

OVER 300 IDEAS TO INVITE STUDENTS INTO LEARNING, THINKING, GOING DEEPER & REFLECTION

This is a curated list of ideas from a twitter thread that began as a tweet I shared on August 13, 2021. The response was powerful! The impact of our global collaboration and sharing is a gift. Note: some of the ideas have been slightly revised for clarity. Some of the ideas do not include images or references to other materials due to copy right law. This list has not been categorized in any way. Enjoy!

Share your reasons with evidence - <https://thinkingpathwayz.weebly.com/culturesofthinking.html>

Categorizing questions into how we use them, such as: Exploring, Making Meaning, Reflecting, Understanding, Analysis of Meaning in Text, Applying the Learning to Outside Text, Thinking Deeper, Walking the Knowing Road, Processing the ideas in our world and Processing your ideas about the world, Connecting and Bridging Concepts

I enjoy visible thinking strategies. Some of my favorites: Compass Points; Connect, Extend, Challenge; What Makes You Say That

I always ask *what do you notice?* and *what do you wonder?* with my Grade 2s. Also *what can we add to our understanding of....?* with this (new book, photo, video whatever the prompt is), *is there anything we have seen or heard before?*

Reflections:

- 1) How has your thinking about X changed as a result of __?
- 2) What do you most want to remember a yr from now?
- 3) What 3 skills were most important to your leaning?
- 4) What would you do if you had 1 more week to continue your work?
- 5) What are you most proud of?

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Thinking: we are going to write down every question you have about X. We can choose our favorite questions later, so right now, focus on asking everything that you could ask.

- 2) What do you already know about X?
- 3) Describe what you notice about X.
- 4) Record details/collect evidence.

Remember to stay “Present” as you observe. Raise your awareness to the differences you can see, hear, feel, or touch. How can you describe the differences that you observe?

Going Deeper:

- 1) What big idea connects to what you are noticing?
- 2) You are seeing the forest, can you connect that forest idea to the trees and leaves?
- 3) What patterns or trends exist? Why might they matter/have significance?
- 4) Apply a lens (we learn many different lenses). What do you notice about X now? Why might that matter?
- 5) If you were a historian (or other relevant specific profession), what more would you need to know?
- 6) What questions do you have now? What more do you want to know?
- 7) Explain it to me like I know nothing about X

- 1) When you think about X, how do you feel? Y? What do you value that leads to that answer? Think about how that value informs this work or study.
- 2) What info or words do we need to know in order to ask meaningful questions about X?
- 3) How can your passions connect to X?

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QuSmart project works on developing children's scientific questioning -
<https://seerih.manchester.ac.uk/research/>

I like the word *challenge*. I even say in the syllabus *make sure you challenge the text, challenge me, challenge your peers*. I often say how much better my course is with all of their ideas and participation.

Also in online discussions, I've had good luck with requiring three steps: (1) reflection (your own thoughts on the reading not a recap), (2) connection (tell a personal story that relates), (3) action (what is something you might do differently now).

What makes you say that?

Can you *show* it? Make it visible?

Can you justify your response?

Can you compare and contrast the given examples/problem/scenarios?

What can you do with this piece of information?

A very simple invite for my students who don't want to say that they are unsure of what to do with independent work: "Did I make sense or do I need to say it a different way?" A small but mighty success every time a kid says, 'say it a different way.'

Third Grade: The class says 'beep, beep, beep (like a big truck backing up) Back it up.'

Not exactly a question, but it works great for digging deeper and the silly jingle sticks with them.

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How do you think you've arrived at that thought? Where did that knowledge come from?

I use lots of questions. I also include affirmations: "your idea/question is making me see/understand this in a new way." "I have been learning this for over 20 years, and I still find new understandings."
"Raise your hand if you had the same question as ___."

For tasks they don't enjoy, ask them to reflect on how doing something they like makes them feel. Do any of those feelings connect? If they don't see value or connection: How can you use this assignment to help you do more of what you enjoy?

"What's worth talking about?" It's such a simple question but truly gets kids thinking, reflecting and analyzing a text in a different way.

I'm honest: "Today we'll be reading stuff that'll make you uncomfortable. You may want to close the book. That's ok. I feel the same way. While I don't enjoy reading some of these words, I love discussing them with you. YOU are why I chose this material. Let's go."

I like using language experiences to introduce inquiries so students can play and explore. The questions come naturally from the students based on their experiences and observations. I feel authentic experiences makes questions feel organic rather than scripted

Ask "why?" and "so what?"

Can you say more about that?

Thinking Routines mostly. One in particular never lets me down: What Makes You Say That?

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I have a list of Socratic Seminar that my s's and I use to question/discuss. We start with comprehension and work our way to evaluation (note: not resharing here due to copyright)

“What makes you say that?”

“Say more”

"Narrate your work" or "tell/show me/us your mathematical thinking" Also, I do lots of follow-up "what if" questions. For example: What if it was $2(x+5)=20$ instead of $2x+5=20$? What if the 2 was negative instead of positive? What if triangle wasn't isosceles? Etc.

Questions are often more important than answers. Habits before goals. 4Cs. Self-designed assignments. Routine around thinking. Accountability is vital. What do you know/think you know/know you know?. Reflection IS assessment. Make your learning public on your site. QFT. We are partners in the inquiry process. At our round table meetings, students should always be ready to share good news and what they're grateful for (many don't share in September/Oct but give them time!). Creativity = new and valuable. Collaboration vs cooperation

What resonated with you? How did this model fit with your experience? How does your perspective compare/contrast with x's? Could you elaborate on your reasoning here?

Tell me more. What makes you say that? I am wondering why...? How do you know that? Can you prove it? Has there been a shift in your thinking? How will you know if you have been successful?

Why do you think that? How do you know this? What questions do you still have?

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Tell me more. Explain that again. How does that connect? What are you curious about? How did you get there? Why do you think that?

With my government students sometimes: Sounds like a politician's answer: *let's get more specific.*

What needs to be clarified?

How does this connect to yourself, our class, our community, & our world?

What difference has learning about x made to you, the people around you, the planet we all share?

I want students to take risks in their thinking but they are so afraid of the criticism that comes from being wrong in MS. I tell them that if they aren't sure they can just say "maybe..." before sharing ideas. I've also heard of this referred to as *first draft talk*.

It's interesting to see how inquiry language differs in higher grades - early years here and I use language like "I wonder..." or "I'm curious about..." to model an inquiry stance. I say it loudly and take children on a learning journey and with reflection of learning. Last year, near the end of the school year the children in my classroom could be heard saying "I'm curious" and "I wonder" statements, mostly Thai speaking students picked up the language of inquiry. It was joyful to see their mind ready for inquiry learning for next year!

I say, "I know you've never thought about this before but I want you to think about it now".

I ask, "What do you think?" And then I listen.

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What do you notice?

Explain your thinking. Interesting, does anyone have a different way? Is there another perspective?

What would an older person think?

How has your thinking changed?

I love using the VT question *what makes you say that?* and then spin with, *what makes you think that, feel that, question that?* depending on the context of engagement.

Which perspective tells the story right?

Weekly project journal: *What were you trying to do? What did you do? What worked? What didn't? What can you do to make it better? What questions do you have?*

"We don't have to agree, but I do want to know why or how you think what you think..." I try pushing for more metacognition.

What do you notice, what do you wonder, what do you observe? in kindergarten

How do you feel about that?

Does anybody have a better way of saying it?

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Find a learning spot in your mind and mark a zone for __. When __ is being considered, revisit the space, get to know it, this is your sandbox, a storage bin, a zone for exploration and constructing understanding without bounds. When you hear __ go to this place, your meaning meadow.

I wonder if, I wonder why, I wonder how, I wonder when — and I look as if I really do.

“Let’s go on a journey...”

Tell me what kind of picture your brain is drawing right now.

As a whole class, we go over mindful communication. Students will review each other's process and use language like "I'm noticing... Can you explain more to me" "what led you to this design" "My understanding of this concept is_____, was that your intent?"

For a Climate Solutions course might start a Unit on Carbon Footprint/Eco Footprint with an Inquiry Statement: “The cost of a head of lettuce“ Using the QFT (Question Formulation Technique)
Students generate the Unit Inquiry question and the questions that drive the lessons.

Does this remind you of something? What is familiar about it? What is novel or unusual? Does that make a difference in how you will begin? Do you have enough information to start? What else do you need to know? Can you find a different or more efficient strategy?

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What makes you say that?

What evidence can you give from what you learn, observe or read to support your claim?

How would you like to learn this concept?

What connections do you see right now with our unit?

I use a lot of specific thinking and 'learnish' during my classes.

What should we be doing instead to learn better?

"I'm listening. Tell me more about..."

I like to use 'I wonder...' in the conversation with the learners to encourage them to explain their thinking.

What is in the surroundings that justify the taught topic/concept?

How can your observations be the evidence of conceptual applications?

What and how connections can you establish with previously taught themes/units/concepts?

There is a language called love which is really the only way for children to develop a comfort level to go above and beyond- knowing they "can" and knowing we know they "can"- model that for a hot second and masterful learning will arise.

If I am asking a digging deeper question, I'll often say "Do I have any risk takers who can _____?" I find that acknowledging the risk encourages bravery in thinking and sharing!

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I start questions with "What/Who/How do you think is.." rather than "What/Who/How is..". It puts student's minds at ease and they are happy to share their thoughts.

A few faves: I'm curious, tell me more / What do you see that makes you say that? /What are you wondering about? / What if I was to tell you...? / How would it be different if...

As you go about the rest of your day, I want you to keep this idea/thought/wondering in your mind and I want you to think about how what you see, what you do and what you feel might be connected to it. Let's come back and share what we noticed.

What do you notice? What patterns are we seeing? What are you wondering/thinking? I'd like to hear what you're thinking now. What's next? How could we find out?

"How would you apply this to....?", "Teach it!", "Can you explain how you came to that conclusion?", "Did your thoughts change at all? If so, how/why?"

"Remember last month - what did you focus on? How can we use that in ___ sport/activity?" "What other body parts do you think you're using more?" "How could you teach this to your siblings/parents/friends?"

Today, we are going to learn more about... Everything is "we", never "you". I'm pretty sure I'm going to be doing some learning too:)

We have several resources on this concept, including: <https://www.teachthought.com/critical-thinking/28-critical-thinking-question-stems-content-area/>

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I just ask them my students questions and then listen. They provide the info for the next conversation!

Can you tell me more about that?

As a math teacher, when they call me over to “check this” I like to say something like “it is clear you put a lot of thought into this....tell me about it.” Removes the stigma of being ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ and validates their thoughts and processes.

I love to use the *What? Gut? So what? Now what?* reflective model. *Tell me about it. Tell me how it made you feel. Tell me why it's important. Tell me your plan.*

Which voices are we not hearing from?

I love to use the @OpenSciEd discussion Qs. Or the @ASTbigideas talk primer

Super simple but I use this language when trying to elicit questions: *what questions are emerging?* Or just *what questions do you have?* rather than *do you have any questions?* This honours and encourages questions as necessary and expected!

With younger (ok and older) learners I scaffold by exploring and practicing how and when to ask deeper/open-ended questions, often through conducting doc or news-style audio or video interviews with each other, then others. Makes it social and relevant.

What do you think? Why?

What EXCITES you about your research? What do you NEED to know more about? What is WORRISOME about the ideas you discovered?

What does this make you think about? Why do you think that? Do you have more information to support your answer?

Tell me more “What if...”


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I'm a huge fan of visible thinking routines

Check out Socratic Cafe or different Socratic methods. Guide students on self involvement goals such as asking one question or replying w 1 opinion- students list group gen deep vocabulary rich topic ?s.

My deep thank you to those of you who shared on the thread!



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