

Powerful Questions

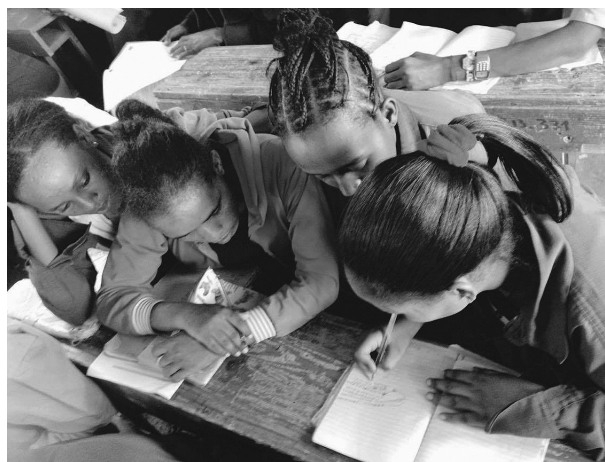
The Powerful Questions technique is used to build comprehension, inferential thinking, listening skills, understanding, and interest. Either an object or image are used as the focal point for questions. After the object or image have been revealed, the students initially observe the object or image, then share questions from their observations. This technique develops inquiry skills while enhancing observation abilities. It is important that no questions are answered during the exercise. Ultimately quality questions frame deeper answers and understanding.

Object or Photographic Image

Either an object or an image work well for this exercise. When presenting an object refer to it as a common object (or similar generic term). This stimulates enhanced observation skills, especially when an object might be several different things. With an image or photograph, it is best to choose one that has some unknown to it (e.g. a half built igloo - is it being built or taken apart?). It is an excellent tool to use an image from a text or book that is being studied as an introduction. Newspapers are also an excellent source of images which becomes an excellent anticipatory set prior to reading the article.

Order of Technique

State you will be shown a common object (or image) which we'll ask questions about. Initially they will be shown the object (or image) and quietly observe it. The students could closely gathered around the object, the teacher could be walking around the room, or each small group could have one of the objects. The students are informed we will only ask questions—they then start presenting their questions. It is best the teacher doesn't repeat the questions, instead having the students repeat their own questions so the focus is on them and they hone their presentation skills. They will be able to see the object or image throughout the time they are sharing questions. An extension is pair/share or small group sharing of questions prior to whole group sharing. This could also be done during the technique to further develop questions.



If the object or image is something they are studying, the questions might be recorded on poster paper. In higher grades two students would write the questions and in lower grades the teacher would write the questions. The person(s) who asked each question might also be noted next to their question to honor them when using the questions during a later study.

The teacher never provides answers and only occasionally asks a question themselves. They might ask a question to offer a new direction, different frame of reference or a deeper extension. e.g. about the perspective of who took the photograph or who invented/designed an object.

Reread all the presented questions to that point several times during Powerful Questions. This recap honors the presented questions while stimulating ideas for deeper inquiry.

Sharing Questions

Questioning in Depth - Developing Deeper Questions - Growing Understanding

To start *Sharing Questions* the two participants must initially decide on a topic to question. One person starts with an open ended question, then the other person responds with a related open ended question. This continues back and forth with the two participants. The process can start from an object, a topic, a photograph and/or a video. An example is an object in the room such as a light bulb:

- Questioner A: *How does a light bulb work?*
- Questioner B: *Who designed the current light bulb?*
- Questioner A: *Who invented the light bulb?*
- Questioner B: *Why would someone invent the light bulb?*
- Questioner A: *How can we improve the light bulb?*



Sharing Questions

