

# Question Time

Curiosity might have killed the cat, but it generally keeps motivation alive. Questioning the teacher is a particularly curious business.

## HOW?

1. Place a good number of resources around the room relevant to the topic in hand. They should be non-text or low-text resources, for example pictures, artefacts, photographs, diagrams, posters, maps .... Make sure that there are at least as many resources as there are pairs.
2. Students work in pairs and go round examining the resources. For each resource, they define one question, raised by the resource, about the topic in hand.
3. The pairs write down their questions, perhaps on a pre-printed sheet.
4. Pairs move freely from one resource to another ensuring that there are never too many people at any one station at any one time. They spend as long as they need to at each resource. The pair must agree that the question they write down is, as far as they can tell, the most significant question raised by the resource.
5. Once time is up the pairs go back to their places or form a circle. The teacher leads a discussion about each resource in turn, based on the students' questions. The quality of the questions is discussed and key questions are identified. The teacher provides the 'input' to the lesson by answering the key questions.
6. Students can note down the questions and answers during the process, or at the end, or the teacher can supply a photocopied summary sheet.

## APPLICATIONS

- **A Level Sociology:** the hidden curriculum's effect on gender role formation by using a Development Education Centre photopack *Behind the Scenes*
- **Physics:** circuit boards set up to show different electrical functions and effects
- **Biology:** a series of photographs from under an electron microscope showing various types of cell behaviour
- **Religious Education:** sacred objects
- **Business Studies:** roles within a company shown through a series of photographs of different people at work
- **Technology:** introduction to new equipment and machinery
- **Maths:** a series of problems – pairs have to identify the key question that will unlock each problem

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## WHY DO IT?

Being curious and asking questions is the natural function of the brain's neo-cortex. So, the activity is likely to be motivating. Also, students are usually more receptive to information which answers questions that they themselves have asked. Those students with kinaesthetic urges can move around the room legitimately! Finally, the process trains students in an essential study skill – asking the right question. The teacher also demonstrates how to answer with precision.

## VARIATIONS

Move the students round the resources in an orderly fashion at set intervals.