Socrates Blog on Essential Questions

www.socratesquestions.com

Below is a menu of posts from the Socratesquestions blog organized by type: *Big Questions in Action, Big Questions Professional Development and Big Questions Lesson Artifacts*.



Big Questions In Action

Post: Big Questions and the Power of Storytelling
There is no more powerful educational tool than a good story, especially one that is animated by a great question from the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Post: Beverly Gage asks: When does a Moment Turn into a Movement?
Explore this great question and think about where you might ask it in your own curriculum. There is a link to a Ted Radio Hour show which discusses qualities of great leaders and why they are important for movements to be successful.

Post: Can Big Questions motivate students? Ask the Marines
Inquiry-based teaching and learning motivates students in a way other teaching does not. Here I draw a comparison with the Marines who have succeeded in their own way to inspire self-motivation.



Big Questions Professional Development

Post: Teaching with Big Questions is like learning in slow motion
To do inquiry-based teaching right, you must slow down. It's the surest route to understanding.

Post: Danger Ahead: The Brutal Truth of Teaching With Big Questions....
This posts discusses the pain and joy of teaching with questions. Trust me, it's worth it!

Post: Sschat Debrief (April 2, 2018): Educators Speak Out On Big Questions-- Part I
SSchat Debrief Part II
These posts summarize a "Questions" chat forum I hosted over Twitter. Educators shared their successes and failures of inquiry-based teaching. Here is an archive of the chat.

Post: Using Questions to conquer fear
Get reluctant students involved in discussion by encouraging them to ask questions. It is safer for them and provides a context for authentic engagement.



Big Question
Lesson Artifacts

Post: Is America the Land of Opportunity?
This question seems pretty simple on its face, until you really start thinking about it. Middle school teacher Melissa Kinsey unpacks this great question to show the complexity of history and human perception.

Post: Some Big Questions are 2,500 years old… and counting
Is our life guided by free will or determinism? High school history teacher Justin Riskus confronts this timeless question to explore World War II and the rise of Adolf Hitler using *If you give a mouse a cookie* by Laura Joffe Numeroff:

Post: How do you know the Abolitionists were brave?
Just what is the definition of bravery?-- asks middle school social studies teacher Melissa Kinsey. Melissa uses *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni to explore the question and connect it to the Abolitionist Movement.

Post: How can you protect your freedoms without limiting someone else's?
High school history teacher Julie Dickinson uses the children's story *Araboolies of Liberty Street* by Sam Swope to teach students of all ages about the dangers of freedom and oppression.

Post Can intolerance be a virtue?
Huh? Using a great little philosophy book called the *60-Second Philosopher*, I pose this question inside a lesson on MLK, morality and the importance of civic engagement.

Post Women's history Big Question: How do gender roles define people?
Social studies teacher Melissa Kinsey considers the different ways gender affects human identity-- using the children's story *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch

Post How does the government protect its people during war, yet still preserve civil liberties?
High school social studies teacher Julie Dickinson explores the difficult balance the government must strike between power and liberty-- using *Flowers from Mariko* by Rick Noguchi and Deneen Jenks:

Post: Go West!... and bring your Big Questions with you.
High school US history teacher Bry Roemer comes up with a way to teach westward expansion through a really good question.

Post: Can War be Glorious?
High school teacher Justin Riskus poses this question and uses a World War I poem and a Medal of Honor speech by *Ross A. McGinnis* to find an answer. This is a great question to apply to all units of a history course.

Post: Government and the Giving Tree--Part I: A Big Question is born
An iconic children's story by Shel Silverstein spawns a timeless question in government.