

Handout 1.4: Question stems for higher order thinking

Clarifying

- How can you explain that ...?
- What do you mean by ...?
- What good example of ... can you give me?
- How does that help?
- Who has got a question to ask ...?
- What questions could we ask about ... ?

Probing for reasons and evidence

- Why do you think that ...?
- How do we know that ...?
- What are your reasons ... (for/against)?
- What evidence have you got for that?
- How could we prove or disprove that?

Exploring alternative views

- How could we put that differently ...?
- What other point of view might there be ...?
- What if someone were to suggest that ...?
- What would someone who disagreed with you say?
- What is the difference between those views ...?
- What if there were no 'right' or 'wrong' way ... ?

Testing implications and consequences

- What follows from what you say ...?
- How does it agree/disagree with what Fred(a) said before?
- What would be the consequence of ...? / What if ... ?
- What could be a general rule for ... ?
- How could you test/check to see if that were true?

Questioning the questions

- Who has got an interesting question about that ...?
- What kind of question is it ... ?
- How does what Sam said help us ... ?
- Who can summarise where we've got to so far ... ?
- How much closer are we to answering the question?
- What do you think would happen if ... ?

(adapted by Ann Bridgland, inspired by Robert Fisher's thoughts on thinking)
www.teachingthinking.net/

Sample material from the DIY training pack *Questioning for Challenge* by Ann Bridgland.
Order from www.optimus-education.com/shop

