

What were you asked over the last month?

‘Why is the moon broken?’ ‘Why do Pokémon evolve?’ ‘Why don’t birds get electrocuted when they sit on wires?’ ‘Will Robert Browning be appearing at Poetry Live?’ ‘How will I know when I’m grown?’ ‘Why does the sun go into the sea at night?’

We are asked so many questions—some of them impossibly sweet and memorable—and, in this job, we ask a great many too. According to The Guardian, teachers ask 400 questions per day. That’s 78,000 per academic year. That’s 80 per lesson, or 1.3 questions a minute.

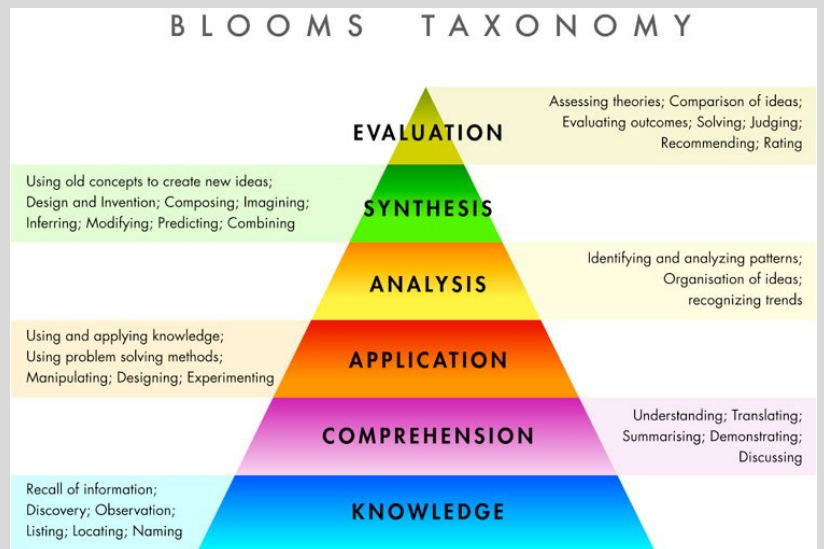
But who do we direct these questions at? And how do we phrase them to ensure the most developmental thinking?

Questioning

Good learning starts with good questions, not good answers

Back in bleak November, the T&L working group met and discussed the challenges of questioning. We explored both key elements; how to phrase questions and techniques around selecting students and giving them time to respond.

Kate Floyer shared a range of ideas based on the research that showed that students perform better with open questions that require thinking, Bloom’s taxonomy, and the benefits of thinking time. Studies have found that if teachers increase the wait time, the number and quality of the responses improves. For a lower-order recall question, three seconds was found to be the optimum wait time, while wait times of more than 10 seconds produced even better results with higher-order questions.



The crux of our discussion was we can both ask better questions and ask questions better. Turn to page 2 for ideas on how to do this...



What does it **reveal / suggest** about Scrooge’s character?

How does the writer’s choice of specific words or language **create / convey / emphasise** different ideas?

Can you make a link or cross-reference to another character or part of the novel, and say what the writer is trying to **reinforce or repeat**?

How might this quote reveal what life/attitudes were like in Victorian times?

Jen Jerred shared her questioning iceberg to encourage deeper analysis in students’ responses



Ideas for Questioning

(ask anyone on the T&L working group if unsure how to apply these)

Good questions allow students to *think*, are *open*, involve the *whole class*, and cause *good learning*

Pose Pause Bounce Pounce

Have a BIG QUESTION to be answered throughout or by the end of the lesson

Ensure a culture of everyone knowing they might be picked to answer

Allow thinking time

No hands up

Open questions... then another student develops further

Includes the whole class

Requires learners to think

Sit on hands

Think Pair Share

Odd one out questions

“What would you say if you did know?”

Pass ball

Safe climate to guess

Wait time

Group responses

Scaffolded questions

Snowballing answers

Use of HOW rather than WHAT

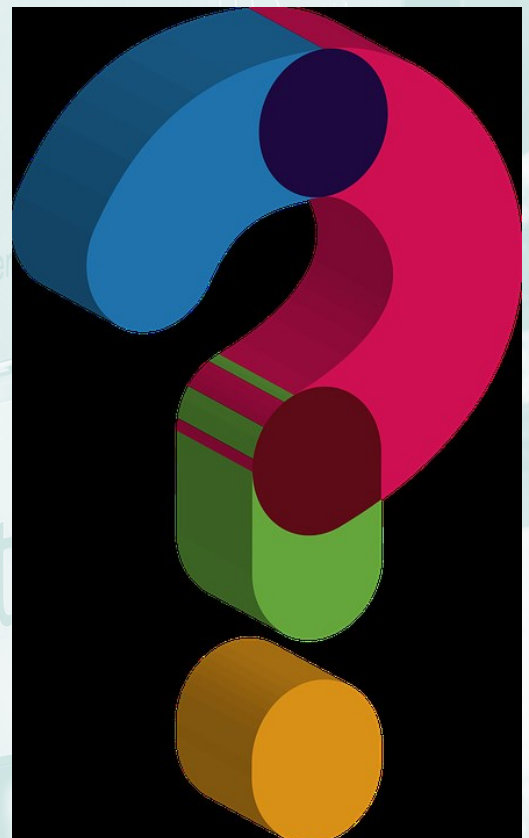
Use of WHY rather than WHAT

Continuum/ How far do you agree...

Students set the question

Problem-solving approach

Know your students





Sharing our Successes

Subject knowledge by JSM and quality of questioning of students to deepen understanding.

CGR- creative use of revision resources to engage students of all ability levels to support preparation for a unit test

SBL- fantastic example of motivating a large, boy-heavy class through skilful questioning systems and rigorous use of assessment.

MMU- Posing a Big Question to be answered by the end of the lesson: 'Was the poet justified in using this title?'

JBU- excellent classroom management in a practical setting with conditions placed upon activities to stretch the most able.

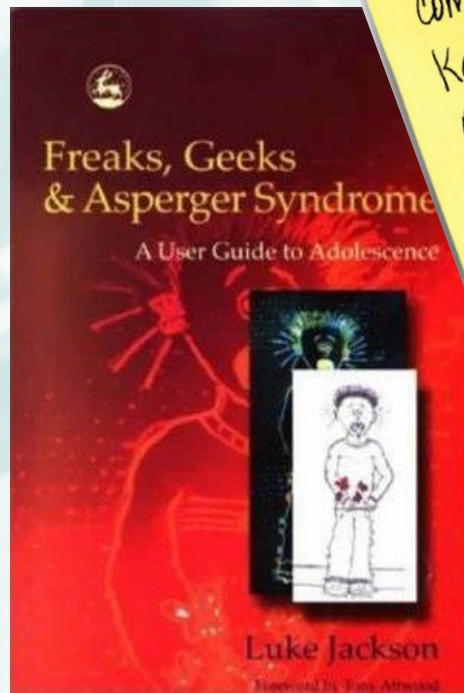
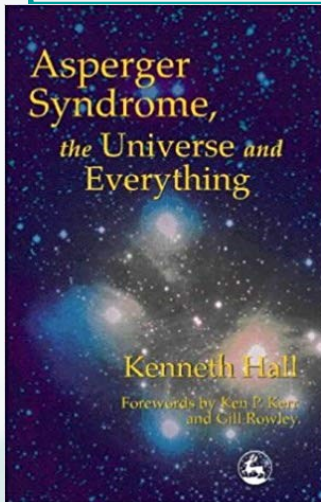
Good developed questioning session during and post video on Spanish Armada in ALO's lesson.

CBU- high levels of technical proficiency in hockey developed through clear demonstrations, carefully sequenced practice and strong teacher feedback

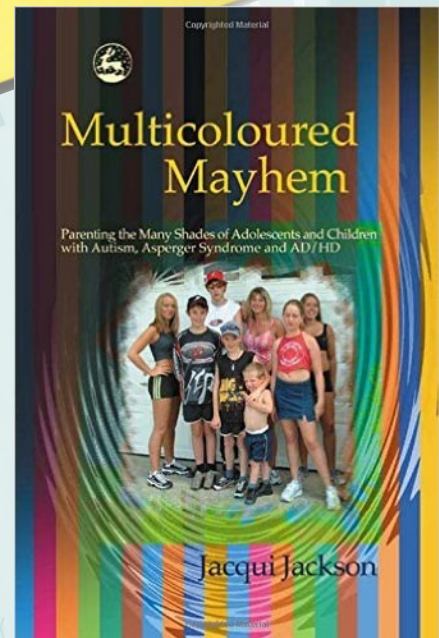
MMC- strong evidence of folder checks, holding the students to account for the organisation of their work within a culture of very positive relationships.



Staff Library: *new books*



This term's new books
come recommended by
Kevin Baskerville from
Autism Education
Trust



Read something inspiring? Or heard about an education/ leadership book that you'd like to read? If you'd be happy to write a short review for the next issue, let me know. There are a selection of books in the staff library section of the LRC, or we may be able to order it in.

