



## An Essential Question Drives Your Research!

Jot down as many different questions as you can within the perspectives listed. Feel free to utilize “The Good Thinkers Tool Kit” to help you generate these questions:

- W** What do you mean by...? (Clarifying Questions)  
**R** What are the **reasons**...?  
**A** What **assumptions** are being made about...?  
**I** Can we **infer** \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_? / What are the **implications** of...?  
**T** Is it **true** that...? How can we find out?  
**E** Are **examples** being given or is **evidence** being offered to support...?  
**C** Are there any **counter-examples** to...?

Perspective	Sample Questions: Solar Energy	Your Questions
<b>Chronological</b>	<i>Can we infer that there will be increased interest in solar energy as a result of the increase in gas prices?</i>	
<b>Procedural</b>	<i>How do solar panels produce energy?</i>	
<b>Cause and Effect</b>	<i>If every home and business had photovoltaic cells, would we need electric plants to produce energy?</i>	
<b>Problems</b>	<i>Is the assumption that solar panels are cost-effective for every household true?</i>	
<b>Solutions</b>	<i>Can we offer incentives to developers to install photovoltaic cells in every new home?</i>	
<b>Comparisons</b>	<i>How does the cost effectiveness of solar energy compare with thermal power?</i>	
<b>Similarities</b>	<i>How are solar panels similar to photovoltaic cells?</i>	
<b>Differences</b>	<i>What are the differences in management of photovoltaic power between Hawaii's electric companies?</i>	
<b>Relationships</b>	<i>Who has been influential in the development of solar energy in Hawaii?</i>	
<b>Analysis</b>	<i>How great a contribution would solar energy make in supporting Hawaii to get off the grid?</i>	
<b>Thematic</b>	<i>What is meant by “renewable energy?”</i>	
<b>Pros</b>	<i>What are the reasons for promoting solar energy in Hawaii?</i>	
<b>Cons</b>	<i>What are the obstacles</i>	



	<i>preventing solar energy from becoming Hawaii's no. 1 energy resource?</i>	
<b>Categories</b>	<i>What are the other categories of alternative energy sources available?</i>	
<b>Global</b>	<i>How are other countries using solar energy?</i>	
<b>Other</b>		

Select one of these questions to be the essential question that drives your research. If you can check off all of the following, you have a great essential question!



**The question is on task with the purpose of research project**

- The question focuses on a topic that is important to learn about.
- The question is still being debated and is controversial.
- This question will inspire a product/research paper worth investigating.
- Answering the question will demonstrate my mastery of new knowledge.



**The question has a connection to a content area and reflects a career or personal interest**

- I generated the questions because I am genuinely interested in this topic.
- I have a connection to the topic and I know that I will personally gain by conducting the research.
- The topic and question will hold my interest for the course of the research.



**The question inspires more questions**

- The question is open ended.
- There is no simple right or wrong answer to the question.
- The question will inspire me to make a reasoned decision or take a thoughtful stance on the topic.



**The question inspires an original thought, idea or product**

- The question is unique and original.
- The question gets me to explore something that others are not doing.



**The question cannot be answered with a yes/no or easily from a quick search on the Internet**

- Answering the question will involve complex thinking.
- The topic is researchable and will require me to use various information sources.
- The question will challenge me to stretch my learning and discover information beyond the scope of my present knowledge.



**The question engages the intended audience**

- The focus is interesting to the audience and therefore they will find a connection to what will be presented.
- The topic/question is something that the audience, although knowledgeable, knows little about and will find interesting.

----- Optional -----



**The question reflects a community/national/global connection, and provides an opportunity to contribute towards responsible citizenship**

- The question addresses a community/national/global issue, concern or event.
- Myself as well as other students can easily make relevant connections to the focus of my query.