***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? |
| **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? |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |

Adapted from: *Active Learning Through Formative Assessment by Shirley Clarke, Hodder Education, 2008*

G:\ED E-Government\Learning Compendium\assessment for learning\day to day assessment\questioning\questioning bookletS.docAdvancing Formative Assessment in Every Classrom by Moss & Brookhart, ACSD

**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? |  |