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At a campus colloquium a number of years ago, a faculty member (no longer at Berkeley) was speaking. A very sincere graduate student asked a question. The professor talked for a few minutes, then turned back to the student and said, "I'm sorry I'm not answering your question, but it's not very interesting." Below are some tips for making engagement with students more productive than this one. In every class there should be interaction between the faculty and students, and at the core of student engagement is how questions are asked of students and by students, and how questions from students are answered. Few things can encourage or discourage student engagement more than simply how questions are handled in a class.

1. Asking Questions: At the very least, asking questions of the class is one way to make sure that students are with you, are understanding where you are at a given point. At their best, questions you ask, even in a large class, are a way of testing how things are going and of involving students. You can always ask a question of the entire class, then have students discuss it with those sitting near them, and ask for reports from various clumps of students around the room. You can ask a question and have students jot down the answer on a piece of scratch paper. They pass their answers to their neighbors, and you call on someone to read the answer on the sheet they have. That way, students who are afraid of providing their own answers are relieved of the burden. Remember that questions don't always have to be directed at individuals; you can also poll the class from time to time on issues, e.g., "Who believes that there is a time and a place for the use of sentence fragments in writing?" Then you can follow up by asking individuals to explain their reasoning. Cold-calling. There is no right or wrong here. Some faculty find it productive to call on students who haven't volunteered while others find that it can create too much tension in the classroom. This is really faculty-class-personality dependent; however, if it's something you're interested in trying, it's best to announce it in advance, and set some guidelines, e.g., students can simply "pass" if they don't feel prepared to answer. And have a backup plan: if you call on someone who doesn't know the answer, you immediately throw out the question to the class. Sometimes simple questions are fine, such as the final step in a formula, but most often the best questions are those for which the answer isn't a number or a date or a figure. For that reason, think about asking "how" or "why" questions. One interesting technique: one faculty member at Berkeley would ask a question to her very large class, and students would raise their hands to answer. But the faculty member wouldn't call on anyone until she was satisfied that enough people had raised their hands.

2. Soliciting students' questions and answering them: The most common-and-very-worst-way to solicit questions is to look at the class and say, "Any questions?" or the truncated "Questions?" or "Ok?" or "Is that clear?" These often have a deadening effect, as if you are really just pausing, or asking just pro forma. Whether or not you intend it, the subtext can be "You shouldn't have questions." Try out a variety of other formulations: "I'm sure at this point you'll have some questions, so let me try to answer them." "This is a complex point, so please ask me questions about it." Or any other formulation that indicates you are actually interested in answering student questions. When you answer a question, answer it directly first, then go off on any tangents that come to you. Try not to mix tangents in, so that the actual answer is hard to discern. And when you're done, ask if you've answered the question. Repeat a student's question before you answer it. Be aware of the acoustics and that students sitting behind someone who asks a question might not hear it. In addition, by repeating it, you give the student a chance to indicate whether that was indeed the question he or she intended. If the question is a good one, you can say so. If the question is tangential, develop a nice way to say that. Often something like, "That's interesting, but a little off our point here. However, I'd be happy to talk about that after class/in office hours." If you have a plan in advance for these questions, you'll be happier. And you'll be less tentative to solicit questions from the class. Consider turning some questions back to the class to answer. Don't feel that you need to be responsible for answering them all. Get all the students involved in this process. Finally, when you answer questions, don't focus all your attention on the student who asked, but look at the whole class, so that it doesn't become a conversation between you and a single student. Answering and asking questions is an important part of learning. We ask questions in order to learn more information about something, and we answer questions to provide more information. Asking and answering questions is not only a part of how we learn, but it is also a part of our social skills; we ask and answer questions to be polite and build and maintain relationships. Types of questions we ask and answer include who, what, where, when, and why. Answering questions involves having a child hear the question, think about the meaning of the question, understand the meaning of the question, form an answer, and speak the answer that they formed. Asking questions involves thinking about what you want ask, forming the question in your mind, and then producing the question that you want to ask. For children with speech and language delays, asking and answering questions can be a challenge. This challenge in asking and answering questions may affect their ability to learn and their ability to develop and build relationships. Believe it or not some questions are easier to ask/answer than others. What questions are the easiest to learn, followed by Who, then Where, followed by When, and finally Why. Why questions being the most difficult for children to learn and master. The following is a basic guideline on the types of questions a child may ask/answer according to their age. More information can be found at: Between 12-24 months, a child should be able to answer basic Whats this? questions about familiar objects, answer basic where questions by pointing, answer basic yes/no question by shaking their head or nodding, and use a rising pitch in their voice to indicate that they are asking a question (e.g., Daddy? to ask Where is daddy?) Between 24-36 months, a child should point to objects being described (e.g., Where do you wear a hat and the child points to their head), answer longer Where, Whatdoing, and Who is questions, understand Can you questions, ask questions to get their basic wants/needs met (e.g., where cup?), and ask one-word why? questions Between 36-48 months, a child should answer more complex questions, answer questions about object functions (e.g., what do you do with a spoon), and answer if/what questions (e.g., if you get sick, what would you do?) If you find that your child is having difficulty asking/answering questions determine the type of question(s) that is the most problematic. Once you have figured out the type of question that is challenging for your child, talk about what it means to ask/answer that type of question. For example, what means we are talking about a thing, such as the dog, the house, a cracker, etc. who means we are talking about a person, like mommy and daddy, grandma/grandpa, etc. where means we are talking about a place or location, such as the park, our house, or in the kitchen. when means a time, such as daytime/nighttime, breakfast, summer, yesterday, or even a month like December why means a reason, such as I fell down because I tripped on a rock. Once you have talked about the type of question that is troublesome, use games and activities involving questions to teach your child about asking/answering questions while having fun at the same time. Games and activities could include, but are not limited to: Wh Bingo! I Spy Asking questions while reading a book Asking questions while playing with toys (e.g., Where is the cow? What animal is this?) Headbanz Gamelf your child is still struggling to ask/answer questions or other speech and language skills, it is recommended to seek out a Speech and Language evaluation from your local Speech Therapist to determine if your child would qualify from services to improve these skills. For more information visit Answering and asking questions is an important part of learning. We ask questions in order to learn more information about something, and we answer questions to provide more information. Asking and answering questions is not only a part of how we learn, but it is also a part of our social skills; we ask and answer questions to be polite and build and maintain relationships. Types of questions we ask and answer include who, what, where, when, and why. Answering questions involves having a child hear the question, think about the meaning of the question, understand the meaning of the question, form an answer, and speak the answer that they formed. 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Games and activities could include, but are not limited to: Wh Bingo! I Spy Asking questions while reading a book Asking questions while playing with toys (e.g., Where is the cow? What animal is this?) Headbanz Gamelf your child is still struggling to ask/answer questions or other speech and language skills, it is recommended to seek out a Speech and Language evaluation from your local Speech Therapist to determine if your child would qualify from services to improve these skills. For more information visit Asking and answering questions come naturally to kids/Asking and answering TEXT DEPENDENT questions that can be answered with text evidence or through inference? Wellllllllllnot so much. This is one of the most essential reading strategies! It is vital for students to master asking and answering questions because simply put, its what good readers do! Fluent, engaged readers ask and answer questions about the text before, during, and after reading. Being able to use this strategy is an important sign of comprehension. When kids question as they read, it shows that they are thinking deeply about the text. Kids are naturally wired to ask lots of questions, but the text-dependent and critical analysis aspect can be tricky. Students will need explicit instruction on how to form questions that are text-based, meaningful, and relevant. Finding answers supported by analysis and text evidence will also need focused instruction. Below you will find my three go-to strategies for teaching asking and answering questions in literature: Model, model, model! First things first, (and this may be a bit of a no-brainer), but youve got to model using this strategy. Students need to see how YOU do it so that they can understand what this strategy looks like in action. Modeling this skill is pretty simple- you just need a piece of literature to read aloud and a whiteboard or chart paper to record your questions. Make sure to share your thinking out loud as you read, before, during, and after the story. Another crucial element is providing examples of text-dependent questions, and asking kids to provide answers that are supported by text evidence. As mentioned above, this doesnt always come naturally to kids, so its good to show them exactly what kinds of questions you are looking for. Check out this digital comprehension game if you are looking for a quick way to practice answering text-dependent questions with your students. It includes tons of practice, in both print and digital versions. This resource is perfect for independent work or centers. Reteach and revisitval year long! My second tip for teaching this strategy is to come back to this skill again and again throughout the year. It is definitely not a one-and-done skill. To really master asking and answering relevant, text-based questions, students will need a ton of practice. Since questioning is one of the main reading skills, its a great idea to cover it in depth towards the beginning of the year, and then circle back regularly. Each time you come back to it students will have a chance to deepen their skills. Create Frequent Opportunities for Minds-On Activities! The last tip is to provide practice, practice, practice! Kids need to try using this strategy over and over and over, with all different types of texts. Students should have the opportunity to practice this strategy with fables, modern fiction, folktales, poetry, drama, and mythology. Use a mixture of short and long passages, and a good mix of question types. As you go through each different reading unit, students will need to be consistently challenged. A great place to do this is within your guided reading or small groups. Even if youre working on a different skill, be sure to model asking and answering questions from the text throughout your session together. More to Consider! Another thing to mention when you talk about asking and answering questions with students is that not all questions are created equal. Some questions are surface-level and can be answered without too much thought. Others are deep questions and require students to really dig down into the text. Explicit questions have answers that can be found directly stated in the text. Implicit questions are those whose answers have to be inferred based on what the text says. When you begin to ask implicit questions, youll likely notice this is where you lose your struggling readers. Many struggling readers on the cusp of becoming proficient readers can perform quite well with explicit questions. So much so you may even think theyre stronger readers than they actually are. Thus, not providing them with that important small group instruction that they so desperately need. Be sure to provide enough practice with both types of questions to ensure you have a firm understanding of where each of your students is performing. Remember, no one type of question is better or more important than another, but using a wide variety of question types shows full engagement with the text. Assessment! One last note, about the assessment of this strategy. You really have to assess this skill through observation, over a long period of time. To get a good idea of what a student can do, its best to observe them one on one or in a small group. You can do this during reading workshop, at center time, or while the rest of the class is working on something independently. Resources! If you are looking for some extra practice with asking and answering questions, check out the two resources below: Questions from the Story digital practice can be used with Google Slides or PowerPoint. It includes two high-interest passages, both with text-dependent questions in several different formats. This Reading Comprehension Using Literature game includes 32 printable task cards, a printable game board, and a recording sheet. If you prefer a no-prep activity, this game can also be used digitally! Both of these activities are great for distance learning, centers, whole class, or independent work. Looking to learn more? Check out similar posts below! How to Teach Paired Texts in Five Days with a Free Reading Unit Teaching Nonfiction Text Featured Compare and Contrast Activities Standards Alignment: Common Core State Standard RL.3.1 (Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.) Asking and answering questions is an important reading comprehension strategy for elementary students to become proficient in. Strong readers ask questions before, during, and after reading or listening to a story. It helps them better understand and enjoy stories. Learn all about how to teach asking and answering questions below! What is Asking and Answering Questions about a Text? The ability to ask and answer questions while reading is an important comprehension strategy. Strong readers will ask themselves questions as they read in order to understand the text. These readers will then seek the answers to their questions as they read. It is important to teach students to ask questions before, during, and after reading. Before reading, students might wonder what will happen in the story. While reading, questions can include students asking questions about their own reading, questioning what they are reading, and questioning the author. Students might take time to reread or continue reading to answer their questions. Readers will also wonder what will happen next as they make their way through a text. After reading, students might ask questions because they are still unsure about something that was not answered in the text or they want to learn more about the topic. As students ask questions about their reading, it is important for them to try and find the answers. Students can find answers to their questions within the text, using their background knowledge, using inferencing skills, engaging in discussion with others, or conducting research. Frequently, the teacher is the only person in the classroom asking questions about what was read. However, students must learn to ask questions themselves as they read and seek to answer their own questions. As a result, its important that we take the time to teach them about asking and answering questions. Its very important to teach asking and answering questions because there are many benefits to readers asking their own questions and seeking answers. By doing so, students are more engaged in their reading and have a deeper understanding of what they have read. This is because they are monitoring their own comprehension as they read and they are interested in finding the answers to their questions. Asking questions gives students a purpose and focus for their reading. When students ask questions about themselves as readers, they get an idea of what they understand and what they do not understand. This skill is very important when it comes to other reading comprehension strategies as well. The ability to ask questions helps students to make predictions, make connections, and identify the problem and solution, authors purpose and themes of what they read. Before we get into how to teach asking and answering questions, lets look at the standards for this reading comprehension topic. RL.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. RL.2.1: Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. RL.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. RL.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. LA.1.6.B: generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information with adult assistance; LA.1.6.C: make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures with adult assistance; LA.1.7.C: use text evidence to support an appropriate response; LA.2.6.B: generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information; LA.2.6.C: make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures; LA.2.7.C: use text evidence to support an appropriate response; LA.3.6.B: generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information; LA.3.6.C: make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures; LA.3.7.C: use text evidence to support an appropriate response; LA.4.6.B: generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information; LA.4.6.C: make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures; LA.4.7.C: use text evidence to support an appropriate response; LA.5.6.B: generate questions about text before, during, and after reading to deepen understanding and gain information; LA.5.6.C: make and correct or confirm predictions using text features, characteristics of genre, and structures; LA.5.7.C: use text evidence to support an appropriate response; Below are suggestions for when you teach your students about asking and answering questions when reading. Reading aloud picture books is a great way to model and practice this reading comprehension strategy. There are tons of great read alouds out there for teaching students to ask and answer questions while they read. Some high-quality examples include Sylvester and The Magic Pebble, A Bike Like Sergios, and Can I Be Your Dog?. Anchor charts are another great way to teach students about asking and answering questions. My asking and answering resource includes an interactive anchor chart that successfully engages students in their learning and provides a visual learning experience for students to learn about asking and answering questions. The third on the list of tips for teaching students to ask and answer questions is playing videos. This is another great visual learning opportunity for students to learn about what can feel like a very abstract idea. This is an example of a video that is great for teaching students how to ask and answer questions about picture books. These printable and digital resources for teaching elementary students about asking and answering questions make curriculum and lesson planning quick and easy. It includes teacher, parent, and student resources, so youll have everything you need to teach students about asking and answering questions and deliver meaningful research-based instruction rooted in current best practices. BUY NOW! LEARN MORE | BUY NOW! There are teacher notes about the strategy, teaching ideas, a planning page with question prompts, and list of mentor texts, so you have all of the information you need to plan a research and standards-based reading unit based on this reading comprehension strategy. There is a parent letter and a reading log with suggested question prompts so parents can confidently support and reinforce the strategy you are teaching with their children at home. There are printables to create a larger anchor chart and reference charts. Both save you lots of time searching for anchor chart ideas and supplemental teaching tools. There are 3 printables and 2 activities for students that provide meaningful opportunities to practice and make sense of the reading strategy in a fun and engaging way. There are digital versions of several of the resources so students can access them in school or at home using a technology device of their choice. This collection of resources is versatile in that it can be used on its own or can be used to supplement any reading curriculum, so you will be able to continue to use these resources if your school adopts a new reading program or you switch school districts. This resource is part of a larger collection of reading strategy products, so you can provide a consistent instructional approach that your students quickly learn and understand the expectations and routines for. Learn more about this collection here! Its a huge time saver! Instead of hunting for background information on a reading strategy, this comprehensive resource includes all of the information and resources you need to teach a whole unit on this reading strategy. The student activities are a lot of fun for students, which helps create a productive learning environment where students are engaged and learning! It includes resources that provide a great way to create a home-school connection with students families and support parents/guardians in continuing student learning at home. If you want to get more book ideas to read aloud to your elementary students, then grab this reading freebie for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classroom teachers. It includes: seasonal read aloud books lists for teachers printable reading logs to track students reading monthly reading challenges to motivate students to read more! It will have you covered for the entire school year, as well as the summer months! Grab this free elementary reading packet now! In closing, we hope you found this post about how to teach asking and answering questions helpful! If you did, then you may also be interested in this other post about elementary reading comprehension strategies. Teachers ask questions for several purposes, and for that reason they may formulate their questions in various ways. There are many ways of categorizing questions, and we will review several approaches in this section of the web-site. The simplest way to distinguish between types of questions is the difference between display questions and referential questions. A display question is a question for which the answer is obvious; for example, what is this colour? Or how many arms do I have? The purpose of a display question is to allow the student to show that they know and can answer the question in the target language. A referential question, on the other hand, poses a problem for which the answer is not obvious and may be unknown to the teacher and student alike. The purpose of this type of question is to discover the unknown information, back to top What are some different types of questions? In his article Questioning Strategies to Improve Student Thinking and Comprehension, J.B. Slack identifies several different types of questions which teachers can use to assist students process new information or review previous material: Refocusing questions are used when learners are off-task or in a transition to a new topic. Clarifying questions are used if the learners answer was not clear, if the teacher is looking for a different answer or if the teacher wants the answer expressed differently. Verifying questions are used to elicit more detail and clarification. Narrow the focus questions are used to refocus answers within a narrower framework; that is, to restrict the content of the answers. Supporting questions are used to assist students in establishing connections and relationships between concepts. Teachers should consider preparing some questions in advance. This would benefit the students since it would ensure that various types of questions with differing levels of difficulty and complexity would be explored. It is advisable to keep Blooms Taxonomy in mind when preparing questions. This would oblige the teacher to consider the type of information they are seeking to elicit with the question. Two types of wait time are apparent in a classroom setting. One type of wait time is the time between asking a question and getting an answer from a student. The second type of wait time concerns the length of time that the teacher allows to pass after a student stops speaking before the teacher speaks up, again. Some studies have shown that the average wait time allowed by teachers is less than a second, which does not allow much opportunity for students to internalize the discussion. A wait time of 3 to 5 seconds has been found to result in higher student performance standards. Waiting those extra few seconds can produce several other positive outcomes including, the following: Improved student retention, Increased length of student responses, More unsolicited student responses, Increased contributions by students who normally would not with a wait time of under 3 seconds, and, Fewer student interruptions. In addition to evaluating their techniques of posing questions, teachers should also actively assess their techniques of answering questions, as well. Teachers should consider whether to answer questions directly, indirectly or not answer the question at all and redirect it to someone else. This website offers many examples of ways to answer or redirect student questions in order to best facilitate learning. As we can see the process of posing and answering questions that, whether by the teacher or by the students, is of critical importance in the language classroom. All students need to be made to feel comfortable asking questions, even if the answer has already been covered. The teacher must acknowledge the value of each question. Students should be given plenty of opportunity to ask questions, so that they do not need to be constantly interrupting the class to ask something. All of these considerations may be facilitated if the teacher provides an opportunity for the student to ask questions at regular intervals. By demonstrating the necessary patience to indulge students curiosity, a teacher will create a question-friendly environment, and this would go a long way toward creating a student-friendly classroom. Both asking and answering questions are important parts of effective learning and teaching. The types of questions you ask should capture the students attention, arouse their curiosity, reinforce key points, and encourage active learning. Here is a list of question types based on Benjamin Blooms six cognitive levels: Knowledge (identification and recall of information): Who, what, when, where, how? Describe Comprehension (organization and selection of facts and ideas): Application (use of facts, rules and principles): How is an example of? How is related to? Why is significant? Analysis (separation of a whole into component parts): What are the parts or features of? Classify according to Outline/diagram How does compare/contrast with? What evidence can you list for? Synthesis (combination of ideas to form a new whole): What would you predict/infer from? What ideas can you add to? How would you create/design a new? What might happen if you combined? What solutions would you suggest for? Evaluation (development of opinions, judgments, or decisions): Do you agree? What do you think about? What is the most important? Place the following in order of priority How would you decide about? What criteria would you use to assess? Support If you would like support applying these tips to your own teaching, CTE staff members are here to help. View the CTE Supportpage to findthe most relevant staff member to contact. This Creative Commons licenselets others remix, tweak, and build upon our work non-commercially, as long as they credit us and indicate if changes were made. Use this citation format: Asking Questions: Six Types. Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo. In this introductory clip, Catlin presents an overview of the Asking and Answering Questions training. The first part of the training is about teaching students to meaningfully ask questions about the text, and the second part covers teaching students to meaningfully answer questions. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 1 PowerPoint Handout Slides Final Reflection: Read over Slides 9-12. Think about your data. What does the data at your school indicate about why it's important to teach students to ask and answer questions well? Note: Remember, although we may highlight or focus on one strategy to make the strategy explicit, we need to ensure that our students know that strategies dont happen in isolation. We use multiple strategies automatically and interchangeably; and usually, we use more than one at a time. We do not want to teach isolated strategies for very long at all. Michael Pressley (2000) tells us that, Strategies are taught just a few at a time and students learn to coordinate multiple strategies as they read. Strategies instruction is long-term and woven through the content areas so students learn to apply appropriate strategies to comprehend a wide range of genres (Isreal & Duffy, p. 512). In the second clip of the Asking and Answering Questions video series, a closer look at the Cognitive Strategy Routine is presented. Participants first examine an anchor lesson and then follow Catlin through the steps to introduce the strategy of Asking and Answering Questions to students. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 2 PowerPoint Handout Slides AAQ Video Clip 2 Additional Handouts Final Reflection: Read over steps 2 through 4 from the Cognitive Strategy Routine Card (found in the Additional Handouts). Think through how you would proceed through steps 2 through 4 from Asking and Answering Questions with your students in order to practice the explicit and precise language needed. The third clip features a model lesson of a fiction think aloud, based on Angel Child, Dragon Child. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 3 PowerPoint Handout Slides AAQ Video Clip 3 Additional Handouts Final Reflection: Take a moment now to think about how this type of explicit instruction might support student learning in your classroom. Are there stories you can think of that lend themselves well to teaching this strategy? What did you notice about the model lesson? This video clip features a model lesson of a non-fiction think aloud, The Koala Catchers. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 4 PowerPoint Handout Slides AAQ Video Clip 4 Additional Handouts Final Reflection: Take a moment now to think about this model lesson on reading informational text. How might this type of instruction support student learning in your classroom? How might this strategy help students in other content areas? What did you notice about the model lesson? The fifth video in the series covers an explanation of how to engage students in asking and answering questions. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 5 PowerPoint Handout Slides AAQ Video Clip 5 Additional Handouts Final Reflection: What will be the biggest shift in how time is spent planning for reading lessons? In the sixth clip in the Asking and Answering Questions video series, Catlin presents the history of questions in education as well as how teachers should teach answering questions in their classrooms. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 6 PowerPoint Handout Slides Final Reflection: What did you learn about questions that deepen understanding? Given all of Catlins examples, what is one technique you would like to try in your classroom? The seventh video clip briefly describes informal and formal assessment questions. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 7 PowerPoint Handout Slides Final Reflection: Reflect on Catlins example of students ineffective use of test-taking strategies. Why do you think this happens and how can you ensure that your students are thinking critically when utilizing test-taking strategies? In this video clip, Catlin introduces and explains the Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 8 PowerPoint Handout Slides QAR Poster This video clip shows Catlin modeling the Question and Answer Relationship with third grade STAAR questions. Materials needed: AAQ Video Clip 9 PowerPoint Handout Slides AAQ Video Clip 9 Additional Handouts Final Reflection: How will you use what you learned in this training to help your students ask questions and find meaning in texts?

How to teach asking and answering questions. Asking and answering questions in english. Getting to the truth by asking and answering questions is called what. Answering question.