

Examples of Open Ended Questions

REMEMBERING

Useful Verbs

Tell, list, describe, relate, locate, write, find, state, name.

Sample Question Stems

What happened after...?

How many...?

Who was it that...?

Can you name the...?

Describe what happened at...?

Who spoke to...?

Can you tell why...?

Find the meaning of...?

What is...?

Which is true or false...?

UNDERSTANDING

Useful Verbs

Explain, interpret, outline, discuss, distinguish, predict, restate, translate, compare, describe.

Sample Question Stems

Can you write in your own words...?

Can you write a brief outline...?

What do you think could of happened next...?

Who do you think...?

What was the main idea...?

Who was the key character...?

Can you distinguish between...?

What differences exist between...?

Can you provide an example of what you mean...?

Can you provide a definition for...?

APPLYING

Useful Verbs

Solve, show, use, illustrate, construct, complete, examine, classify.

Sample Question Stems

Do you know another instance where...?

Could this have happened in...?

Can you group by characteristics such as...?

What factors would you change if...?

Can you apply the method used to some experience of your own...?

What questions would you ask of...?

From the information given, can you develop a set of instructions about...?

Would this information be useful if you had a ...?

ANALYSING

Useful Verbs

Analyse, distinguish, examine, compare, contrast, investigate, categorise, identify, explain, separate, advertise.

Sample Question Stems

Which events could have happened...?
I ... happened, what might the ending have been?
How was this similar to...?
What was the underlying theme of...?
What do you see as other possible outcomes?
Why did ... changes occur?
Can you compare your ... with that presented in...?
Can you explain what must have happened when...?
How is ... similar to ...?
What are some of the problems of...?
Can you distinguish between...?
What were some of the motives behind...?
What was the turning point in the game?
What was the problem with...?

CREATING

Useful Verbs

Create, invent, compose, predict, plan, construct, design, imagine, propose, devise, formulate.

Sample Question Stems

Can you design a ... to ...?
Why not compose a song about...?
Can you see a possible solution to...?
If you had access to all resources how would you deal with...?
Why don't you devise your own way to deal with...?
What would happen if...?
How many ways can you...?
Can you create new and unusual uses for...?
Can you write a new recipe for a tasty dish?
Can you develop a proposal which would...

EVALUATING

Useful Verbs

Judge, select, choose, decide, justify, debate, verify, argue, recommend, assess, discuss, rate, prioritise.

Sample Question Stems

Is there a better solution to...
Judge the value of...
Can you defend your position about...?
Do you think ... is a good or a bad thing?
How would you have handled...?
What changes to ... would you recommend?
Do you believe?
Are you a ... person?

How would you feel if...?
 How effective are...?
 What do you think about...?

The Question Matrix

Chuck Wiederhold (1991) designed this matrix. It includes the six well-known question starters of *what*, *where*, *which*, *who*, *why* and *how*. These have then been combined with *is*, *did*, *can*, *would*, *will* and *might*.

The matrix has 36 question starters for any topic that move from recall questions to more analytical, creative and critical thinking. This matrix can be used by teachers and by students to design questions.

	EVENT	SITUATION	CHOICE	PERSON	REASON	MEANS
PRESENT	1. What Is?	2. Where/ When Is?	3. Which Is?	4. Who Is?	5. Why Is?	6. How Is?
PAST	7. What Did?	8. Where/ When Did?	9. Which Did?	10. Who Did?	11. Why Did?	12. How Did?
POSSIBILITY	13. What Can?	14. Where/ When Can?	15. Which Can?	16. Who Can?	17. Why Can?	18. How Can?
PROBABILITY	19. What Would?	20. Where/ When Would?	21. Which Would?	22. Who Would?	23. Why Would?	24. How Would?
PREDICTION	25. What Will?	26. Where/ When Will?	27. Which Will?	28. Who Will?	29. Why Will?	30. How Will?
IMAGINATION	31. What Might?	32. Where/ When Might?	33. Which Might?	34. Who Might?	35. Why Might?	36. How Might?

©The Question Matrix by Chuck Wiederhold, taken from *Co-operative Learning and Higher Level Thinking—The Q-Matrix*.

PRESENT / PAST To check what I know or need to understand I can ask.....

POSSIBILITY / PROBABILITY To learn more about it I can ask.....

PREDICTION / IMAGINATION To challenge my thinking I can ask.....

EXAMPLES FROM THE MATRIX

So you learnt about Whales today.....

Question: What sort of animal is a whale?

Response: It is a big fish / it is a mammal

Question: that's right... where do whales live?

Response: in the water

Question: where would we need to go if we wanted to see a whale?

Response: to the sea

Question: Yes we could! Where else could we see a whale?

Response: in the /beach/ zoo, aquarium

Question: Why do you think so many people want to see whales?

Response: because they are so big/ they are dying out

Question: Why do you think people want to hunt whales? etc