

Text-Dependent Questions

- Answers must be based on what has been read, not opinions or experience.
- More time must be spent on text worth reading and rereading carefully.
- Recent study found that 80% of the questions students were asked when they are reading are answerable without direct reference to the text itself.

Bringing the Common Core to Life" David Coleman · Founder, Student Achievement Partners
Chancellors Hall · State Education Building · Albany, NY April 28, 2011

Non-Examples and Examples

Not Text-Dependent

- In "Casey at the Bat," Casey strikes out. Describe a time when you failed at something.
- In "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Dr. King discusses nonviolent protest. Discuss, in writing, a time when you wanted to fight against something that you felt was unfair.
- In "The Gettysburg Address" Lincoln says the nation is dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Why is equality an important value to promote?

Resource: Achievethecore.org

Text-Dependent

What makes Casey's experiences at bat humorous?

What can you infer from King's letter about the letter that he received?

"The Gettysburg Address" mentions the year 1776. According to Lincoln's speech, why is this year significant to the events described in the speech?

Key Characteristics of Text Dependent Prompts

Good text dependent questions cause students to do at least one of the following:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
- Prove each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

Four Types of Text Dependent Questions

Type 1: Find it

What is...?
Where is...?
Who is...?

Compare and contrast...

Type 2: Look Closer

Identify main idea...
Draw conclusions...
Make predictions...
Make inferences...

Type 3: Prove It

The first paragraph is important because...
How has the author organized the information? (cause/effect, clues/evidence, chronological, etc.)
Why does the author use a chart, an illustration...?
The author uses description to tell... Give an example from the text.

Type 4: Take it Apart

Three Types of Text-Dependent Questions

- When you're writing or reviewing a set of questions, consider the following three categories:
- Questions that assess themes and central ideas
- Questions that assess knowledge of vocabulary
- Questions that assess syntax and structure

7 Steps to Creating Text Dependent Questions

- **Step 1:** Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text
- **Step 2:** Start Small to Build Confidence
- **Step 3:** Target Vocabulary and Text Structure
- **Step 4:** Tackle Tough Sections Head-on
- **Step 5:** Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions
- **Step 6:** Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed
- **Step 7:** Create the Culminating Assessment

Evaluating Question Quality

=HANDOUT=

Checklist for Evaluating Question Quality

Text Under Review (include page #s): _____

✓if yes	Criteria:	Comments/Questions/Fixes (refer to specific questions!):
A	C. Text Specific:	
	C1. Are the questions specific enough so they can only be answered by reference to this text?	
B	C2. Are the inferences students are asked to make grounded logically in the text (Can they be answered with careful reading rather than background knowledge)?	
	D. Organization of the Questions:	
	D1. Do the early questions in the sequence focus on specific phrases and sentences to support basic comprehension of the text and develop student confidence before moving on to more challenging tasks?	
	D2. Are the questions coherently sequenced? Do they build toward gradual understanding of the text's meaning?	
	D3. Do the questions stay focused on the text and only go beyond it to make other connections in extension activities after the text has been explored?	
	D4. If multiple texts/different media are under consideration, are students asked to examine each text closely before making connections among texts?	
C	E. Culminating Activity or Writing Prompt:	
	E1. Does the culminating task call on the knowledge and understanding acquired through	

Question Stems for Close Reading of Informational Texts (Adapted from Race to the Top/Strategies for Close Reading)

- What clues show you ...
- Point to the evidence ...
- How does the author describe X in paragraph X? What are the exact words?
- What reasons does the book give for X? Where are they?
- Share a sentence that (tells you what the text is about, or describes X, or gives a different point of view)
- What is the purpose of paragraph X? What are the clues that tell you this?
- What does the author think about X? Why do you think so — what is your evidence?
- What do you predict will happen next? What are the clues that make you think so?

Source: Reading Rockets

Pause and Reflect

Based on the definition you were just given of a text dependent question, can you think of one or two text dependent questions that you have posed to your students recently? Using your Learning Journal, write them down.

