



Questions in the Classroom

Types of Questions

Display Questions

used when the teacher
knows the answer

Referential Questions

used when the teacher is
curious about engaging
students in open-ended
conversations

Closed Questions

Closed questions have
one answer, typically only
one word.

Open Questions

Open questions have
several answers and allow
students to work on
reasoning and
explanation.

Research Says.....



Researchers Long and Sato (1983) found that display questions are asked far more frequently in the classroom. Referential questions are more common outside a classroom setting. Long and Sato argue that we need to re-assess how we ask questions in the classroom in order to prepare students for real-life scenarios. Generally speaking, questions in the classroom should be referential in order to elicit long-form responses. Display questions are still important in the classroom, but teachers should be cautious about limiting the length of responses from their students.



Tips n' Tricks



Teachers often rush students' responses by waiting only one or two seconds after posing a question. Providing sufficient wait time encourages more detailed and complex answers, and also supports student motivation. (I know silence can be awkward, but giving students the time to answer our questions is beneficial to their growth.)

Encourage students by asking questions with "Why," "How," or "What if..." Also, you can ask questions that require students to connect new information to their own experiences and opinions.