

Useful as a lesson starter or plenary, a powerful question can hook students' interest, spark their imagination and help to start a discussion. This activity will help you create questions or statements which will engage your students by linking the topics they enjoy talking about with the content you want to teach.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD QUESTION?

Personal or relevant: How could your students' interests link to your topic? Could you link your topic to your local area? Does your topic link to a story that has been in the media recently?

Surprising: Is there a humorous or unexpected link to your topic?

Provocative: Could your students have strong feelings about the topic?

HOW TO RUN THE ACTIVITY

You can do this activity by yourself, with a colleague or with your students.

- Draw two columns on a piece of paper (or use the template overleaf).
- In the left-hand column write a list of at least ten things that your students are currently interested in.

This list could include examples of celebrities, fashion, sport, music, local events, gadgets, etc. Make all references as specific as you can, eg use the names of the celebrities or TV programmes.

- Then, in the right-hand column write down as many different content links that you can think of which are related to the topic you are teaching.
- To help you generate more creative and interesting results, turn your list upside down...
- Pick up a pen, close your eyes and draw six or seven lines randomly across the page to connect the two lists (if working with another person they can help to keep the pen on the paper).
- Turn the paper the right way up again and see what connections have been made.
- Think about some possible questions using your connections – eg a question from a link between Manchester United and fossil fuels could become:

'Should Man United only play local teams to reduce their carbon footprint?'

EXAMPLE

INTERESTS	TOPIC (eg the environment)
Snapchat	Recycling
Birthday parties	Fossil fuels
Manchester United	Habitat loss

WRITE A LIST OF THE THINGS THAT YOUR STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY INTERESTED IN OR TALKING ABOUT.

WRITE A LIST OF CONTENT LINKS THAT RELATE TO THE TOPIC YOU ARE TEACHING.

YOUR QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS:
