

Types of Questions

Memory questions: these relate to recall of facts, names of things, usually one right answer. Example: What famous architect designed this building?

Divergent/ Open-ended questions: encourage multiple answers. These questions may demand imaginative thinking and exploration of all facets of an issue.

Example: Where do you see circles here in the Ballroom?

Convergent questions: seeks the most appropriate answer or best answer.

Example: What does this stairwell remind you of?

Inference questions: get the group to generalize or reason beyond the information you have given; to explore possible conclusions and implications.

Example: So if the lake is below us here, what is holding the building up?

Application questions: get the group to see how certain information applies in different situations. Example: Does your school building have any features that you might see in Frank Lloyd Wright buildings?

Problem-solving questions: get the group to think of solutions to real-world problems and issues. Example: If you were a designer and needed to create a room that could be different sizes, what would you do?

Cause-and-effect questions: get the group to think about relationships that explain the occurrence of different events and objects. Example: Why do you think Frank Lloyd Wright used triangles at his home in the desert?

Judgmental questions: stimulate one to evaluate and form an opinion, value, or belief that is personal and perhaps unique. Example: Do you think the designer did a good job in creating this space for meetings?

Compare/Contrast questions: ask the visitor to compare/contrast based on observation. These questions can be “low-risk” for students who do not have a lot of background knowledge on the topic, and can be the entry point for bigger ideas. Example: What do Monona Terrace and the State Capitol have in common? What is different?

When asking questions...

- Ask one question at a time.
- Practice “wait-time”- be silent and wait for a response to your questions. The longer you wait, the better the answer will be.
- Try to draw contributions from every student in the group. Avoid calling on the same person with his/her hand up for every question.
- No answer is stupid. Acknowledge everyone’s contribution. Redirect the conversation if you can’t build a discussion based on a response.