Focus of Instruction
- Asking questions
- Answering questions
- Building comprehension

Overview

The Q-Matrix (Kagan, 2008) is designed to help students in question writing and answering. The Q-Matrix includes 36 question stems arranged in a cognitive hierarchy. Stems 1–12 can generate literal questions, stems 13–24 can generate inferential questions, and stems 25–36 can generate evaluative questions.

Directions

Step 1: Introduce the Q-Matrix. Model how to use a stem to generate a question about a recent text. For example, **I'm going to use stem 5 to write a question about *The Day It Snowed Marshmallows.*** Write *Why was* on chart paper. Read the words aloud; then continue writing and reading your question. **Why was the boy unhappy at the beginning of the story?**

Step 2: Guide students in using the same stem to generate another question about the same text.

Step 3: Encourage students to choose a different stem and generate their own questions about the text.

Teacher Tips

In some cases, you will need to pull the words in a stem apart. For example, you might use stem 7, *What did,* to generate this question: *What* name *did* the town give to the mountain of marshmallows?

Extensions

The full Q-Matrix might seem overwhelming to some readers. The Q-Matrix can be used more selectively by allowing student to choose one stem for a reading selection. You can also focus the use of the stems by assigning one stem or several stems during a discussion. And for more of challenge, assign a row or column.

Prompt students to answer their own and each other's questions. Encourage them to look back in the text and cite evidence to support their answer.

Q-Matrix

1. What is/was? What are?	**2.** Where/When is/ was? Where/When are?	**3.** Which is/ was? Which are?	**4.** Who is/was? Who are?	**5.** Why is/was? Why are?	**6.** How is/was? How are?
7. What do? What does? What did?	**8.** Where/When do? Where/When does? Where/When did?	**9.** Which do? Which does? Which did?	**10.** Who do? Who does? Who did?	**11.** Why do? Why does? Why did?	**12.** How do? How does? How did?
13. What can?	**14.** Where/When can?	**15.** Which can?	**16.** Who can?	**17.** Why can?	**18.** How can?
19. What could/ should?	**20.** Where/When could/should?	**21.** Which could/ should?	**22.** Who could/ should?	**23.** Why could/ should?	**24.** How could/ should?
25. What will?	**26.** Where/When will?	**27.** Which will?	**28.** Who will?	**29.** Why will?	**30.** How will?
31. What might?	**32.** Where/When might?	**33.** Which might?	**34.** Who might?	**35.** Why might?	**36.** How might?