Types of Questions

Open-Ended Questions: questions that have unlimited response options

Why ask open-ended questions?

- Open-ended questions require more in-depth responses and are usually supported with reasons or evidence.
- Open-ended questions open up discussion and require higher-level thinking.

Closed Questions: questions that have limited response options

Why ask closed questions?

- Closed questions test knowledge and result in specific answers.
- These questions can help build up to an open-ended question.

Forced-Choice Questions: a type of closed question, gives a choice of two or more limited responses

Why ask forced-choice questions?

- In cases where children have expressive language delays, difficulty with rapid word retrieval, or are multilingual learners, forced-choice questions help scaffold instruction.
- They help students answer comprehension questions without being hindered by limitations in expressive language.

Open-Ended	Closed	Forced-Choice
Why did Ms. Jones cry when she found the teddy bear?	Who is this story mainly about?	Who is the story mainly about- Ms. Jones or the firefighter?
How did Rob change throughout the story? Why?	What did Rob like to do?	Did Rob like to skate in the park or read books in the library?
How is the scene in the ice cream parlor different from the one in the monster's cave?	Where did the story take place?	Where did the story take place: in the forest or at the beach?

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Literal Questions: questions about information that is directly stated in the text. Students can answer them by pointing to words, phrases, or sentences on the page.

Why ask literal questions?

- These questions check basic comprehension and help ensure that children are attending to important details.
- They're especially important when students first encounter a new concept or when their background knowledge is limited.

Inferential Questions: questions that go beyond what is directly stated in the text. They ask students to read between the lines, connect pieces of information, and use background knowledge to draw conclusions.

Why ask inferential questions?

- These questions prompt students to engage in deeper thinking and reasoning.
- They strengthen critical thinking and interpretation skills.
- These questions provide students with practice in making connections between the text and their prior knowledge, which is essential for developing true reading comprehension.

Literal	Inferential
Who is the main character in the story?	Why do you think the character made that choice?
Where did the family go on their trip?	How did you know the main character was disappointed?
What happened first?	This says plants need sunlight, water, and soil to survive. What would happen if a plant was in a dark room for several weeks?
What does the author say about how plants grow?	Bees help move pollen from flower to flower. Why do you think this is important for plants?

Teacher Tip:

Begin with literal questions to ensure children have a solid understanding of the text. Then, ask inferential questions to deepen their understanding.

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- **Literal**: What part of the plant takes in water and nutrients from the soil?
- **Inferential**: What might happen to the plant if its roots are damaged?