

# A REVIEW OF FACTS AND TIPS ABOUT THE SKILL OF ASKING QUESTIONS

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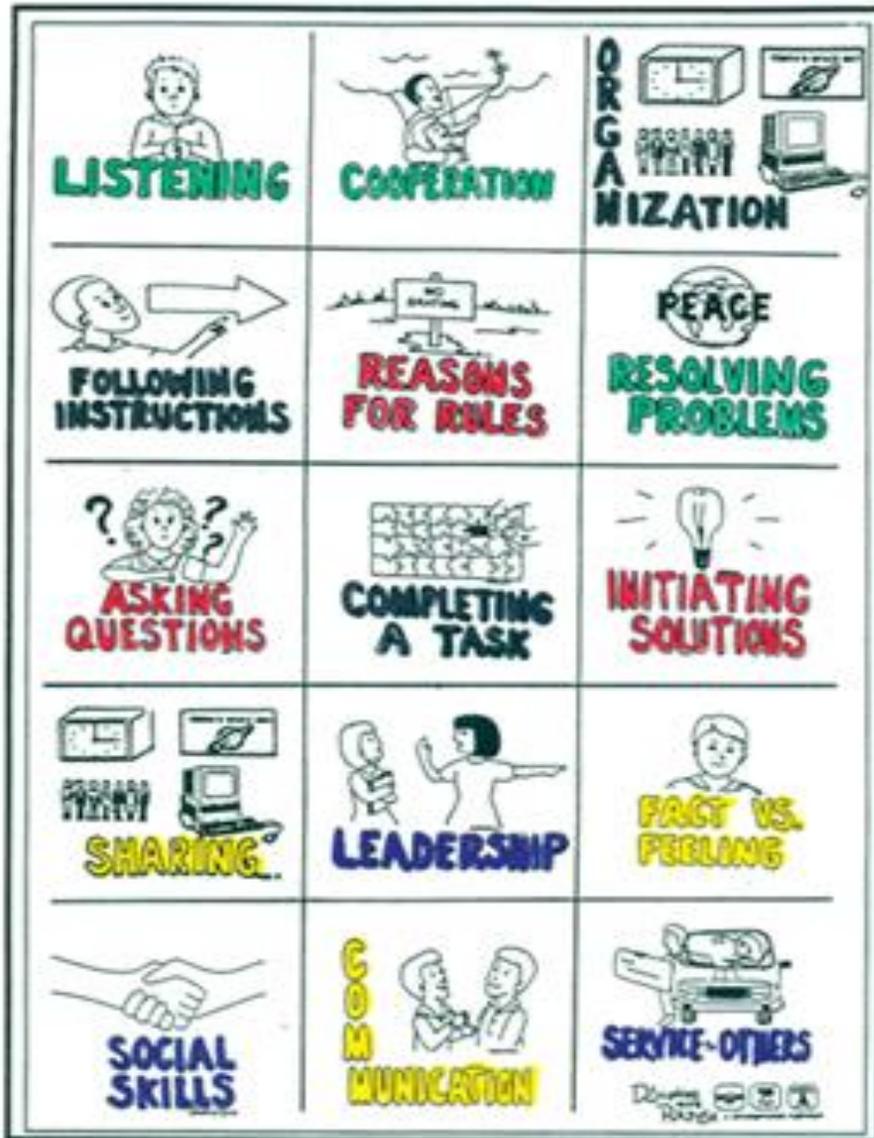
Good questions....

- ...Haven't been asked before.
- ...Haven't already been answered.
- ...Don't embarrass the speaker.
- ...Make people think.
- ...Keep the conversation on the topic.



# ASKING QUESTIONS

# Teaching Self-discipline: 15 Essential Skills



The skill of Asking Questions is related to Understanding Reasons for Rules and Initiating Solutions to Problems.

# **The skill of ASKING QUESTIONS is taught to:**

- a) Eliminate off-topic questions.
- b) Eliminate questions asked at inappropriate times.
- c) Inform students of the criteria used to formulate good questions.
- d) Help students seek answers for their own questions.
- e) Encourage curiosity and mental stimulation.

# Facts about ASKING QUESTIONS

- **Third of the five Basic Skills**
- **Difficult for children age 5 until the middle of Grade 3 to master = demonstrate without prompts**
- **People have difficulty asking questions when:**
  - a) focused listening is not established**
  - b) words that start questions are not known**
  - c) persons who process more quickly are called upon before others have time to think**
  - d) past experience has taught that a speaker will answer questions when they are blurted out**
  - e) they don't know the criteria used to ask effective questions.**

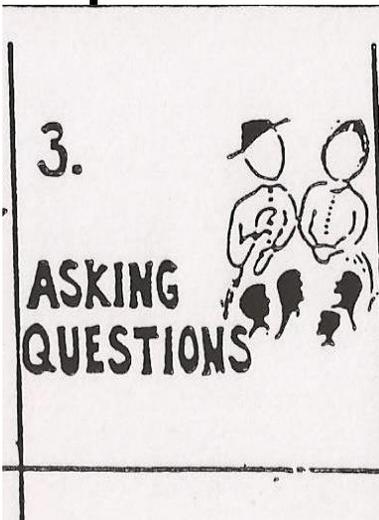
# Skill Illustration

## 3.

Good questions....  
...Haven't been asked before.  
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# ASKING QUESTIONS



Native Americans believe questions about the nature of the world should only be asked of the elders. It is impolite to look an elder in the eye.

***Gesture for the skill:  
Draw a question mark in the  
air.***



# Establish the criteria used to ask questions

## ASKING QUESTIONS

*Helpful questions are those that.....*

- the speaker hasn't already answered.
- have not been asked before.
- other people want answered too.
- are phrased well.
- make people think.
- make the speaker feel comfortable and not ill at ease.
- keep the conversation on the topic.
- are not stallerers.
- are not statements in disguise.



Discipline  
with  
Purpose

# Use the criteria to ask birthday questions

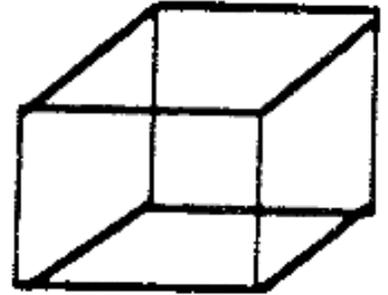
## BIRTHDAY CELEBRITY

Tune: This Old Man

**Be a birthday celebrity  
Sit in the chair for all to see.  
And we'll ask you questions.  
Ten will do,  
In your birthday interview.**

- 1. Ask 10 questions of the birthday person using the criteria established*
- 2. Sing the Birthday Celebrity song*
- 3. Let the celebrity name one safe, legal, and moral action for all to perform 10X to celebrate the birthday.*

# Teach the skill of Asking Questions



- 1. Use question cubes:**  
Who, what, when, where, how, why. Roll the cube and ask a question using the word on the top of the cube.
- 2. Use question cards: Who, What, When, Where, Why, Now, What If. Give teams or groups of students a question card. Challenge students to formulate questions that begin with the word on their card.**
- 3. Establish the rule: ‘Three before me’ to help students find the answer to their questions. 1 = Ask yourself, 2 = Ask your study buddy, 3 = Ask the helper for the day.**  
**If all these fail, ask the teacher.**

# Teach older students to answer their own questions

1. With the class make a list of questions students ask frequently. In teams of three let students go over the list and circle questions they think students should be able to answer for themselves. Post the list for students to view and to begin monitoring themselves.

## QUESTIONS WE CAN ANSWER OURSELVES

“Is this good enough?”

“Should we print or write?”

“What are we going to do today?”

# Categorizing Questions

- Give students a copy of the riddle. Invite them to ask questions that can be answered with “Yes”, “No”, or “Does not matter.” Track the questions asked by placing them under the appropriate heading.

YES

NO

DOESN'T MATTER

## Riddle

Every evening a man came home from work and entered the elevator in his apartment building. Every evening he pushed floor #3, got off the elevator and then walked five flights to get to his apartment. Every morning he got on the elevator on the eighth floor and pushed the #1 which was the ground floor. He left his apartment building and went to work. How do you account for his strange behavior?

**(Answer on the bottom of the next slide.)**

# Vary the way questions are asked

1. After asking a question count silently to 20. When you reach 18 count aloud and end with, “18,19,20, all hands up please.”
2. **Pause before asking a question. Say aloud: “Let’s see...whose I.Q. points should we tap today?”**
3. Walk around the room and tell children the person you tap on the shoulder should give the first answer.
4. **Show excitement with student answers: Clap, Do a cheer, Give out an imaginary million dollar check, run to the board and write the question.**

***RIDDLE ANSWER: The man was very short and could only reach the first three buttons.***

# Model

- 1. Refrain from asking questions you already know the answer to. ( What did you do?)*
- 2. Refrain from asking questions that begin with 'WHY'.*
- 3. Avoid questions that start with – “Would you like to.....”*
- 4. Avoid questions that can be answered with one word or 'yes' or 'no'.*
- 5. Encourage questions by saying, “Ask me EVERY QUESTION instead of 'ANY' QUESTION.*
- 6. Acknowledge 'Good tries' and portions of answers that fit the criteria.*

# Model

7. *If you do not want to answer a question ask:  
“What will you do with that information?”*
8. *If you don't want to debate: “What do you want me to say?” “What do you think?” “What do you think I will say?”*
9. *Give the student who wants to argue the last word: “Mark, why don't you have the last word on this issue.”*
10. *Anticipate a student's discontent with an answer: “I'm going to say something now, and you may not like my answer. I hope you will accept it and stop asking.”*

# Homework Assignments

## Asking Questions

- Make a list of three questions you would like to know about the day you were born. Interview a parent and write the answers to your questions.
- Play the game of Twenty Questions as a family. Record how many questions were used before an item or idea was guessed.
- Call a grandparent, relative and or friend and ask them questions about their day, life etc. Record the questions and answers on an interview sheet and bring it back to class.

# Assessing Progress

- Use a rubric to assess progress.
- Show students the rubric after the skill is introduced
  - Lacks knowledge or willingness
  - Needs assistance
  - Basic mastery
  - Proficiency
- Let them self-evaluate at the end of the three weeks practice
- Share this information with parents.

(See sample rubrics in Assessment Made Easy – Tara Kassi)

# Reflect

1. Identify something you learned or relearned from this presentation.
2. Name one action step you will try each of the next three weeks.
  - Teach students the criteria used to formulate effective questions.
  - Use question cubes, cards or riddles to stimulate student's questions.
  - Select any three ways teachers can model this skill and practice them.
  - Invite students to chart for one week the number of effective questions they ask.
  - Give a homework assignment that requires students to talk about the skill of asking questions with parents.