



Knowledge to lead

Conducting a Socratic Questioning

General guidelines

1. **Be a model of 'critical thinking'.** Respect learners' views, check out their understanding, and show authentic interest in their ideas.
2. **Promote a positive and stimulating learning environment.** Acknowledge the value of each contribution and make learners feel both challenged and comfortable in answering questions.
3. **Ask clear and specific questions.** Formulate questions that can encourage and guide the discussion; avoid yes/no questions, as well as ambiguous or too complex ones.
4. **Let learners think before answering.** Give learners at least 5-10 seconds to reflect upon your question; don't be afraid of the silence.
5. **Regularly summarize the main points discussed.** For instance, you might write them down on a blackboard.
6. **Involve as many learners as possible in the discussion.** Draw up their attention and invite the most quiet ones to speak; avoid the discussion being monopolized by few participants.

Questions you might ask

Questions of clarification

- Is the question clear?
- Before answering this question, what other questions should we answer?
- What do you mean when you say ...?
- What is your main point?
- Can you give us an example?



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Questions that probe assumptions

- What are you assuming here?
- You seem to be assuming ... Do I understand your point correctly?
- How would you support your assumption?
- Is it always the case?
- Is this necessary or only possible/probable?

Questions that probe reasons and evidence

- What evidence supports your view?
- Could you doubt that evidence?
- Can someone else give evidence to support that viewpoint?
- How could we verify that hypothesis?
- How did you come to that conclusion?

Questions that probe implications and consequences

- What are you implying here?
- What effect it would have?
- What generalization could we make from this case?
- What prediction could we make concerning what will happen?



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