

Stretch and challenge

Stretch: *Be capable of being made longer or wider without tearing or breaking.*

Questions that unlock thinking

Explanation – Why might that be the case? How would we know that? Who might be responsible for...?

Hypothetical – What might happen if...? What would be the possible benefits/impact of X?

Evidence - How do you know that? What evidence is there to support this view?

Clarification - Can you put that another way? Can you give me an example? Can you explain that term?

Linking and extending - Can you add to what X just said? How does this idea support/challenge what we explored earlier in the lesson?

Summary and synthesis – What remains unknown at this point? What else do we need to know or do to understand this better?

Metacognition – What was the most difficult part of that task? How would you do it differently next time? How could you approach this question?

Meta questions

- **Before a Task** – How does this link to previous learning? Is this similar to a previous task? What do I want to achieve? What should I do first?
- **During The Task** – Am I on the right track? What can I do differently? Who can I ask for help?
- **After a Task** – What worked well? What could I have done better? Can I apply this to other situations? What was the most difficult aspect of this work? What made it difficult? How did I overcome this?

Encourage speculation:

might, could, perhaps, may, if, possibly, arguably

Consider strategies to introduce new vocabulary (particularly tier 2 and 3 vocabulary).

Thinking Hard

'Learning happens when people have to think hard.' **Robert Coe**

Knowledge and Understanding: Reduce

- Reduce the key argument into a tweet (140 characters) OR 12 words.
- Reduce the paragraph to three key points.
- Reduce this paragraph to 6 words. In pairs compare your words, add the best to your list.
- Explain ... in a maximum of 12 words.

Knowledge and Understanding: Transform

- Change this image into six words/a paragraph.
- Transform this paragraph into a diagram/chart/sketch. No words allowed.
- How does this text/image/performance make you feel?
- Change this idea/event/character into a model.

Analysis: Prioritise

- Change the most serious problem here into an image. No words allowed! Label your partner's image. Why do you think that this problem is so serious?
- Diamond Nine activity. Justify your top three choices.
- Any ranking exercise and justification of top and bottom responses.
- Which of these questions is the most difficult/easiest? Explain why.
- Underline the most important/thought provoking/surprising/shocking statement.
- Neatly cross out the least important point. Explain your thinking.

Analysis: Categorise

- Sort this information into three categories. Highlight and think of a suitable title for each category.
- Group together questions that require the same technique to answer. Highlight in three different colours.

Flexibility: Extend

- Write down three questions you would like to ask...about...
- How is this question/text/image similar to X? How is it different?
- Write a three-step guide for a student to answer these types of questions.

Stretch and challenge

Stretch: *Be capable of being made longer or wider without tearing or breaking.*

Questions that unlock thinking

Explanation – Why might that be the case? How would we know that? Who might be responsible for...?

Hypothetical – What might happen if...? What would be the possible benefits/impact of X?

Evidence - How do you know that? What evidence is there to support this view?

Clarification - Can you put that another way? Can you give me an example? Can you explain that term?

Linking and extending - Can you add to what X just said? How does this idea support/challenge what we explored earlier in the lesson?

Summary and synthesis – What remains unknown at this point? What else do we need to know or do to understand this better?

Metacognition – What was the most difficult part of that task? How would you do it differently next time? How could you approach this question?

Meta questions

- **Before a Task** – How does this link to previous learning? Is this similar to a previous task? What do I want to achieve? What should I do first?
- **During The Task** – Am I on the right track? What can I do differently? Who can I ask for help?
- **After a Task** – What worked well? What could I have done better? Can I apply this to other situations? What was the most difficult aspect of this work? What made it difficult? How did I overcome this?

Able learners like to see the bigger picture; “they require context in order to be motivated to complete an activity or to put in their best effort.”
(*Potential Plus UK*)

Explain the reason for a task, what skills are being learnt through it or where it fits in the knowledge of a subject.

Give students opportunities to explore alternative viewpoints

Encourage speculation:

might, could, perhaps, may, if, possibly, arguably

Consider strategies to introduce new vocabulary (particularly tier 2 and 3 vocabulary).

Ask students to argue the reverse for a quick opportunity to challenge and extend their thinking

Caveats

You can only use short sentences in this speech

You're not allowed to touch the ball more than twice during this match - how will you still make a difference?

You must include at least 5 shades of green in your painting

Your sonnet must follow an ABAB ABAB ABBA BB structure

Flooding

Make students think quickly and carefully about how to regain equilibrium.

Give students a further 4 success criteria and the same amount of time

Give students an additional 2 questions to answer in the same amount of time

Give students an additional 3 sources to analyse in the same amount of time

Conceptual questioning - asking students to manipulate abstract ideas

Were the witches right to tell Macbeth the future?

What if we could speed up and slow down natural selection?

Why is only one of these pictures a masterpiece?

How does a business know if it thinks about value in the same way as its customers?

Is it ever okay for friends to lie to each other?

Semantic interrogation

Yes, but why is this the case?

Why might this be true?

What is the reason behind this?

Why should someone do it this way and not this way?

Why is there a connection between these two things?

Concept exploration - inviting students to explore concepts in more depth

Persuasive writing

As the rest of the class continue with the main task, present most able students with examples of persuasive writing from three different eras (an advert from the 1960s, one from the 1980s and one from the 2000s) and ask them to compare and contrast: Do you think persuasive writing has stayed the same over time?

If questions

If you had to introduce a new character into the story, where would you do it and why?

If we had used a different solution, then what might have happened and why?

If we adopt pressing tactics in the first-half, how might it play out across the game as a whole?

If Catherine of Aragon had given birth to a son, how might Henry's reign have been different?

Try it this way - then tell me about it

In a Maths lesson show students an alternative method (for long division for example) - get them to try this method before discussing the results and evaluating the processes.

Verbal feedback

Provide students with a target and a limited amount of time in which to implement it
Encourage them to think more critically about their work or to try to take a different approach from the one they usually favour
'Who's to say that this is the only way this could be tackled?'

Argue the reverse

When a student knows what they think about a given topic, arguing the reverse is a challenge.

From *'50 Quick Ways to Stretch and Challenge'* Mike Gershon