

Asking Good Questions: Question Formulating Technique

Grade	Grades 4 and up
Time	30-45 minutes
Standards for the 21st-Century Learner	
AASL	1.1.6 Read, view, and listen to information presented in any format in order to make inferences and gather meaning.
VA SOL	LA 4.6 Students will use text structures, such as type, headings, and graphics, to predict and categorize information in both print and digital texts. VS.1 The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to d) draw conclusions and make generalizations; Engl 7.6 d Students will differentiate between fact and opinion in nonfiction (Language arts & history SOLS for other grade levels are similar.)
Lesson objective	Students will identify questions that require factual answers and ones that are open-ended. Students will formulate questions that lead to self-directed, focused inquiry.
Vocabulary	Caption —description of photograph or illustration Factual or closed-ended questions —answered by “yes” or “no” or specific information Open-ended questions —answers require evaluating evidence, making decisions using information from several sources, coming to your own conclusion, Inquiry –asking for information
Big Idea	
Essential question	How do questions lead to a deeper understanding of topics?
Materials	
Samuel Wilbert Tucker: <i>The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-in</i> ; Graphic organizer for sorting questions. Photograph from book showing arrested protesters leaving the library.	
Tasks in the Lesson	
Anticipatory activity	Brainstorm questions words and examples of questions. who, what, where, when, how, why
Teaching/Instructional practice	Explain that good readers ask questions and look for answers before, during and after reading. When you think about reading, you think about reading text/words. You can also get information or learn about a story by reading pictures/photographs. As a group, invite students to describe what they see in the photo. Then ask what questions they have about the photo. What are they wondering about. After several examples, split class into pairs or small groups.
Guided practice (10 min)	In pairs or small groups, ask students to write down their questions quickly as they think of them. Rules: 1. Write down every question without judging.2. Don't discuss or answer questions. Then ask students to separate statements from questions. Use a few examples with the class and model how to rewrite statements as questions. Next, ask students to circle question words of factual questions. Report back examples.
Independent practice	Students will rank their questions. Identify 3 questions they want to answer first.
Closure/Assessment	Students will share the questions they want to ask first and explain why.
Differentiation	Increase or decrease the amount of time for each part of the lesson. More or less teacher guidance may be needed to formulate questions.
Next Lesson	Once questions are asked and prioritized, students are ready to look for answers. Instruction on how to identify the type of information needed to answer a questions could be included in a lesson on how to use a table of contents and index to locate information. Then students would read Tucker's biography to answer their questions.