

Preparing and Facilitating a Small Group Tutorial

SET - getting ready for the teaching session

- What do you expect the learner to achieve?
- Make clear linkages where relevant to past or future teaching episodes.
- Physical environment – chair arrangement, lighting, noise, name-tags, mobile phones...

DIALOGUE - interaction between the learners and the teacher

- Think about the sort of questions you are going to ask. Try to involve the learner rather than just talk to them. This means getting them to think and reflect.
- Questions should be used as often as possible using a combination of closed and open question types
- Use and encourage stories to illustrate learning points
- Make eye contact
- Watch the timing

CLOSURE - wrapping up the session

- Review - Ask for any questions, then for the “take home message”. Reinforce key learning points
- Evaluate – ask for feedback on the session

Asking questions

Yes/No questions

A question that requires an answer that is ‘yes’ or ‘no’ does not stretch the learner. However, if you have a learner who is **shy or lacking confidence**, this is a **basic type of question that will get the talking going**.

Closed questions

A closed question is the sort of question for which there is a specific and correct answer. For example, what are the most common causes of difficulty in swallowing? This type of question is useful because it **enables you to check the learner’s knowledge base, but not necessarily their level of understanding**.

Open questions

An open question usually begins with ‘why’ or ‘how’. There are generally no right answers and the questions **allow you to probe the reasoning process of the learner**. Open questions **usually require some evaluation, comparison, and/or problem solving**. They can also be used to **allow and encourage divergent thinking or novel responses**.

Types of Questions and Examples

<i>Testing questions</i>	Checking knowledge	What, where, when, how, which, how many/big.
	Comprehension and interpreting	Compare, distinguish, show, find evidence, try to prove, interpret, re-arrange, restate, and explain differences.
	Applying/Analysing	Specify conditions for, arrange, demonstrate, make use of, illustrate/ give and example, explore, discover, form an hypothesis.
	Synthesis	Solve this, think of an approach, create, devise, speculate, imagine, design.
	Evaluation	Check the results to prove a point, evaluate data against standards, rank, argue from all sides.
<i>Clarifying questions</i>	To help the learner clarify their thinking on a point or topic.	Can you rephrase that? What did you mean by...? Can you give me an example of...?
<i>Elaborating questions</i>	These help students express themselves more fully.	Can you tell me more? Can you elaborate on that? Uh-huh, what else?
<i>Reflecting and deflecting questions</i>	Use these questions if the learner wants an answer from you or wants to know what you think – and you do not wish to give the answer.	Well, what do you think? Do you have any ideas about what it means? What do others in the group think?
<i>Supporting and valuing questions</i>	Use these questions if the learner has gone off the track and you need to bring them back without making them appear foolish.	Could you think about that again? How does that fit with what you said before about...?
<i>Checking and building questions</i>	This could be used if the learner is having difficulty formulating ideas for the first time.	Let me just check that I understand you, are you saying...' How does that connect with what you said before? Would anyone else like to comment on what Jo has said?

Pauses Once you have asked a question be prepared to wait for an answer. Short silences are not necessarily a bad thing – they often get the learner to talk more freely if they know you require and are prepared to wait for an answer.