

18 July 2013

MINI-MANUAL

Instruction: Effective Questions



INSTRUCTIONAL
COACHING
GROUP

Jim Knight

For more detailed information regarding the information contained in this mini-manual, refer to:

High Impact Instruction: A Framework for Great Teaching

Chapter 6

By Jim Knight

Also view the High Impact Instruction introduction video:



Instruction: Effective Questions

Some rights reserved. Educators are granted permission to copy this document for use with students and teachers. However, no part of this document may be included in other publications in any format without written permission from the Instructional Coaching Group. www.instructionalcoaching.com.

Copyright © 2013



Effective Questions

“Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question.”

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN

KEY CONCEPTS FOR COACHES

USING QUESTIONS EFFECTIVELY WITH STUDENTS

- 1 Ask questions of all students.
- 2 Develop expectations for students.
- 3 So that all students answer questions, use the “Repeat, Rephrase, Reduce, Reach Out” technique.
- 4 Celebrate mistakes.
- 5 Avoid giving away the answers to right or wrong questions.
- 6 Provide sufficient wait time.

Turning Ideas Into Action

STUDENTS

- 1 Guide students to ask their own questions.
- 2 Conduct “thinking audits” where students rate how much thinking they did during a lesson.

TEACHERS

- 1 Coach self on questioning techniques by audio recording and then coding types of questions.
- 2 Video record class to examine effectiveness of the questions asked.
- 3 Video recording will also allow teachers to examine the amount of wait time they give students.

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES

- 1 The easiest way to coach teachers on questioning is to use video recording.
- 2 Coaches can also gather data around types and levels of questions using a checklist.
- 3 Encourage teachers to set goals related to student engagement, increased learning, and/or attitude.

PRINCIPALS

- 1 Lead a discussion about using the right types of questions during specific types of lessons.
- 2 Consider learning more strategies for better questions while leading collaboration in your school.

What It Looks Like



Data about questioning in a classroom can be gathered by the teacher or instructional coach in several ways. The most effective way of improving questioning skills is by video recording; teachers will immediately recognize how they can improve their questioning skills. The art of becoming a skilled questioner is part of the teaching craft. It is a very complex affair that includes many variables. Expert questioning depends on deeply understanding the content and knowing the proficiencies involved in learning the content. Teachers who are expert questioners become highly responsive to student needs. The type of questioning is dependent upon the type of instruction to be delivered. Skilled questioners are very intentional in scaffolding questions to help construct meaning. If teachers have a clear plan for the lesson and unit and they know their students well, they can determine the types of questions to ask and differentiate questions for individual students.

