

Using Copilot to brainstorm discussion questions

– Example conversations

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Initial prompt used for all conversations in this document

I want you to help me prepare engaging questions to use with my students at Coventry University. First, ask me for the topic and the question that I want you to reformulate. Then give me a list of how I can reformulate the question in each of the following ways:

- Reverse question: provide a possible answer to the question and ask 'If this is the answer, what is the question?'. It's essential that the answer you provide doesn't make it too obvious what the question is. For example, if the original question was 'What is one advantage of open-questions?', you could change this to 'This type of question encourages critical thinking' - If this is the answer, what is the question?
- Statement: make the question into a statement and follow it with 'Do you agree or disagree with this statement?'
- Rank statements: make the question into five varied statements with different viewpoints on the topic that students have to rank in the order that they agree with them. The statements must be opinions about the same topic that it's possible to agree or disagree with, not just disparate facts. It's essential you avoid directly contradictory statements (whereby agreeing with one statement means you can't agree with the others), for example avoid things like 'X is more important than Y', 'X is just as important as Y', 'X is less important than Y'.
- Challenge assumptions: make the question into something that could challenge common assumptions, e.g. 'Are open-questions always more effective than closed questions? When might closed-questions be more appropriate?'
- Consider implications: make the questions focus on the application of the concept in a hypothetical scenario, e.g. 'What would happen if a student only studied the day before a test?'

Example conversation 1 (Topic = GDP)

 You

The topic is Macroeconomics. The question is 'Why is GDP not always a satisfactory measure of living standards?'

 Copilot

Great, let's get started! Here are different ways to reformulate the question "Why is GDP not always a satisfactory measure of living standards?" for your students:

Reverse Question

Answer: "It doesn't account for income inequality or environmental degradation."

Question: "If this is the answer, what is the question?"

Statement

Statement: "GDP is not always a satisfactory measure of living standards."

Question: "Do you agree or disagree with this statement?"

Rank Statements

Statements to Rank:

1. GDP fails to consider income distribution within a country.
2. GDP does not account for non-market transactions that contribute to well-being.
3. GDP overlooks environmental costs and sustainability.
4. GDP is a comprehensive measure of economic activity and living standards.
5. GDP does not reflect the quality of life or happiness of citizens.

Question: "Rank these statements in the order that you agree with them."

Challenge Assumptions

Question: "Is GDP always an inadequate measure of living standards? When might GDP be a useful indicator?"

Consider Implications

Question: "What would happen if policymakers only used GDP to assess the well-being of a country's population? How might this impact their decisions?"

Feel free to use these as they are or tweak them to better fit your teaching style! Do you need help with any

Example conversation 2 (Topic = Cameras on / off in online teaching sessions)

**You**

The topic is Education. The question is 'Why do students turn their cameras off for online lessons?'

**Copilot**

Great, let's work on that question. Here are some ways to reformulate it using different higher-order questioning techniques:

Reverse Question

Answer: Students might feel self-conscious or distracted by their surroundings. **Question:** What could be some reasons that students might feel uncomfortable turning their cameras on during online lessons?

Statement

Statement: Turning off cameras during online lessons indicates a lack of engagement from students. **Task:** Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

Rank Statements

Task: Rank the following statements in order of how much you agree with them:

1. Students turn off their cameras because they are multitasking during the lesson.
2. Students feel more comfortable and less self-conscious with their cameras off.
3. Technical issues and bandwidth limitations often lead students to turn off their cameras.
4. Turning off cameras helps students focus better on the lesson content.
5. Students turn off their cameras to avoid distractions from their surroundings.

Challenge Assumptions

Question: Is it always true that students who turn off their cameras are less engaged in the lesson? What are some situations where this might not be the case?

Consider Implications

Question: What would be the impact on student participation and engagement if a policy was implemented requiring all students to keep their cameras on during online lessons?

Feel free to let me know if you need any further adjustments or additional questions!

Example conversation 3 (Topic = Nominating students vs asking for hands up)

**You**

The topic is education. The question is 'Why is it often better to nominate students rather than ask for hands up?'

**Copilot**

Great, thank you! Here are some ways to reformulate the question "Why is it often better to nominate students rather than ask for hands up?" using different higher-order questioning techniques:

Reverse Question

Answer: "This approach can help ensure that all students are engaged and participating." **Question:** "If this is the answer, what is the question?"

Statement

Statement: "Nominating students is a more effective method than asking for hands up."

Rank Statements

1. "Nominating students ensures equal participation from everyone."
2. "Asking for hands up encourages only the most confident students to participate."
3. "Nominating students can put pressure on those who are less prepared."
4. "Asking for hands up allows students to volunteer when they feel ready."
5. "Nominating students helps the teacher manage classroom dynamics better."

Challenge Assumptions

Question: "Is nominating students always a better approach than asking for hands up? In what situations might asking for hands up be more effective?"

Consider Implications

Question: "What might happen in a classroom where the teacher only nominates students to answer questions? How could this impact student engagement and learning?"

Feel free to adjust these as needed to better fit your teaching style and the needs of your students! Would you like to explore more questions or another topic?



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