

# Questioning to bring about deep understanding

When forming questions for students, do so with the intention of bringing about deep understanding for individuals and the class.

Questioning should engage students and bring about critical thinking. A teacher knows if he/she has asked a good question because the question is usually followed by frowns and silence.

It is important to pose questions and allow time for responses. Some questions may take from a day to a week to find an answer. This gives target students the opportunity to engage in the process at their level.

Ask students to sit quietly with their eyes closed for a period of two minutes while they think on a question. Be careful not to target the same students who always seem to respond. Many low achieving students are able to give insightful answers.

Be prepared to extend the class as discussion develops to bring about deeper understanding. Encourage children to also formulate good questions.

Model questions using:

- How
- Why
- What if
- I wonder

Listen carefully to student's responses, clarify and reframe if necessary.

Do not criticise students' answers.

Do not problem solve for students and impose your own thoughts.

Some key questions have been included in the planning documents.

For further ideas on questioning refer to Paul Richard's works:

*Socratic Questions*

*Critical Thinking: How to prepare Students for a Rapidly Changing World.*