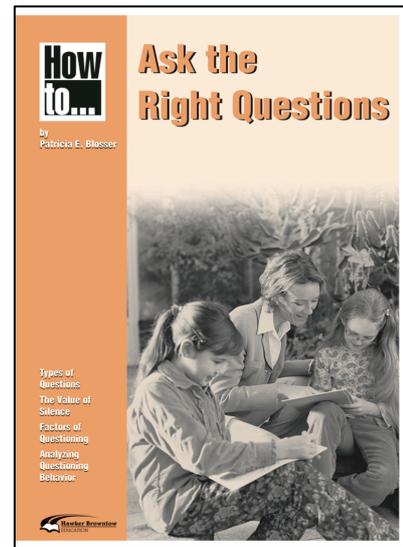


How to... Ask the Right Questions

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Summary:

Questions, questions, questions! They are a large part of a teacher's stock-in-trade. We use questions to help students review, to check on comprehension, to stimulate critical thinking, to encourage creativity, to emphasise a point, to control classroom activities, reduce disruptive behaviour, to help determine grades, to encourage discussion, to discourage inattentiveness, and for other reasons and purposes. Questioning style and content varies from teacher to teacher, student group to student group, and situation to situation.

If students are to discover, if students are to become better problem solvers, if students are to comprehend that their intuitive, everyday ways of explaining the world around them need to be adapted in order to better describe, predict, explain and control natural phenomena – they need to develop higher-order thinking skills. The kind of questions teachers ask influence the level of thinking operations students engage in.

The aim of this "*How to...*" booklet is to help teachers focus on a common teaching activity – the asking of questions.

This booklet is devoted to providing some methods which you can use to analyse your questioning strategies and to suggest some techniques for developing variety in the kinds of questions you ask. To illustrate some of the classifications and concepts discussed, excerpts from a videotaped lesson to Year 3 students on magnetism appears at the end of this booklet.

Supporting Resources:

- *Quality Questioning – Research-Based Practice to Engage Every Learner* (CO4425)
- *Thinking Through Quality Questioning: Deepening Student Engagement* (CO1005)
- *Teaching as Inquiry: Asking Hard Questions to Improve Practice and Student Achievement* (TCP1670)