



Socratic Questioning Learning Strategies

Strategies using the Socratic Question stems cube, booklet, or question sheet:

1. Select a topic - see *Teachers Design A Question Focus* - [Questioning Strategies – QFT](#))
 - **Literature** - Any piece of literature or subject content may be the Focus for the questions.
2. Place learners into groups of 2-4.
3. Have groups select roles of:
 - a) Recorder
 - b) Reporter
 - c) Timekeeper - let group know how much work time is left and encourage to keep on task
4. Materials: Give each individual/group one of the following:
 - Paper or digital device for recording questions
 - [Socratic Question Stems](#) - Printable page format
 - [Socratic Question Stems Cube](#) - Question stems on a foldable cube for use with Revised Bloom's Questioning Learning Strategies.
 - [Socratic Question Stems Mini Booklet](#) - Foldable Mini Booklet Format
 - [Mini Booklet Directions](#)
5. Review the difference between levels of Socratic Questioning - [Designing Effective Projects: Questioning The Socratic Questioning Technique](#) - explanation of the Socratic questioning technique and [open and closed ended questions](#) . If desired, let them know they will be given the opportunity to identify their best questions and change them from closed to open-ended.
6. For all strategy options groups are to rotate through members of the group allowing each learner the opportunity to share a question. A 'PASS' is acceptable.
7. Follow brainstorming rules where all questions are acceptable and allow variations on wording when appropriate.



Introducing or reviewing a concept or unit of study:

- **Option #1:**

- On a sheet of paper or digital device have the recorder list the six types of Socratic Questioning leaving a space after each.
- Beginning with the first level, for a specified period of time have them go around the group with each learner offering a question using one of the question stems. When there are 4-6 questions in that category, the group is to move to the next level until all six levels have at least 4 questions.
- Have them evaluate their questions and select the best 2-3 in each category.
 - Try to make this process as neutral as possible, give each member the opportunity to express their opinion along with a supporting reason “WHY?”
 - Extension: Have the group change any closed questions to open-ended.
- Have each group share their best questions and then post them in an easy-to-view place to reference during the unit study

- **Option #2:**

- Assign each group one of the six questions types.
- Instruct the recorder to write down the question type as the heading on paper or digital device and record the brainstormed questions.
- Give a specified period of time and instruct learners to go around the group and brainstorm as many questions as they can for their assigned question type using the questions stems on the cube. Other type appropriate questions stems are allowed. (Might be able to access others on their digital devices)
- Have them evaluate their questions as to open or closed ended and, if found, change a closed question to open-ended.
- Have the group select the best 2-4 questions for their assigned level.
- Have each reporter share with the group and then post the questions in an easy-to-view place to reference during the unit study.

- **Option #3:**

- Post 6 large sheets of paper around the room with one of the questions types written at the top.
- Divide the learners into 6 groups and have them rotate for a specified time to all

- the sheets writing down their question suggestions on the posted sheet.
- After the last rotation have the group at each sheet evaluate the questions as to whether they are open or closed and change a specific number to open-ended. Have the group's reporter share their top 2-3 with the whole group. Keep sheets posted or accessible for use during unit study.

- **Option #4: Using the cube**

(Ideal for each learner to have a stem list to reference. If each has a cube, it **must** be left on the table until it's their turn with hands off.)

- Give each group a question cube and the topic. The reporter will need paper or digital device to record group's questions. Specify a work time, i.e. 8-10 minutes. Allow more time if groups are working productively.
- Time keeper - Give a half time and 2 minute time notice to let groups adjust work time.
- After assigning roles, give the following instructions:
 - The person to the left of the Recorder will begin the round with the cube.
 - Toss it gently in the air (demonstrate to clarify expectation). Beginning with the person to the left of the one with the cube, each learner will offer one question beginning with the word or one of the questions stems. If someone can't think of a question, say, "PASS". Other level appropriate questions stems are allowed. (Might be able to access on their digital devices)
 - The recorder will write down all questions on paper or digital device under that question category.
 - After once around, pass the cube to the left and follow the previous instructions.
 - If the same question side comes up more than twice, the cube may be tossed again until all 6 sides have been used.
- After the last rotation have the group evaluate the questions as to whether they are closed or open-ended and change a specific number to open-ended.
- Have the group's reporter share their top 2-3 with the whole group and then post the questions in an easy- to-view place to reference during the unit study.
- This also lends itself to using as the **Fish Bowl Strategy** to accumulate student created questions.