions

PosePausePounceBounce

Say it better

Think, Pair, Share

Answer Build Challenge



Questioning - Guide for Students

Hinge Questions

are quick important questions we use to check for understanding if you have understood the key idea.

They act as a “hinge”
If most of the class gets it right, we move on. If lots of people get it wrong, we stop and go over it again.

It's like a hinge on a door — the lesson can swing forward or backward depending on your answers.



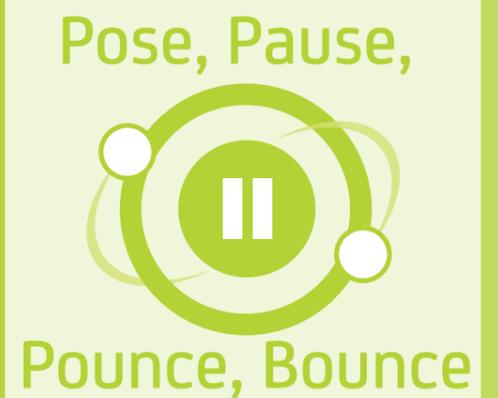
Pose, Pause, Bounce, Pounce

Pose – The teacher asks a question.

Pounce – The teacher chooses someone to answer.

Bounce – The teacher then asks another student what they think about that answer.

Pause – Everyone gets a short time to think.



Say it better

Is when the teacher asks you to take someone's answer and explain it in a clearer, fuller, or more accurate way.

It's not about saying the first answer was wrong — it's about improving it so everyone understands better.



Think, Pair, Share

Think – You stop and think about your own answer first.

Share – Together, you share your best ideas with the class.

It's a way to make sure everyone has time to think, talk, and learn from each other.

Pair – You talk about your ideas with a partner.



ABC Questions

are a way to talk about ideas in class.

A is for Answer: The first person answers the question.

B is for Build: The next

person adds more details or agrees with the first answer.

C is for Challenge: Another person politely disagrees or offers a

new point of view. The goal is to have a good discussion where everyone listens and thinks, not just waiting for the teacher to talk.

