

**Monarch High School 2008-2009 - Instructional Resource Guide: Reference and Research/
Essential Questions and Discussion**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective Underlining: http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/underline.html
<p>Essential Question:</p> <p>Definition:</p> <p>Any question that requires one of the following thought processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a question that requires the student to develop a plan or course of action. • a question that requires the student to make a decision. 	<p>The effectiveness of your lesson plan design relies on the quality of the essential question posed to students. Effective questioning strategy by teachers is absolutely essential if a teacher expects to promote critical and creative thinking by students.</p> <p>Avoid the Simple Question.</p> <p>Writing questions such as "What is cancer?" simply asks students to move information from one point (the resource) to another (their paper). By asking this type of question, you license the student to plagiarize.</p> <p>Better Question</p> <p>Instead of the above question, we may ask students the essential question: "What plan could you develop that would reduce your likelihood of developing cancer?"</p> <p>This is a more powerful question than "What is cancer" <u>but the question is still not finished</u>. At this point it is helpful to visualize the answer. In this case, a student could answer this question by developing a <i>list</i> of strategies. They are still moving information.</p> <p>Best Question.</p> <p>A much better question is "What plan could you develop that would reduce your likelihood</p>

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of developing cancer in your lifetime? Your plan can have only two strategies. Defend why you selected those two strategies." In this case, the question requires students to discriminate among the potential list of strategies, and then defend their choice.

Sample Essential Questions:

- Is it acceptable to clone human beings? Support your decision. (Decision-making)
- What invention of the 20th Century has had the greatest impact? Justify your response (decision-making).
- Who was the greatest home run hitter in baseball history? (Decision-making)
- Which credit card should is best for me? (Decision-making)
- What plan could be developed to reduce the impact of zebra mussels on the Great Lakes ecosystem? Your plan can include three strategies. (Action plan)
- What is the best plan for losing 20 pounds? Your plan can include three strategies that are most appropriate for you. (Action plan)
- What plan could I use to prepare for a 5K run? The plan can include two strategies. (Action plan)
- What human activity has the most significant impact on groundwater in your community? Support your position and propose a solution. (Decision-making and Action Plan)
- What is the best plan to solve the problems caused by urban deer? Your plan may include no more that two strategies. (Action plan)

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- How would you design and build a parachute in order to slow its descent? (Action plan)
- How do you use statistics to compare unlike events? Who is the greatest running back of our/all time? (Decision-making)
- How can an athlete in your sport improve their performance using one of Newton's three laws of motion? (Decision-making)
- Would you be willing to help a slave escape? (Decision-making)
- What does a cell have to do to go from one cell to two cells? (Action plan)
- Should new powers be delegated to the Federal Government after 9/11? (Decision-making)
- Develop a plan to maintain a healthy lifestyle. (Action plan)
- Develop a plan to increase muscle strength. (Action plan)
- Should high-energy physics research continue to be funded by the United States government? Justify your answer. (Decision-making)
- What are the two most significant benefits for reopening the trial you have selected? (Decision-making)
- Should the novel you selected be banned for high school students in our School District? (Decision-making)
- What is the most significant aspect of contemporary Chicago that can be directly traced to the Great Chicago Fire of 1871? (Decision-making).

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