

## Snorkel and Scuba Diving Questions

Trying to get your students to think while they read? To ask questions? Here's a one-hour lesson that works at Middle School (High School Teachers, see starred note\*):

- 1) Teach students *when* to ask questions. Have them make a three-column chart with the headings, Before Reading, During Reading, and After Reading.
- 2) Hand them a short reading with a title and at least one feature, such as a picture, vocab box, etc.
- 3) Have students look at the page and fill in as many "Before Reading" questions as possible. Have students recall question words, like the 5w's and 1h (who, what, when, where, why and how) and write them on the board.
- 4) Invite a rapid-fire question share-out where each student shares their favorite question so far. Avoid nodding, responding, or answering to encourage students to just *be* in a state of curiosity and wonderment.
- 5) Ask students about similarities and differences in the *types of questions* asked.
- 6) Chunk the text into three parts and read the first chunk aloud.
- 7) Invite students to write questions in the "During Reading" column and to note answers to their Before Reading Questions.
- 8) Repeat the read-aloud, jotting down questions, and rapid-fire sharing for "During Reading" for chunk 2. Ask again if students notice a difference in *types of questions*.
- 9) Repeat for the last chunk, but have students write their questions in the "After Reading" column.
- 10) Using two of the questions from the class as examples, explain that two types of questions are:
  - "right there questions" where the answer is more shallow or literal and in the text, and
  - "inference questions" where there is no explicit answer in the text and students are invited to think—to sort and gather parts of the text, to analyze (break down), evaluate, or synthesize (build up or bring together) them, or to make inferences or predictions.
- 11) Hand out two sticky notes to each student. Have them write down any two of their favorite questions.
- 12) Draw a two-column chart on the board with "Snorkeling" and "Scuba Diving" written on the board. Have students guess which picture goes with each question type. (Snorkeling is surface-level questions; scuba diving is deep, inference questions)
- 13) Have students come up and place their sticky notes in one of the columns.
- 14) Students may notice that some questions don't move our understanding forward; that even though they might be deep and require inferencing, they are off-topic, or just fail to invite clarification, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, or application. If they do, you can call these questions "Cloud Questions" or "Bubble Questions" to keep the water theme.



\*\*Snorkel and Scuba Diving Questions are named by Kyla Hadden and Adrienne Gear in *Powerful Readers*, by Pembroke Publishers, 2016.



\*High School Teachers – instead of Snorkel and Scuba Dive Questions, you can introduce the four types of questions outlined in [Webb's Theory of Knowledge](#), which are utilized by the Provincial Literacy Assessments.