ASAP

A Systemic APproach to social media
and pre-adolescents through thinking

ASAP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

LEARNING UNIT

THE POWER OF QUESTIONS

Unlocking curiosity and critical thinking

Co-funded by
the European Union

THE POWER OF QUESTIONS:
Unlocking curiosity and critical thinking

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ASAP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

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R3.2.1 ASAP Educational Programme Handbook

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Learning Unit

The Power of Questions: Unlocking curiosity and critical thinking

FOCUS OF THIS UNIT

Introduction

With words, human beings not only describe the world or their ideas, but also act, do things, give life to something new. In the 20th century, reflection on the pragmatics of language, on its performative function, was intensified and systematised: with words, we talk about reality, but also give it form, we marry, declare war, condemn to death, we weave and break ties, confer powers or revoke them, grant rights or limit the ability of others to act.

Here we deal with a fundamental linguistic act that is the asking of questions....

Key Competences

Key Competences* (which the Unit aims to contribute to)	
General	**Specific**
PERSONAL: Self-regulation	• Awareness and expression of personal emotions, thoughts, values, and behaviour
SOCIAL: Communication	• Awareness of the need for a variety of communication strategies, language registers, and tools that are adapted to context and content. • Understanding and managing interactions and conversations in different socio-cultural contexts and domain-specific situations. • Listening to others and engaging in conversations with confidence, assertiveness, clarity and reciprocity, both in personal and social contexts.
SOCIAL: Collaboration	• Fair sharing of tasks, resources and responsibility within a group taking into account its specific aim; eliciting the expression of different views and adopting a systemic approach.
LEARNING TO LEARN: Critical Thinking	• Awareness of potential biases in the data and one's personal limitations, while collecting valid and reliable information and ideas from diverse and reputable sources. • Comparing, analysing, assessing, and synthesising data, information, ideas, and media messages in order to draw logical conclusions.

LEARNING TO LEARN: Managing Learning	• Planning and implementing learning goals, strategies, resources and processes.

**Defined according to the LifeComp and DigComp 2.2 Frameworks*

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes	
Knowledge	**Skills and Abilities**
1.a) The question as a linguistic act; distinction between question types according to communication purposes and related contexts ('asking to get' and 'asking to know'; asking to know what the other person knows, thinks or feels; 'asking to know what I know' and 'asking to know what I don't know'; open-ended and closed-ended questions); importance of asking well formulated questions in order to know the other and to know the world; importance of verifying hypotheses	• Obtaining information by asking effectively formulated questions • Distinguishing between asking to know what the other person knows, thinks, feels • Distinguishing between closed-ended and open-ended questions and transforming closed-ended questions into open-ended questions • Making hypotheses and verifying them
2.a) Distinction between fact and opinion; difference between opinions and judgements; difference between observing, interpreting, judging	• Asking questions to get to know the other person's opinions (active listening) • Asking questions to reconstruct facts • Distinguishing opinions based on facts from those based on impressions • Giving arguments for supporting one's own opinions • Expressing one's opinions without transforming them into judgements on the other person

Work plan

Topic 1 – Let's map the questions		
Phase 1.a **(Knowledge building and skills development)**	**Activity 1.a.1 –** Observing the differences The content is proposed in an open dialogue with the participants to check what they already know and what they need to learn (the activity itself is an example of maieutic questioning)	45 min

Phase 1.b (Applying knowledge)	**Activity** 1.b.1 – Interview: getting to know a person Group game **Activity** 1.b.2 – Guess who? Team game	45 min
Topic 2 – Let's distinguish facts and opinions		
Phase 2.a **(Knowledge building)**	Frontal presentation 2.a.1	45 min
Phase 2.b **(Skills development)**	**Activity** 2.b.1 – Facts or opinions? Exercise in recognising facts, distinguishing them from opinions **Activity** 2.b.2- Interviewing witnesses of a fact to reconstruct what happened	45 min

Final products

Participants interview an existing person or character or author from the most diverse fields (science, history, literature, philosophy, music, art, comics, film, etc.). They choose not only the subject to be interviewed, but also the medium with which to carry out the interview and the final product (article, podcast, video, etc.).

Evaluation

Objective:
Evaluate how kids develop their questioning skills, critical thinking, and ability to distinguish between facts, opinions, and emotions.

Methods and tools:

- Ongoing observation during activities, games, and discussions
- Collection of kids' written or oral outputs (e.g. questions formulated, interviews conducted, reflections, etc.)
- Comparative observation before and after specific activities to detect learning progress.
- Peer and self-assessment moments, especially after interviews and group work.

Timing:
Continuous (before, during, and after activities). Possible pre/post assessment moments:

- Before and after "Interview" activities, to assess progress in formulating open and purposeful questions.
- Before and after the "Facts or Opinions" activities, to check improved understanding of the distinction.

Roles:
Educators observe and note behaviours, participation, and quality of questioning. They support self-reflection and provide feedback during debriefing.

Evaluation activities examples:

- Designing interview questions:

Ask kids to prepare a set of questions for an interview (with a peer, adult, or admired character, whether real or fictional). Evaluate their ability to formulate open questions and to distinguish between those "to know" and "to get."

- Fact vs. opinion test:

Present mixed statements (from articles, posts, or public figures) and ask kids to classify them as facts, opinions, or judgements. Do it before and after Topic 2 activities to evaluate conceptual progress.

- Class questioning observation:

Observe how kids ask questions during ordinary lessons after completing the Learning Unit. Note if they use more open, exploratory, or reflective questions.

Evaluation indicators:

- Ability to formulate open-ended and purposeful questions.
- Awareness of question types and their communicative purposes.
- Ability to identify and separate facts, opinions, judgements, and emotions.
- Willingness to listen and reformulate respectfully.
- Increased curiosity and engagement in dialogue.

Application contexts

The knowledge and skills developed in the LU can be applied in interviews, in the collection of information needed to tell stories, events and news, but also during a simple conversation.

One application context tested by ASAP is the Editorial Board of an online newspaper. A series of meetings can be structured to learn how an editorial office works, its roles and the tasks of the journalist with examples from the world of journalism in each country (TV news, newspapers, web, etc.). The use of the 5 Ws in constructing a story can be used to answer the question 'How do journalists construct their articles/videos?'. Additional knowledge includes deontology of the journalist; difference between the journalist and those who disseminate content and information (especially) on social media without being a journalist.

Links with other LUs

- **Authenticity & Authority:** uses inquiry to evaluate sources, claims, and credibility.
- **Communication:** supports clearer dialogue and active listening through effective questioning.
- **Emotions:** fosters perspective-taking and empathy via reflective questions.
- **Onlife:** applies questioning to interpret online information and platform logics.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

On the importance of questions in the relationship between kids and adults

Questions are central to thinking and learning. This awareness emerged clearly in 5th century BCE Athens and then became a kind of common place in Western culture. Socrates' method for exposing contradictions and fallacies – which can be described, in the language of Popper, as a process of falsification – was based on well-posed questions, with the aim of clarifying thought and seeking deeper understanding.

In the digital or information age[1], with a pervasive diffusion of the Internet and the beginning of the recurrent use of Artificial Intelligence, the main capacity we are owed to develop is not the ability to answer, but the ability to ask questions. Answers are everywhere; we are immersed in information and knowledge. Any item of knowledge produced and stored over the centuries is available and quickly accessible, at a click of a button. However, the capacity to retrieve, select and evaluate information relies on a strong and well-trained ability to ask questions, which is the fundamental trigger of research and understanding, of science and interpretation.

In recent decades, cognitive neuroscience has allowed us to link this understanding to what Stanislas Dehaene calls 'the pillars of learning'[2], providing scientific evidence for insights and practices that have been established over centuries. This offers the possibility of renewing and refreshing adult–child relationships and rethinking the value, meaning, and direction of the underlying concepts.

The perception of the centrality of questions in knowledge and communication is so clear that every event involving learning – from conferences to information days, from lectures to school lessons – dedicates time to questions. We expect questions from our audience and measure the impact and effectiveness of our communication by the questions we receive.

In schools, teachers are often unsettled when they do not receive questions from their students[3]. After all, questions are also a kind of feedback that students give to teachers. This unsettling feeling often takes the form of a judgement, if not an accusation, related to the "passivity" of the students or the younger generation in general[4].

However, other directions are worth exploring, starting from the puzzling emotions that arise when a class does not ask questions. If asking is the original impulse that connects us to each other and to the world, how do we learn to keep asking questions or how do we learn to stop asking them? And what role do adults play in discouraging questions?

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[1] See Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave*, New York, Morrow, 1980; Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, 3 voll., Oxford, Blackwell, 1996-1998.

[2] See Stanislas Dehaene, *Apprendre: les talents du cerveau, le défi des machines*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2018 (English transl., *How We Learn: Why Brains Learn Better Than Any Machine… for Now*, New York, Viking, 2020).

[3] See Arthur C. Graesser and Natalie K. Person, "Question Asking During Tutoring", in *American Educational Research Journal*, vol. 31, n. 1, Spring 1994, pp. 104-137.

[4] On the interplay between aging and the problem solving and creativity, see Tuval Raz, Michele T. Diaz and Yoed N. Kenett, "The Effect of Aging on Question-Asking, Divergent Thinking, and Problem-Solving Abilities", in *Creativity Research Journal*, online first, 2025, pp. 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/10400419.2025.2498916.

Needs and lack — of food, sleep, contact or inner balance — are expressed primordially and beyond culture through weeping, stillness and leaning towards. When these are received and interpreted by the caregiver or attachment figure, they begin to be articulated through gestures and words[5]. The word then enables the emergence of new needs, whose expression builds on the original needs, which remain primary throughout our lives and which we share with certain mammals, dogs in particular[6].

Children typically start asking questions verbally when they are around two or three years old; this is when they begin to actively use language[7]. However, they have already been asking questions since birth, albeit in ways that do not require words, such as through look, gestures, pointing, contact, sounds, and facial expressions[8].

It is already during this primordial phase that adults' reactions and behaviour will influence children's attitudes towards asking, either reinforcing, supporting, inhibiting or discouraging it. Throughout our lives, we maintain a high level of sensitivity to what we can call, after Gregory Bateson, analogic communication[9]. This concept encompasses non-verbal communication and continuous signals, as opposed to discrete, symbolic (digital) communication. It includes any sign that marks the context in which communication takes place, as well as the relationships between the senders and receivers of messages. It is therefore essential in shaping meaning and understanding.

Context, as Bateson reminds us, is not an accessory to communication; it is its very condition[10]. Analogic communication, which includes body posture, tone of voice, silences, proxemics, and gaze, constantly shapes the context in which communication unfolds[11]. Unlike verbal (digital) language, analogic signals are not easily filtered or consciously controlled. This means that even in the absence of explicit prohibitions, children may receive implicit messages about whether their questions are welcomed, tolerated, or subtly discouraged[12]. A sigh, a hurried glance at the clock, a teacher leaning back with folded arms: these gestures, though minor, carry a communicative weight that is often stronger than words.

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[5] See John Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss. Vol. 1: Attachment*, London, Hogarth Press, 1969.

[6] See, for example, Konrad Lorenz, *So kam der Mensch auf den Hund*, Wien, Borotha-Schoeler, 1950 (English transl., *Man Meets Dog*, London, Methuen, 1954; Italian transl., *E l'uomo incontrò il cane*, Milano, Adelphi, 1983).

[7] Some recent studies have investigated the behaviour of preschool children and the role of questions in their learning. See, for example, Melissa Wong, Kai Choi, Liat Barak, Elizabeth Lapidow, Jill Austin, Patrick Shafto and Elizabeth Bonawitz, "Young Children's Directed Question Asking in Preschool Classrooms", in *Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 14, n. 10, 2024, art. 754, where in paragraph 1.1 we can read that "in a daily diary study, parents of children between 1 and 5 years old reported children asking on average 76 questions per hour during their conversations with adults at home".

[8] This occurs during the phase known as the 'sensorimotor stage', which is the first of four stages in Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development. This stage extends from birth to around the age of two. During this period, children use their senses and motor skills to interact with the world. See Jean Piaget, *La naissance de l'intelligence chez l'enfant*, Neuchâtel, Delachaux et Niestlé, 1936; English transl., *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*, transl. by Margaret Cook, New York, International Universities Press, 1952; Italian transl., *La nascita dell'intelligenza nel bambino*, Firenze, Giunti-Barbera, 1973.

[9] Gregory Bateson (1904-1980) contributed foundational ideas to the theory of analogic communication. Paul Watzlawick (1921-2007) – who joined in 1960 Bateson's group at the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto – in *Pragmatics of Human Communication* explains how deeply human communication relies on analogic messages. See Paul Watzlawick, Janet H. Beavin and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1967.

[10] See Gregory Bateson, "A Theory of Play and Fantasy" (1954), in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, San Francisco, Chandler Publishing Company, 1972, pp. 177-193.

[11] See Gregory Bateson, Don D. Jackson, Jay Haley, and John H. Weakland, «Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia», in *Behavioral Science*, vol. 1, n. 4, 1956, pp. 251-264; Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, cit.

[12] See Paul Watzlawick, Janet H. Beavin and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, cit.; Gregory Bateson and Mary Catherine Bateson, *Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred*, New York, Macmillan, 1987.

Thus, context, in its broadest sense, plays a decisive role in enabling or inhibiting the emergence of questions. A classroom in which questioning is truly encouraged is not defined solely by explicit rules or instructions, but by a pervasive climate of curiosity, safety, and attentiveness – one co-created by adults and children through their interactions. This brings us to a crucial issue that has become increasingly evident in recent years: the responsibility of adults, especially educators, in shaping this relational and communicative environment.

Rather than questioning why students do not ask questions, we might more fruitfully ask: what kind of context have we created around them? Are we modelling authentic curiosity, or are we delivering knowledge as if it were closed and complete? Are we genuinely listening, or merely waiting for students to say what we expect?

Assuming this perspective requires a shift from blaming students for their silences to examining the adult's own positioning in the learning relationship. A student who refrains from questioning may not be passive or disengaged, but rather cautious, self-protective, or unsure of the safety of their expression. The absence of questions can be read as a symptom: not of a deficit in the student, but of an imbalance in the communicative ecosystem.

Therefore, fostering a culture of inquiry is not about encouraging questions in the abstract, but about cultivating the conditions – both verbal and analogic – in which questioning is meaningful, welcomed, and consequential. This means attending not only to what is said, but to how it is said, to what remains unsaid, and to the subtle dynamics that govern participation and silence. It means rethinking authority as a space of responsibility, not of control, and recognizing that adults are not neutral transmitters of knowledge but active co-constructors of the communicative frame.

From this perspective, reflecting on the wide array of questions we can ask and their purposes, as well as the often-unwanted implications of our reactions to questions becomes essential. Such reflection can shed light on aspects and behaviours that escape our explicit intention and awareness, and can, in turn, support the development of respectful and positive relations between children and adults, as well as dialogue and mutual listening, both in families and schools.

Ultimately, creating an environment where questions can emerge is an ethical and relational task. It requires adults to acknowledge their influence, to interrogate their own responses, and to embrace uncertainty as a shared and generative space. Only then can we hope to sustain the fragile, vital thread of questioning that binds us to ourselves, to others, and to the world.

HOW THE UNIT WORKS

Topic 1: Let's map the questions

This activity aims to transmit and build knowledge in a Socratic way, actively involving the participants.

The content of the knowledge – here we describe a possible way of presenting – is presented in the Background knowledge section. This knowledge can be developed and applied with the activities described in form 1.b.

We present knowledge working on the distinction and with the aim of arriving to a clear and user-friendly map, which distils from the phenomenology of demand what is relevant for the beneficiaries and for the eventual continuation of the training course with other LUs.

What will the participants learn?

- difference between 'asking to get' and 'asking to know'
- difference between asking to know what the other person knows, thinks or feels
- difference between 'asking to know what I know' and 'asking to know what I don't know'
- distinction between open-ended and closed-ended questions
- linguistic indices characterising open questions
- importance of asking well formulated questions in order to know the other and to know the world
- the importance of verifying hypotheses

Learning outcomes

The training objective is also to ensure that participants learn to:

- formulate each question as precisely as possible and close to their intention, choosing the appropriate words
- formulate different questions according to the different information to be obtained and the different communicative purposes

Space configuration

The activity ideally takes place with an arrangement of the chairs/desks in a semicircle, as if creating a theatre scene, where the participants are 'spectators' interacting with the 'actors' (i.e. the educators and their assistants).

We also suggest that all participants prepare their own 'table tent card' with the name by which they want to be called. This is because the activity involves a lot of interaction of the educator with the participants, who are to be called by name each time they want to be given the floor.

Methods and pedagogical techniques used

Socratic method; individual, groups, full group activities

Tools

Blackboard, concept maps, paper, markers, pens

Overview of the activities

Activity 1.a.1 – Observing the differences

After watching two contrasting interactions, the group identifies differences and maps types of questions (e.g., “asking to get/know”, open/closed, facts–opinions–feelings, WH-questions).

Detailed step-by-step instructions for this activity are provided in Activity Plan in the Annex.

Activity 1.b.1 – Interview: getting to know a person

An interview game to recognise open vs closed questions and whether they seek facts, opinions or emotions; the educator supports respectful reformulations and the right not to answer.

Detailed step-by-step instructions for this activity are provided in Activity Plan in the Annex.

Activity 1.b.2 – Guess who

Teams guess a mystery character by asking questions with a limited number of attempts, encouraging hypothesis testing and effective questioning.

Detailed step-by-step instructions for this activity are provided in Activity Plan in the Annex.

Topic 2: Let’s distinguish facts and opinions

The activities described here are intended to develop the knowledge provided in activity 2.a and to have participants practicing its application.

What will the participants learn?

- distinguishing between asking to know what the other person knows, thinks, feels
- distinguishing between closed-ended and open-ended questions
- transforming closed-ended questions into open-ended questions
- making hypotheses and verifying them

Learning outcomes

Knowledge:

- Understanding the difference between **facts** and **opinions**.
- Awareness of the role of **emotions, opinions, and facts** in communication.
- Understanding the importance of **neutrality and precision** when collecting or sharing information.
- Awareness of the value of **cooperation and shared decision-making** in group activities.

Skills and abilities:

- Formulating effective questions to obtain relevant information.
- Reformulating closed-ended questions into open-ended ones.
- Listening actively and using information received to guide further inquiry.
- Working collaboratively in teams, respecting roles and turn-taking.
- Applying logical reasoning to test hypotheses and make decisions.

Space Configuration

Ideally, the classroom should be arranged in a flexible way, allowing movement between plenary moments and group work.

- For **Activity 2.b.1** participants work best in **small groups of 4–6**, seated around tables or in clusters, and then rejoin in a **semicircle** for the plenary discussion.
- For **Activity 2.b.2** a **semicircle** is recommended, with one or two seats in the middle for the "witness(es)". In larger groups, the semicircle can later be divided into **smaller circles** for parallel play

Methods and Pedagogical Techniques

Group play activities

Reinforcement and practice activities

At the end of each activity, participants can:

- Note down ideas, concepts and information relevant to them. At the end of the meeting, a final moment of free (i.e. open to whoever wants to) sharing of notes can be proposed
- Write a short article about the experience
- Write a hypothetical dialogue between two people interviewing each other

Overview of the activities

Activity 2.a.1 – Let's distinguish facts and opinions (presentation)

In this short introductory session, the teacher leads a discussion to distinguish facts from opinions, and opinions from judgments. The purpose is to help kids understand that while facts are verifiable, opinions are personal interpretations that should be based on reasoned arguments. Educators guide the group to recognize the importance of asking precise questions to reconstruct facts and critically assess information.

Detailed step-by-step instructions for this activity are provided in Activity Plan in the Annex.

Activity 2.b.1 – Facts or opinions?

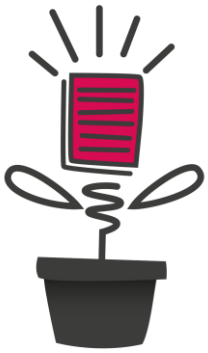
Pairs classify statements (easy/medium/difficult), justify choices and explain how facts could be verified, then share and discuss ambiguous cases.

Activity 2.b.2 – Interviewing witnesses

Teams uncover a "mystery fact" by asking open, neutral questions within a question limit; stories may be real (known to the educator) or invented for the game.

ACTIVITY PLANS & WORKSHEETS

Activity 1.a.1 – OBSERVING THE DIFFERENCE



Objective

- To introduce participants to the concept of different types of questions and their purposes.
- To help participants distinguish between “asking to get” and “asking to know,” as well as the differences between facts, opinions, and emotions.
- To foster critical thinking and active participation through observation and discussion.

Preparation

- Arrange chairs in a semicircle to simulate a theatre scene.
- Reserve a central area for role-playing or interactions between the trainer and the participants.
- A whiteboard or flip chart for noting observations and key points.
- Markers or pens for participants to take notes, if needed.
- Prepare two sets of contrasting interactions or scenarios illustrating the differences between “asking to get” and “asking to know.”
- Agree with a participant or assistant to role-play certain parts if needed.

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

Set the scene:

- Briefly explain the purpose of the activity: understanding how questions function and how different types of questions elicit different kinds of information.
- Emphasize the importance of recognizing how we ask questions to improve communication and understanding.

Define key terms:

- Explain the difference between “asking to get” (seeking a specific result or action) and “asking to know” (seeking understanding or knowledge).
- Mention that the activity will also explore questions related to facts, opinions, and emotions.

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2. Observe two interactions (10 minutes)

- **Scenario 1**:
    - The trainer (or role-playing assistant) asks two questions to a participant or class teacher.
        - Example: “Can you lend me a pen?” and “What is the capital of Italy?”
    - Highlight how one question is transactional (“asking to get”), and the other seeks factual knowledge (“asking to know”).
- **Scenario 2**:
    - The trainer engages in a conversation with a participant or assistant to explore what they know, think, or feel about a topic (e.g., “What do you think about this book?” or “How do you feel about today’s activity?”).
    - Encourage participants to notice the difference between factual, opinion-based, and emotion-based questions.
- **Group observation**:
    - After each scenario, invite participants to share what they observed about the questions.
    - Note observations on the whiteboard under categories such as “Facts,” “Opinions,” “Emotions,” “Transactional,” or “Knowledge-Seeking.”

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3. Group reflection (10 minutes)

- Ask participants to discuss:
    - What distinguishes “asking to get” from “asking to know”?
    - How do questions about facts, opinions, and emotions differ?
- Encourage them to share examples from their own lives where they’ve asked similar questions.
- Invite participants to suggest questions they’ve asked recently and classify them as “asking to get” or “asking to know.”
- Discuss how some questions could be rephrased to achieve a different purpose (e.g., from transactional to knowledge-seeking).

Concluding the activity (10 minutes)

1. Recap of the key learnings

Summarize the main takeaways:

- Questions can have different purposes: transactional (“asking to get”) or knowledge-seeking (“asking to know”).
- Understanding what we want to achieve with our questions helps us communicate more effectively.
- Questions can uncover facts, opinions, or emotions, depending on their formulation.

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2. Personal reflection

Ask participants to individually reflect on these questions

- What type of question do I ask most often: transactional or knowledge-seeking?
- How can I improve my questioning to better understand others?

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3. Group sharing

Invite a few participants to share their thoughts about:

- A moment they noticed a clear difference between “asking to get” and “asking to know.”
- How understanding these differences can improve communication in their daily lives.

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4. Reinforce the takeaway

End with an inspiring statement (on a projector or board): "Questions are powerful tools for learning and connection. By asking the right kinds of questions, we can uncover not just facts, but also thoughts, feelings, and perspectives that deepen our understanding of the world and the people around us."

Optional next steps

Cross-Subject Integration

Challenge teachers to design an activity integrating the concept into another subject area, such as science or literature.

Activity 1.b.1 – INTERVIEW: GETTING TO KNOW A PERSON

Objective

- To help students develop their questioning skills by distinguishing between open-ended and closed-ended questions.
- To practice using questions to explore facts, opinions, and emotions.
- To encourage active listening and improve interpersonal communication skills.

Preparation

- Arrange the chairs/desks in a semicircle with a seat in the centre for the interviewee.
- Name tent cards for students (if not already prepared in a previous session).
- A flip chart or whiteboard and markers for noting examples of effective questions during the activity.
- Choose a willing adult (e.g., a class teacher) or a pre-determined participant to be the first interviewee.

  Prepare the interviewee with an understanding of the rules, particularly their right to respond with "I do not want to answer this question."

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- Explain the purpose of the activity: to learn how to use questions effectively and to distinguish between closed-ended and open-ended questions.
- Clarify the types of questions students will practice: exploring facts, opinions, and emotions.

2. Rule explanation (5 minutes)

- Introduce the rule that students may ask personal questions but must respect the interviewee's right to decline answering with "I do not want to answer this question."
- Emphasize that the trainer will assist in reformulating closed-ended questions into open-ended ones when needed.

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3. Demonstration (5 minutes)

1. Start with an example question directed at the interviewee:
    - Closed-ended: “Do you enjoy teaching?”
    - Reformulated open-ended: “What do you enjoy most about teaching?”
1. Discuss briefly why the open-ended version allows for more detailed responses and deeper engagement

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4. Interview (20 minutes)

1. Each student takes turns asking one question to the interviewee.
2. After each question, the group identifies:
    - Is the question closed-ended or open-ended?
    - Which category does it explore: fact, opinion, or emotion?
3. The trainer intervenes to assist students in reformulating closed-ended questions as open-ended ones, if necessary.

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5. Group reflection (5 minutes)

- Discuss the types of questions asked during the activity.
- Highlight particularly effective or insightful questions and explain why they worked well.
- Allow students to share their thoughts on how they felt asking or answering questions.

Concluding the activity (10 minutes)

1. Recap of the key learnings

Summarize the main takeaways:

- Open-ended questions help us explore more meaningful and detailed responses, building deeper connections.
- Questions can uncover facts, opinions, and emotions, enhancing our understanding of others.

- Reformulating closed-ended questions into open-ended ones opens up conversations and encourages sharing.

2. Personal reflection

Ask students to individually reflect on these questions:

- What was the most interesting thing I learned about the interviewee?
- Which question do I think was the most effective in getting to know the person better? Why?
- How can I use open-ended questions in my daily conversations?

3. Group sharing

Invite a few students to share their thoughts about:

- A question they felt worked particularly well in the activity.
- Something surprising or interesting they discovered about the person interviewed.
- How this activity changed the way they think about asking questions.

4. Reinforce the takeaway

End with an inspiring statement to encourage thoughtful communication (on projector or board):

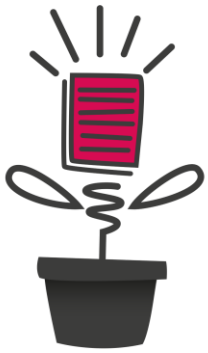
"Remember, the way you ask questions can change the way you connect with others. By asking open-ended questions, you create space for understanding, empathy, and meaningful conversations."

Optional next steps

A written task: "Design Your Questions"

- Provide a few closed-ended questions and ask students to rewrite them in their textbooks as open-ended ones.
- Create three columns on the board (Facts, Opinions, Emotions). Students write one question for each category.

Activity 1.b.2 – GUESS WHO



Objective

- To practice asking effective questions by focusing on open-ended vs. closed-ended questions.
- To encourage teamwork, critical thinking, and hypothesis testing through questioning.
- To build an understanding of how the type of questions shapes the information we receive.

Preparation

- Arrange chairs/desks in a semicircle for the group.
- Place a single chair in the centre for the participant playing the “mystery character.”
- Name cards for team identification.
- A flip chart or whiteboard for noting examples of effective or interesting questions.
- Prepare a quick explanation of the game rules and clarify the role of the trainer in assisting participants to reformulate questions.

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Highlight the focus on effective questioning and how this skill applies to daily life, such as solving problems or better understanding others.
- Recap the difference between open-ended and closed-ended questions with examples.
- Provide examples of how reformulating questions can lead to better information (e.g., “Does he have blond hair?” vs. “Can you describe his appearance?”).

2. Test round - Interview with free questions (10 minutes)

- An adult (e.g., teacher or trainer) selects a well-known character (real or fictional) and answers students' questions.

- Students ask any questions they choose to guess the mystery character.
- Point out ineffective or closed-ended questions, helping students reformulate them into open-ended questions.
- At the end of the round, discuss which questions were most effective and why.

---

3. Team game (30 minutes)

2. **Form Teams**:
    - Divide the class into 3-4 teams, each choosing a team name.
3. **Game rules**:
    - Each team takes turns asking questions to identify the mystery character played by a participant in the centre.
    - Teams are allowed a limited number of questions (e.g., five) per turn.
    - Encourage teams to collaborate on crafting the most effective questions.
    - Teams can make one or two guesses per round but are encouraged to test hypotheses with questions before guessing.
4. **Facilitator's role**:
    - Observe and assist teams in refining their questions.
    - Provide examples of alternative, open-ended question formulations when necessary.
5. **Rounds**:
    - Conduct at least four rounds, ensuring every team has a fair chance to ask questions and participate actively.

---

4. Debriefing (10 minutes)

- Reflect on the questions asked during the game:
    - Which types of questions yielded the best information?
    - How did teamwork contribute to better questioning strategies?
- Highlight examples of well-thought-out, open-ended questions.
- Discuss the importance of testing hypotheses through questions.
- Emphasize how this skill can be applied in real-world contexts like interviews, group discussions, and problem-solving.

Concluding the activity (10 minutes)

1. Recap of the key learnings

Summarize the main takeaways:

- Open-ended questions are more effective for gathering detailed and nuanced information.
- Hypothesis testing through questions helps refine understanding and reach conclusions.
- Teamwork enhances questioning strategies and critical thinking

---

2. Personal reflection

Ask participants to consider:

- Which question that I or my team asked was the most effective? Why?
- How can I apply what I learned about questioning to situations outside of this activity?
- What did I learn about the importance of teamwork in formulating better questions?

---

3. Group sharing

Invite a few students to share their thoughts about:

- A question or strategy they felt worked particularly well during the game.
- Something surprising or interesting they learned about asking questions or collaborating with their team.

---

4. Reinforce the takeaway

End with an inspiring statement to encourage the use of effective questioning in daily life (on a projector or board):

"Remember, asking the right questions helps us uncover the answers we seek, understand others better, and solve problems more effectively.

Optional variant

- Play the game in a foreign language being learned by the group.

Activity 2.a.1 – LET'S DISTINGUISH FACTS AND OPINIONS

Objective

- To help students understand the difference between facts and opinions.
- To raise awareness of how mixing facts and opinions can distort understanding.
- To develop critical thinking by learning to recognize and separate factual information from personal judgments or interpretations.

Preparation

Space configuration:

- Traditional classroom setup facing the board or projector.
- Option for flexible group seating during short discussions.

Materials:

- Slide or poster summarizing key differences between facts and opinions.
- Examples of short statements mixing facts and opinions.
- Whiteboard or flipchart and markers.

Preparation tasks:

- Prepare 5–7 short statements that blend facts and opinions for analysis (can be simple like "The Earth orbits the Sun" vs. "The Sun is the most beautiful star"). See the Worksheet file.

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Explain the objective**: "Today we will learn how to tell the difference between facts and opinions. This helps us think clearly, communicate better, and understand the world more accurately."
- **Key ideas to introduce**:
    - A **fact** is something that can be proven true or false.

    - An **opinion** is a personal belief, feeling, or interpretation that cannot be proven true or false.
- **Simple examples**:
    - Fact: "Water boils at 100°C at sea level."
    - Opinion: "Tea is better than coffee."

---

2. Presentation – Understanding Facts vs. Opinions (10 minutes)

- **Show a slide or poster** summarizing:
    - **Fact:** Objective, verifiable, evidence-based.
    - **Opinion:** Subjective, based on beliefs, emotions, personal experiences.
- **Discuss common confusion**:
    - Some statements look like facts but express opinions (e.g., "This is the best book ever written").
    - Opinions can be based on facts but still remain opinions (e.g., "The city has many parks, so it is the best place to live").
- **Introduce a simple 3-question test** for students to apply when evaluating a statement:
    - Can it be proven true or false? (Fact)
    - Is it based on personal feelings or beliefs? (Opinion)
    - Is evidence required or possible to confirm it? (Fact)

---

3. Guided Practice (10 minutes)

- Read out or display 5–7 mixed statements one at a time.
- For each statement, ask students:
    - "Is this a fact or an opinion?"
    - "How do you know?"
- Example statements:
    - "Dogs have four legs." → Fact
    - "Dogs are the best pets." → Opinion
    - "Mount Everest is the tallest mountain on Earth." → Fact
    - "Mount Everest is too dangerous to climb." → Opinion
    - "Soccer is more exciting than basketball." → Opinion
- Write responses on the board:

- **Facts** on one side
- **Opinions** on the other

---

4. Quick Pair Discussion (5 minutes)

- Students form pairs.
- Each pair tries to **invent two statements** — one fact and one opinion — about a topic of their choice (e.g., food, school, sports).
- A few pairs share their examples with the class.

Concluding the activity

1. Recap of key learnings

- Facts are objective and verifiable.
- Opinions express feelings and beliefs and are subjective.
- Recognizing the difference helps avoid confusion and builds stronger arguments.

2. Personal reflection

Ask students individually:

- "When you read something online or hear news, do you usually notice if it's a fact or an opinion? How can you start practicing this more often?"

3. Group sharing

Invite a few students to share:

- One tip they will use to recognize facts and opinions more easily.

4. Reinforce the takeaway

Display this message:

"Facts tell us about the world. Opinions tell us about people. Knowing the difference makes you smarter."

Optional next steps

Home assignment: Students bring a news article or social media post and underline facts in one colour and opinions in another.

Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2a1 - Let's distinguish facts and opinions
Slide to be displayed

FACT

CAN BE PROVEN TRUE OR FALSE

EXAMPLE: WATER BOILS AT 100°C ATSEA LEVEL.

FACT IS OBJECTIVE,VERIFIABLE, EVIDENCE-BASED.

OPINION

A PERSONAL BELIEF, CANNOT BE PROVEN TRUE OR FALSE

EXAMPLE: TEA IS BETTER THAN COFFEE.

OPINION IS SUBJECTIVE,BASED ON BELIEFS,EMOTIONS, PERSONALEXPERIENCES.

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CONFUSION 1

Some statements look like facts but express opinions:

This is the best book ever written.

CONFUSION 2

Opinions can be based on facts but still remain opinions:

The city has many parks, so it is the best place to live.

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Three question TEST

1. **Can it be proven true or false? (Fact)**
2. **Is it based on personal feelings or beliefs? (Opinion)**
3. **Is evidence required or possible to confirm it? (Fact)**

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Fact or Opinion?

1. **Dogs have four legs.**
2. **Dogs are the best pets.**
3. **Mount Everest is the tallest mountain on Earth.**
4. **Mount Everest is too dangerous to climb.**
5. **Soccer is more exciting than basketball.**

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Facts tell us about the world. Opinions tell us about people. Knowing the difference makes you smarter.

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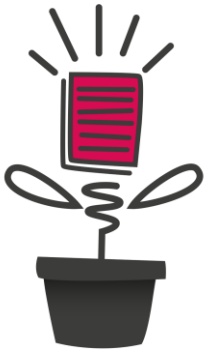
Activity 2.b.1 – FACTS OR OPINIONS?



Objective

- To reinforce students' ability to distinguish between facts and opinions.
- To develop critical thinking by applying recognition skills in a practical exercise.
- To encourage careful reading and listening in daily life.

Preparation

Space configuration:

- Tables arranged for small group collaboration (3–5 students per group).

Materials:

- Printable Worksheet 1: "Facts or Opinions Sorting Sheet" (one per group or individual).
- Sets of 15–20 mixed statements (half facts, half opinions).
- Markers or pens.

Preparation tasks:

- Prepare a set of short, mixed statements covering diverse topics (nature, school, sports, food, technology, etc.).
- Prepare a slide or poster with quick reminders about the difference between facts and opinions.

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Explain the objective**: "Today we'll put our skills to the test and practice recognizing facts and opinions quickly and confidently."
- **Review the key points**:
    - Facts = can be proven true or false.
    - Opinions = personal beliefs, feelings, or preferences.

2. Practical Exercise – Sorting Facts and Opinions (20 minutes)

Step 1: Group setup

- Divide students into small groups (3–5 participants).
- Distribute Worksheet 1 with a set of 20 statements to each group.

Step 2: Group work (15 minutes)

- Each group will:
    - Read each statement carefully.
    - Decide together if it is a **Fact** or an **Opinion**.
    - Place the statement in the appropriate column on the Worksheet.
- Encourage students to **justify their choices** briefly:
    - "How do you know it's a fact or an opinion?"
    - "Can it be verified?"
    - "Does it express a feeling or belief?"

3. Group Review and Discussion (10 minutes)

- Invite each group to share 2–3 examples they found interesting or difficult to categorize.
- Discuss as a class:
    - Were there any statements that sparked disagreement?
    - How did the group resolve it?
    - Why are facts and opinions sometimes confused?
- Highlight that:
    - Some opinions are based on facts, but they remain opinions.
    - Some facts can be surprising, but they are still verifiable.

Concluding the activity

1. Recap of key learnings

- Distinguishing facts from opinions is a key skill for thinking clearly and communicating effectively.
- Not everything written or said is purely factual — critical thinking helps us decide what to trust.

2. Personal reflection

Ask students individually:

- "How can recognizing facts and opinions help you when reading the news, listening to friends, or browsing social media?"

3. Group sharing

Invite a few students to share:

- An example where knowing the difference between fact and opinion helped them in real life (or could help them).

4. Reinforce the takeaway

Display this message:
"Facts build knowledge. Opinions build character. Knowing the difference builds wisdom."

Optional next steps

Fact/Opinion Hunt

Students find a short article or advertisement at home and highlight facts and opinions in different colours.

Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2b1 - Facts or opinions?
Slide to be displayed

FACT

CAN BE PROVEN
TRUE OR FALSE

OPINION

A PERSONAL BELIEF,
CANNOT BE PROVEN
TRUE OR FALSE

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HOW to justify your choice:

1. **Can it be verified?**
2. **Does it express a feeling or belief?**

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Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2b1 - Facts or opinions?
Workshet

Task:
Read each statement carefully. Decide if it is a fact or an opinion. Write a brief justification if needed.

The sun is a star located at the center of our solar system.

Pizza is the most delicious food in the world.

Water freezes at 0 degrees Celsius.

Homework is a waste of time.

The capital city of Spain is Madrid.

Cats are better pets than dogs.

Most smartphones today have touchscreens.

Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla.

The human body has 206 bones.

Soccer is the most exciting sport to watch.

The Amazon rainforest is the largest rainforest on Earth.

Reading books is more fun than watching movies.

There are seven continents on Earth.

School should start later in the morning.

Mount Everest is the tallest mountain on the planet.

Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2b1 - Facts or opinions?
Slide to be displayed - Results

- The sun is a star located at the center of our solar system. (Fact)
- Pizza is the most delicious food in the world. (Opinion)
- Water freezes at 0 degrees Celsius. (Fact)
- Homework is a waste of time. (Opinion)
- The capital city of Spain is Madrid. (Fact)
- Cats are better pets than dogs. (Opinion)
- Most smartphones today have touchscreens. (Fact)
- Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla. (Opinion)
- The human body has 206 bones. (Fact)
- Soccer is the most exciting sport to watch. (Opinion)
- The Amazon rainforest is the largest rainforest on Earth. (Fact)
- Reading books is more fun than watching movies. (Opinion)
- There are seven continents on Earth. (Fact)
- School should start later in the morning. (Opinion)
- Mount Everest is the tallest mountain on the planet. (Fact)

Facts build knowledge. Opinions build character. Knowing the difference builds wisdom.

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Activity 2.b.2 – INTERVIEWING WITNESSES OF A FACT

Objective

- To help students practice distinguishing facts from opinions and emotions during interviews.
- To develop questioning techniques for gathering accurate and objective information.
- To understand the importance of verifying facts when reconstructing events.

Preparation

- Chairs arranged for role-playing interviews (pairs or small groups).
- Open space or separate areas for interviews if possible.
- Printable Worksheet 1: "Witness Interview Notes" (one per student or group).
- Prepared short "incident scenarios" that students can act out as witnesses (optional if students need inspiration).
- Markers or pens.
- Prepare simple, fictional event scenarios for role-play (e.g., a lost item at school, a playground event, a mysterious package arrival). Suggestions are in the Worksheet.

Step-by-step instructions

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Explain the objective**: "Today, you will practice interviewing witnesses to find out what really happened. Your goal is to separate facts from opinions and emotions."
- **Key ideas to introduce**:
    - When interviewing a witness, the goal is to **gather factual information** first.
    - Witnesses might also share opinions or emotions — it's important to recognize and separate them.

- **Warm-up question**:
  "If you saw a car accident, what kind of information would the police want from you?"

---

2. Practical Exercise – Witness Interviews (25 minutes)

Step 1: Group setup

- Divide students into pairs or small groups.
- Assign roles:
  - One or two students will act as **witnesses** to an event.
  - Others will be **interviewers**.

Step 2: Instructions for Witnesses

- Witnesses:
  - Can either use a prepared event scenario or invent a simple event they witnessed.
  - Should naturally mix **facts**, **opinions**, and **emotions** when telling their story (e.g., "The ball broke the window" – fact; "I think it was on purpose" – opinion; "I was really scared" – emotion).

Step 3: Instructions for Interviewers

- Interviewers:
  - Ask **open-ended questions** to reconstruct the event (What happened? Where? When? Who was there? How did it happen?).
  - Pay attention to separate what the witness knows (fact), thinks (opinion), and feels (emotion).
  - Fill in the Worksheet 1 after the interview.

Step 4: Rotate roles (optional)

- If time allows, students switch roles so everyone practices being both witness and interviewer.

---

3. Group Reflection and Discussion (10 minutes)

- As a full group, discuss:
  - Was it easy or hard to separate facts from opinions and emotions?
  - What kinds of questions helped the most in getting clear, factual information?
  - How do emotions influence the way events are described?
- Summarize key learning points:
  - Good interviewers ask clear questions and focus on facts first.
  - Emotions and opinions are natural but must be recognized separately from facts.

- Verifying facts helps us build a true and reliable understanding of events.

Concluding the activity

1. Recap of key learnings

- Interviews must focus on gathering facts first.
- Witnesses often mix facts, emotions, and opinions — skilled questioning helps separate them.
- Recognizing different types of information leads to clearer and more accurate communication.

2. Personal reflection

Ask students individually:

- "What was one question you asked that helped the witness share important factual information?"

3. Group sharing

Invite a few students to share:

- A difficulty they faced in separating fact, opinion, and emotion during the interview.

4. Reinforce the takeaway

Display this message:
"Good questions reveal the truth behind the story."

Optional next steps

Creative homework

Students conduct a mini-interview at home (e.g., with a parent about a past event) and practice separating facts from opinions in their notes.

Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2b2 - Interviewing witnesses
Scenario cards - to be cut out

DURING LUNCH BREAK, A WINDOW IN THE SCHOOL HALLWAY WAS BROKEN. A GROUP OF STUDENTS WAS PLAYING NEARBY.

A FORGOTTEN BACKPACK WAS FOUND IN THE LIBRARY, AND NO ONE CLAIMED IT FOR HOURS. TEACHERS BECAME CONCERNED AND CALLED THE PRINCIPAL.

A TRAY OF FOOD SPILLED IN THE CAFETERIA AND SEVERAL STUDENTS SLIPPED ON IT. SOMEONE MAY HAVE BUMPED INTO THE PERSON CARRYING IT.

A PHONE WAS REPORTED MISSING DURING GYM CLASS. IT WAS LATER FOUND BEHIND A BENCH IN THE LOCKER ROOM.

DURING TALENT SHOW REHEARSALS, TWO CLASSMATES HAD A LOUD DISAGREEMENT ABOUT WHAT SONG TO PERFORM.

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Learning Unit: Power of Questions
Activity 2b2 - Interviewing witnesses
Worksheet - to be printed out

Witness:

1. **Describe what you saw. Naturally mix facts, opinions, and emotions when telling the story**

Interviewer:

1. **During the interview, listen carefully and record the facts, opinions, and emotions separately.**
2. **Ask open-ended questions to reconstruct the event. (What happened? Where? When? Who was there? How did it happen?).**
3. **Afterward, review what information needs further verification.**

Notes:

What Happened? (Facts)

.....

.....

Witness's Opinions

.....

.....

Witness's Emotions

.....

.....

Unclear/Needs Verification

.....

.....

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