

## Creating Text-Dependent Questions

1. In a piece of ancillary reading, identify the core understandings and key ideas you want students to understand: who, what, when, where, why, how much, how many. Create questions that require critical thinking backed by evidence.

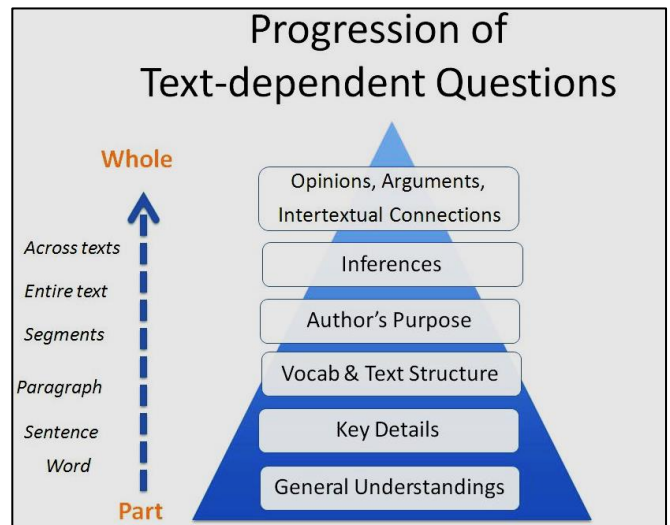
2. Identify the text structure (organizational pattern) and key vocabulary, then use these to create questions.

Text structures:

- **Description:** Detailed description of something to give the reader a mental picture.
- **Sequence:** Chronological events or list of steps.
- **Problem and solution:** Sets up a problem, explains the solution, then discusses the effects of the solution.
- **Cause and effect:** Presents the causal relationship between a specific event, idea, or concept and the events, ideas, or concept that follow.
- **Compare and contrast:** Similarities and differences between two or more people, events, concepts, ideas, etc.

3. To build students' confidence in answering the questions, write questions requiring a general understanding (bottom of the pyramid). Add questions requiring knowledge of:

- Key Details
- Vocabulary And Text Structure
- Author's Purpose
- Inferences
- Opinions, Arguments
- Intertextual Connections (using Paired Readings)



4. When writing the higher-level questions...

- a) Find sections of the text that may be difficult and write questions that support students in mastering these sections. These could be sections with difficult syntax, dense information, tricky transitions, or a variety of possible inferences.
- b) Find sections of the text to have students examine:
  - **Words and phrases**, e.g. "What words or phrases did General Eisenhower use to inspire the troops on D-Day?"
  - **Paragraphs**, e.g. "Ike's message to the troops acknowledges the difficulty of the mission, but assures them that they will be triumphant. In what ways does he accomplish this?" "How does the use of religious imagery contrast in the opening and closing?"
- c) Create questions based on the **author's purpose**. Examine:
  - Genre: To entertain? Explain? Inform? Persuade?
  - Point of view: First person, third person limited, omniscient, unreliable narrator.
  - Critical literacy: Whose viewpoint is not represented?
- d) Create **Inference** questions. Examine and observe how those contribute to the main point. Look at the
  - Arguments in a persuasive text.
  - Ideas in an informational text.
  - Key details in a literary text.

e) Identify **Opinions, Arguments, and Intertextual Connections:**

- The author's opinion and his/her reasoning.
- Any claims and counterclaims.
- Any use of the three modes of appeal: ethos, pathos, logos:
  - Ethos or the ethical appeal – to convince an audience of the author's credibility or character.
  - Pathos or the emotional appeal – to persuade an audience by appealing to their emotions.
  - Logos or the appeal to logic– to convince an audience by use of logic or reason.

5. Include questions that:

- Require the reader to **return to the text**.
- Require the student to **provide evidence** to support his or her ideas or claims.
- Require determining the **meaning of vocabulary**.
- Gain knowledge as a result of the question.
- Move from text-explicit to text-implicit knowledge.

*For example, which of the following questions would require students to read the text closely:*

- If you were present at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, what would you do?
- What are the reasons listed in the preamble for supporting their argument to separate from Great Britain?

6. Ask the questions in a coherent sequence that build toward understanding and analysis. For example...

- 1) What is the natural right of every individual according to Anthony?
- 2) What is Anthony's purpose in writing this speech? Is she trying to inform, entertain, or persuade? How do you know?
- 3) What is one right that every individual has a right to protect?
- 4) What is the meaning of the word brute as used in the sentence?
- 5) How does the information at the start of this speech help Anthony make her argument to be able to vote?
- 6) How does Anthony's speech compare with Sojourner Truth's speech, "Ain't I a Woman?"

## Model Critical Reading with Students

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Inform students of the difference of reading vs. *critical reading*: engaging in what you read by asking yourself questions such as, 'what is the author trying to say?' or 'what is the main argument being presented?'

To guide students in answering higher-level questions, use a document camera with the think-aloud strategy: reading out loud and modeling your thinking and annotating as you go.

1. Pre-teach any helpful background knowledge.
2. Provide students with copies of the questions in advance of the reading.
3. Mark places in the article where you:
  - a. Learn new information.
  - b. See a strong image.
  - c. Are curious about.
  - d. Find new vocabulary.
4. Have them turn and talk with each other about what a particular passage or section means.
5. Identify the organizational pattern of the passage as it becomes clear.

## Selecting Ancillary Reading Articles

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Look for stories or articles that raise authentic questions and could be interpreted differently depending on each student's background knowledge or prior reading.

## Discussion Questions for Building Analytical Reading Skills

Extracted from <http://www.wccusd.net/cms/lib03/CA01001466/Centricity/Domain/1129/Text%20Dependent%20Questions.pdf>

### Inferring Meaning:

- What do these sentences tell you about...?
- Why does the author make a point of saying... ?
- The author provides a list of... . What do these have in common?
- What is the author's purpose in using this language?
- What does the author mean by \_\_\_\_\_? What exact words lead me to this meaning?
- Using the (graph/chart) and reading the text, what inferences can you draw as to reasons why... ?

### Finding Evidence:

- What evidence is there in paragraph that... ?
- Identify specific details/passages in the text that led you to infer...
- List at least three ways the author has described....
- What evidence does the author give to support his or her description of... ?
- What impact do these descriptions have on...?
- Using evidence from the text, explain why this is a good title for this selection.

### Determining Text Structure (*description, sequence, compare & contrast, problem/solution, cause & effect*)

- What text structure does the author use to... ?
- Why is the text structure effective?
- How does this sentence/passage fit into the text as a whole?
- Who is speaking in the passage?
- Who seems to be the main audience? (To whom is the narrator speaking?)

### Determining the Main Idea and Supporting Details:

- What seems important here? Why- What in the text led you to that conclusion?
- What is the first thing that jumps out at you? Why?
- What's the next thing you notice? Are these two things connected? How? Do they seem to be saying different things?

### Determining the Author's Purpose:

- The author includes a number of details about... . Look at each action. What does the author want you to understand about... ?
- Is the author trying to convince you of something? What? How do you know?
- Why would the author want to draw attention to that detail?
- Is there something missing from this passage that you expected to read? Why might the author have left it out?
- Is there anything that could have been explained more thoroughly for greater clarity?