***Redeeming Closed Questions***

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| **Closed Questions** imply that the teacher has a predetermined correct response in mind. These are nearly always concerned with the recall of facts or simple comprehension where the answers have previously been provided.**What’s the value?*** They give you *facts*.
* They are *easy* to answer.
* They are *quick* to answer.
* They keep control of the conversation with the *questioner*.

 **EX:** * Have you read the book, The Hunger Games?
* Do you plan to see the movie?

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| **Open Questions** allow for a range of responses and make progressive cognitive demands on children. They encourage children to think beyond the literal. **What’s the value?*** They ask the respondent to *think* and reflect.
* They will give you *opinions* and *feelings*.
* They invite a range of responses
* They make progressive, increasing demands on student thinking.
* They hand control of the conversation to the *respondent*.
* They encourage students to think of authentic uses for concepts.

**EX:** * What makes The Hunger Games a successful story?
* What evidence do you have to justify your opinion?
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| **Can a teacher’s Closed Questions be easily redeemed to increase cognitive demand and encourage children to think critically? YES!** |
| **A Range of Answers:**Ask a question and give a range of answers for students to discuss with a partner or small group. Include a YES answer, a NO answer, and some ambiguous answers.***EX:*** *Which of these language features would you need to use if you were going to* *write a diary entry? Formal language, past tense, abbreviations, technical language, full names of people, present tense, informal language***Impact on Students:** * + Develops thinking skills
	+ Improves reasoning skills
	+ Promotes discussion and explanation
	+ Reveals misconceptions
	+ Encourages debate
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| **A Statement:**Turn a question into a statement. Ask students to agree or disagree and to give reasons. Teachers can require students to give evidence to support their answer, if appropriate.***EX:*** *Glass is an excellent material for making a shelter. Agree or Disagree?* ***EX:*** *Odd numbers multiplied by even numbers have odd answers. Is this statement always, sometimes, or never true? Give evidence for your answer.* **Impact on Students:*** Encourages open discussion and debate
* Develops critical thinking
* Reveals misconceptions and understanding
* Gives pupils confidence in expressing their opinions
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| **Right and Wrong:**Present students with opposites. Tell them one is “right” and one is “wrong.” Students have to decide why the one they decide is true.***EX:*** Rather than asking: ***What would you include in a healthy meal?****,* show two pictures of meals and ask: ***Which meal is the healthy meal? What makes it healthy?*** **Impact on Students:*** Encourages problem solving
* Identifies the success criteria
* Stimulates curiosity and interest
* Reinforces previous learning
* Demands explanation

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| **Starting From the Answer/End:**Give students the “answer” at the beginning and ask them what they think the question might have been, how that answer was obtained, or why they think it’s correct.***EX:*** The answer is: Water, glass, the moon, and shiny material can all do this. What might the question have been? **Impact on Students:*** Promotes reasoning skills
* Elicits prior knowledge
* Reinforces and revisits learning objectives
* Good for assessment
* Inclusive, all students can come up with their own ideas and solutions
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| **Opposing Standpoint:**Introduce a different point of view, not the conventional slant.***EX:*** Rather than asking, ***How did Cinderella feel about her stepmother?*** ask ***How could Cinderella have helped her stepmother become a better person?*****Impact on Students:*** Improves debating skills
* Encourages reasoning skills
* Develops respect for other points of view
* Teachers get pupils to substantiate their opinions
* Encourages lateral thinking
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Adapted from: *Active Learning Through Formative Assessment by Shirley Clarke, Hodder Education, 2008*

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**Practice Redeeming Closed Questions**

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| **Closed****Question** | **Open****Question** |
| Is 16 an even number? | 15 is an even number. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your thinking. |
| Name 3 impacts of the Industrial Revolution. | Which consequence of the Industrial Revolution most directly affects your life today? |
| What is photosynthesis? | If the process of photosynthesis does not occur, how might that impact our society? |
| Was Jacques Cousteau a conservationist? | What words, in the third paragraph, give you the impression that Jacques Cousteau was a conservationist? |
| It is customary to leave a 15% tip on a meal. How much should you leave if your meal cost $48? |  |
| Why did Henry VIII have six wives? |  |
| Which is a weed, a dandelion or a daffodil? |  |
| What is a verb? |  |