

TEACHING THE ART OF QUESTIONING

Concept: Levels of Questioning

Standard: Students will analyze grade-level text.

Goal: Students will improve reading comprehension by learning how to raise higher-level questions.

Objective: After raising questions about pieces of fruit, students will write and answer several questions about core literature. The questions will be at different levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

Materials needed: an apple and an orange, core literature, a copy of Bloom's taxonomy

Anticipatory set: Present the apple and the orange and ask the class, "Which piece of fruit do you like better? Why?"

Procedure: First, the teacher explains to the class that s/he is going to teach them how to ask questions.

Beginning with the fruit, the teacher explains that low-level questions deal with recall and specific detail, while higher level questions address analysis, application, synthesis and evaluation. Though students may not understand these terms, the teacher can model and then invite students to raise their own questions about the fruit.

Below are examples: 1) Recall/specific detail: What color is the apple? What shape is the orange? Which one is bigger? 2) Comprehension: Which piece of fruit makes your fingers feel sticky? Which piece of fruit is packed with vitamin C? 3) Analysis: What are three differences/similarities between the apple and the orange? 4) Application: Can you think of a way to peel an orange without getting your fingers sticky? What would you do if you were starving and found a worm in your apple? 5) Synthesis: If you were going to create a new piece of fruit that was a combination of the apple and the orange, what would the fruit look and taste like? 6) Evaluation: Which fruit is better for you and why?

After students create fruit questions, introduce a short poem or story and ask them to write questions at each level of Bloom's taxonomy. On the board, list the questions under the different question headings (recall, comprehension, analysis, application, synthesis, evaluation) and ask them to answer at least two questions under each heading.

Assessment: Using a rubric, students can self-assess their work by switching papers with a partner and checking to see the questions span the taxonomy ladder and are adequately answered based on information in the text.

Independent practice: Ask students to record the questions raised at home, on a television program, or in other classes and write an analysis of the types of questions that are most frequently asked. Are they lower or higher level questions?