Making Questioning More Effective

When planning effective questioning it helps to focus on **why** you are asking the question in the first place. The chart below shows some of the many purposes for asking questions in a classroom.

Purpose of question	Examples
To prompt students to reflect on their conceptual understanding	• What is the most important idea from today's discussion? • Can you explain this concept in your own words? • Replace 'Do you understand? with 'Give me an example so I know you understand.
To ask a student to clarify a vague comment	• Could you say a bit more on that point? • Can you explain that a little more?
To prompt students to explore attitudes, values, feelings	• What are the values or beliefs that inform this argument? • What has influenced how you feel/what you believe about this topic
To prompt students to see a concept from another perspective	• How do you think that this issue might be viewed by those with whom you disagree? • Imagine how this might apply to another situation or problem?
To prompt students to support their assertions and interpretations	• How do you know that? • What has led you to that conclusion? • Where is the evidence? Is it reliable?
To prompt students to respond to one another	• What do you think about the idea just presented by your classmate? • Do you agree or do you see the issue differently? Explain.
To extend and deepen students thinking	• What are the assumptions that informed your thinking? • What/who influenced your thinking?
To ask students to predict possible outcomes	• What might happen if…? • What are some possible consequences of…? • What would be the result if a different set of assumptions were used to set up this scenario?
To prompt students to connect and organise information	• How does this shed light on the concept we studied last week? • Can you develop a graph or table that organises this information in a helpful way?
To ask students to apply a principle or formula	• How does this principle apply to this situation? • Who can suggest how we might use this new formula to solve the problem we examined earlier?
To ask students to illustrate a concept with an example	• Can you think of an example of this, drawn from your experience? • Can you point to a specific part of the novel that shows this theme? • Can you identify a painting or design that exemplifies that idea?

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