



Focused Lesson Plan Generate Questions

Preparation



Learning Objective

Students will improve their understanding of a news article by learning to generate questions of their own and find answers in the text (strategy).

Brief Definition

Students create their own questions about a text and then read the text to answer them. Students learn to distinguish a good question from a poor question.

Why use this lesson plan?

This lesson plan suggests an instructional sequence that *focuses* on generating questions about a text. Although you and your students will be employing other strategies as you read, the purpose of this lesson plan is to

intensify your students' awareness and understanding of this single strategy so they are prepared to use it in combination with other strategies when they read independently.

Students who are taught to generate their own questions have improved comprehension and also perform better on multiple-choice and short-answer assessments. Generating questions goes hand in hand with setting a purpose for reading, and as a consequence, improves students' focus and engagement. Generating questions is also important because it prepares students for the research process.

Do Before Teaching

1. Read through the lesson plan.
2. Select a news articles.
3. Think of some specific questions that you can ask about the article when you are modeling the strategy. To successfully model this strategy, some of your questions should have answers in the article, and some should not. See *Samples of Possible Questions* below.
4. Print a copy of the news article for each of your students.

Teaching Routine

Before Reading

Introduce Lesson

- Explain that in this lesson, students will generate questions to help them understand a news article.
- Pass out printed copies of the news article.

Teacher Direct Instruction

- Explain that generating questions improves understanding.
- With the class, preview the article by reading titles, headings, graphics, captions, and the first paragraph. Point out the highlighted vocabulary words and their definitions at the end of the article. This will activate students' prior knowledge so that they can begin generating questions related to the text.
- Briefly discuss what students think the article is about.

Teacher Modeling

Suggest two or three questions you would like to ask about the article. Write them on the board. See *Samples of Possible Questions* and *Samples of Possible Links* below.

- Ask at least one question that is literal. (Who? What? When?)
- Ask at least one question that requires drawing a conclusion or making an inference. (Why? How?)
- Explain why each of your questions is a good question. (See *Guidelines for Good Questions* below.)



Guidelines for Good Questions

A good question

- is related to the topic or structure of the text
- attempts to link prior knowledge or previewed material to the text
- requires that the reader to read the text, that is, the question cannot be answered simply by previewing the text

Student Practice

- Ask students to generate their own questions. Prompt them to
 - Ask questions that are literal. (Who? What? When?)
 - Ask questions that require drawing a conclusion or making an inference. (Why? How?)
 - Evaluate whether the question is a good question.
- Write student questions on the board.

During Reading

Teacher Direct Instruction

- Explain that good readers
 - look for the answers to their questions while they read
 - mark places in the text that may include answers
- Divide the text into two meaningful sections. Sections may include a single paragraph or multiple paragraphs.
- Ask students to read the first section of the text.
- Tell them that if they find an answer to a question, to mark that part of the text.

Teacher Modeling

- When students are done reading the first section of text, point out one or two places in the text where you think there are some answers. Write the answers on the board or simply say the answers out loud and mark the questions on the board that have answers.
- Explain that not all of the questions will be answered in the first part of the text, and remind them that some of the questions may not be answered in the text at all.
- Add a new question based on reading the first section of text.

Student Practice

- After you are done modeling, ask students to point out the answers that they have found in the first part of the text. Write answers on the board or simply mark the questions.
- When they are finished identifying answers, ask students if they want to ask any new questions as a result of their reading. If so, add their questions to the list.
- Ask students to read the second section of text.
- When they are done reading, them to identify more answers to the questions.

After Reading

Teacher Direct Instruction

- Review the answers to the questions.
- Point out that some of the questions were not answered by the text.

Teacher Modeling

- Select one of the questions without an answer.
- Evaluate whether it is a question you are still interested in.
- Suggest other sources where you might find the answer.

Student Practice

Ask students

- to evaluate the remaining questions without answers
- to suggest other sources where they might find the answer
- to suggest new questions that have arisen as a result of reading the text along with suggested sources for the answer
- how generating their own questions helped them understand the text.

Apply Strategy to Future Reading

- Ask students to bring a text to class that answers one or more of the unanswered questions. Plan a time that you can share these texts.
- Ask students to bring a text to class to which they can apply the strategy. Plan time for students to independently apply the strategy to the texts that they have selected.

Samples of Possible Questions

Literal	Possible Questions
Who?	“Who is the main person responsible for ... ?” “Who is the expert in the field of ... ?”
What?	“What are the most important parts of ... ?” “What would happen if ... ?” “What is the author’s purpose for writing this article?” “What other texts have I read about ... ?”
Where?	“Where does ... take place?”
Inferential	Possible Questions
Why?	“Why do people need to ... ?” “Why are scientists investigating ... ?” “Why is ... important to me or other people I know?” “Why did the author choose ... to write about?”
How?	“How can you tell that ... is telling the truth?” “How can you tell that ... is a reliable account of the situation?” “How is ... related to ... ?”

Samples of Links to Text Preview and Prior Knowledge

Possible Links to Text Preview
“The title mentions ... which is related to my question.” “There is a photo of a ... so I want to know more about it.” “In the first paragraph, ... is mentioned, which made me think of my question.”
Possible Links to Prior Knowledge
“I have had an experience that is similar to ... so I am wondering how they might be similar or different.” “I recently read about ... which reminded me of the topic of this article.” “I am always been curious about ..., so I want to know more.” “I have heard about the person in this article and always wondered... about him/her.”