

## Questioning Strategies

Taken from *Teach Like a Champion*, Doug Lemov

Wait time is critical to better student participation. Whenever you ask a question, give students time to think about the question before responding. Ask, wait, then call on a student.

### Think-Pair-Share

The following technique gives students the opportunity to think about the question and share an answer in a smaller setting before answering in front of the entire class.

1. Teacher asks a question and tells students they have \_\_\_\_\_ seconds to think about an answer. Neither students nor teacher should talk after the question has been asked.
2. After the determined amount of time, the teacher tells the students to turn to a classmate and share their answer.
3. After students have shared with a partner, call on two or three students to share their answer (or the answer of their classmate) with the entire class. Sometimes students are more willing to share what their partner shared than their own answer.

If think-pair-share doesn't increase participation, try using some of the following techniques.

### No Opt Out

A sequence that begins with a student unable (or unwilling) to answer a question should end with the student answering that question as often as possible.

Format 1:

1. Teacher asks a question and calls on a student.
2. Student doesn't answer or answers incorrectly.
3. Teacher calls on another student, or the entire class, to answer the question.
4. Teacher calls on the original student to repeat the correct answer.

Format 2:

1. Teacher asks a question and calls on a student.
2. Student doesn't answer or answers incorrectly.
3. Teacher provides a hint to guide the student toward the answer.
4. Student answers the question. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as needed.

Format 3:

1. Teacher asks a question and calls on a student.
2. Student doesn't answer or answers incorrectly.
3. Teacher rewords the question.
4. Student answers the question. Repeat steps 3 and 4 as needed.

Format 4:

1. Teacher asks a question and calls on a student.
2. Student doesn't answer or answers incorrectly.
3. Teacher breaks down the question into smaller parts.
4. Student answers the smaller parts.

## Right is Right

Sometimes students will give an incorrect answer and we don't want to hurt their feelings, so we accept the wrong answer or just move on. We should praise effort, but also teach the youth the importance of giving a completely right answer, especially as we prepare them to share the gospel with friends and later serve missions. The following are techniques to help students give completely right answers when part, or all, the answer is wrong.

- Praise the student for what he or she has done and your expectation that he or she will continue until the question is answered completely correct.
  - Example: "I like what you said about \_\_\_\_\_. Can you develop \_\_\_\_\_ further?"
- Repeat the student's words back to him or her, placing emphasis on the incomplete or incorrect part.

## Stretch It

After a correct answer has been given to a question, ask follow up questions to lengthen the discussion.

- Ask students to give an example that illustrates or supports their response.
- Many times when teachers ask questions that require one-word answers, students choose the simplest word. Pose follow-up questions where you ask students for a better word. This allows students to better study the gospel and gain insight into gospel principles.
- Ask students for evidence that supports their responses.
- Ask students to relate or connect their response to a previously asked question.
  - Previous question: What is pride?
  - Later question: What was Laman and Lemuel's desire as they traveled in the wilderness?
  - Student response: They constantly wanted to return to Jerusalem.
  - Connecting question: According to what we have already discussed about pride, how is Laman and Lemuel's desire to return to Jerusalem an example of pride?

## Half-statement

1. Teacher asks a question.
2. Teacher gives part of the answer and then asks students to fill in the rest of the idea.

## Feign Ignorance

Pretend you have a problem and ask the students a question concerning your problem.

## Cold Call

One mistake made by teachers is asking a question, asking students who know the answer to raise their hands, and then calling on one of the student's who has his or her hand raised. What this is teaching is students will never have to participate if they don't raise their hands. Instead, ask the question, ask students to raise their hands, and then call on a student who doesn't have his or her hand raised. Over time, this will teach students that they need to be prepared to participate regardless of whether they have raised their hand.