



GREGOR POLSON

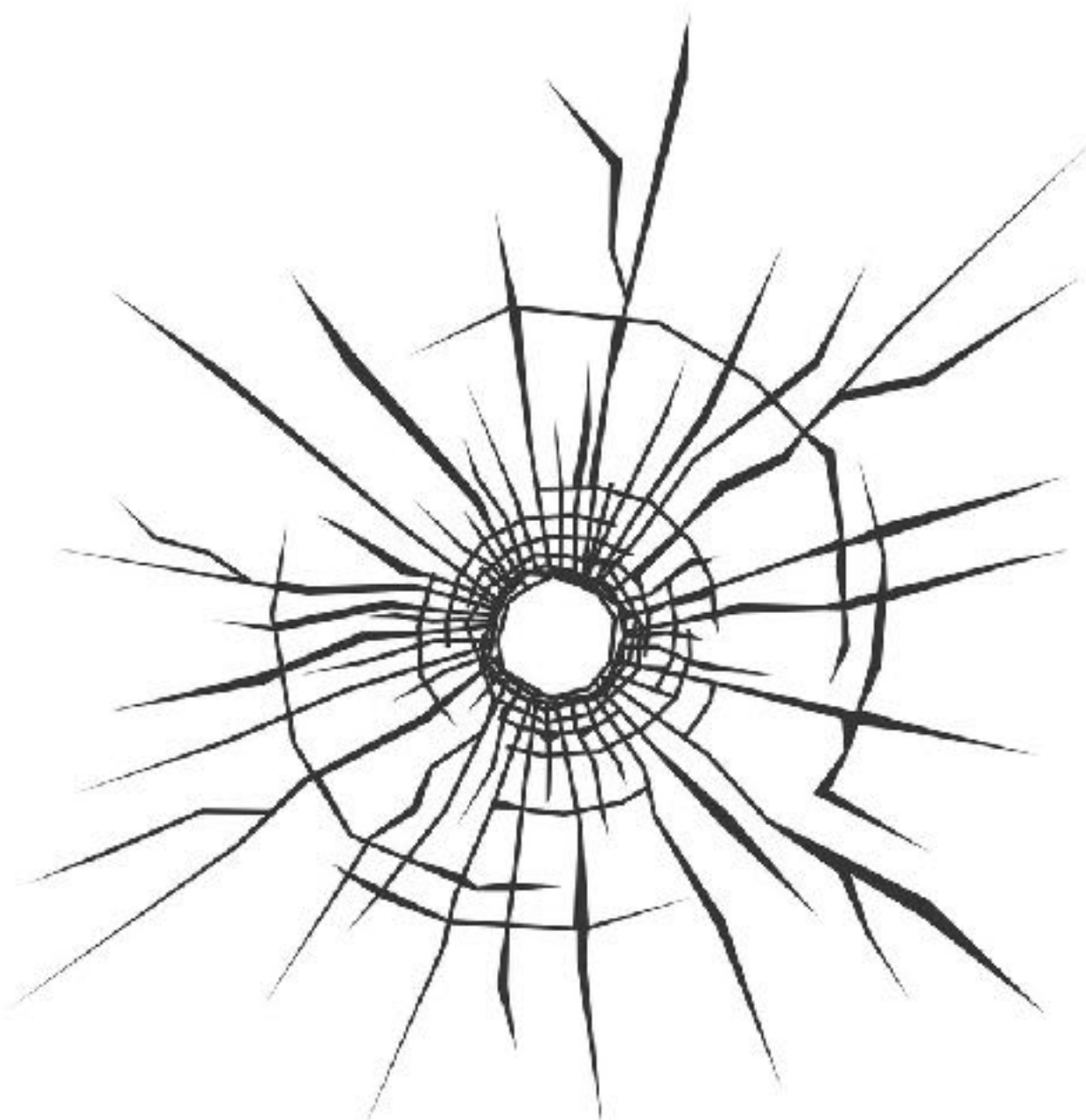
THE GOOD

THE BAD

AND THE QUESTION  
BETTER

**“We must be focused on how to ask better questions rather than simply finding the answer”**

GREGOR POLSON





**Questions fit well with the modern  
“Google” mindset**

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**Questions promote inquiry and  
learning, how to learn over proving  
what you know**

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**Good questions can reveal subtle  
shades of understanding - what this  
student knows about the topic in this  
context**

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**Used well, questions can promote  
personalized learning as teachers can  
change question on the move to meet  
student needs**



**Questions can imply answers, which  
imply stopping points and “finishing”  
over inquiry and wisdom**

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**Accuracy of answers can be  
overvalued, with makes the confidence  
of the answer impact the quality of the  
response significantly**

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**“Bad questions” are easy to write and  
deeply confusing which can  
accumulate to harm a student’s sense  
of self-efficacy, as well as their own  
tendency to ask them on their own**

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**Questions depend on language, which  
means literacy, jargon, confusing  
syntax, academic diction and more can  
all obscure the learning process**

# PURPOSE QUESTIONING



**Questioning** is the key means by which teachers find out what pupils already know, **identify** gaps in knowledge and understanding and scaffold the development of their understanding to enable them to close the gap between what they currently know and the learning objective.



**USE IT**



**How do you have a better  
relationship with someone?**

# 36 questions to build trusting relationships

## Set 1:

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a "perfect" day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?
7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

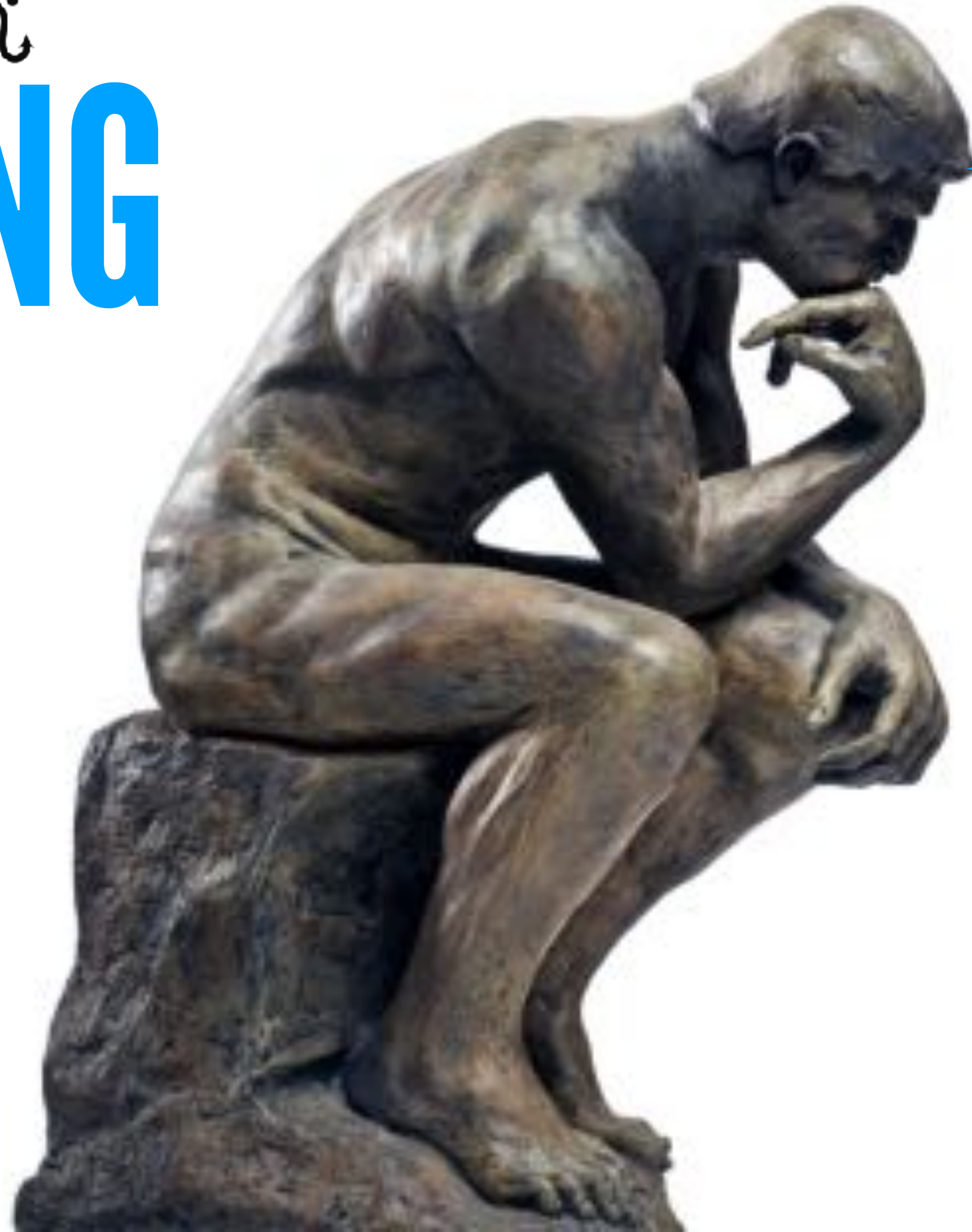
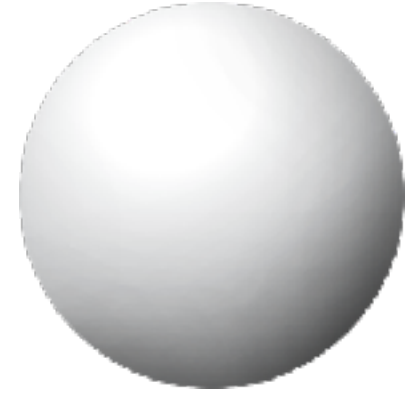
## 3:

13. Write three true "we" statements each. For instance, "We are feeling ..."
14. Complete this sentence: "I wish I had someone with whom I could share the following information: ..."
15. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, what would be important for him or her to know about you? Write your partner what you like about them; be very honest. List things that you might not say to someone you've just met.
16. Describe with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life. Did you last cry in front of another person? By your partner? Tell your partner something that you like about them and if anything, is too serious to be joked about.
17. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told your partner? Why haven't you told them yet?
18. If your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a trip to save any one item. What would it be? Why?
19. If you could have dinner with any three of the people in your family, whose death would you most regret? Why?
20. Write a personal problem and ask your partner's advice on how you might handle it. Also, ask your partner to reflect back to you how you seem to be feeling about the problem you have.

## Set 2:

13. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future or anything else, what would you want to know?
14. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?
15. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
16. What do you value most in a friendship?
17. What is your most treasured memory?
18. What is your most terrible memory?
19. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?
20. What does friendship mean to you?
21. What roles do love and affection play in your life?
22. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.
23. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?
24. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

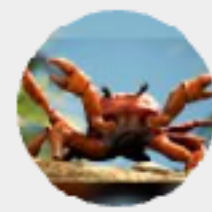
# PURPOSE QUESTIONING



The answer is this...  
and I have to wait  
until I get the  
correct answer!



“guess what answer is in the teacher’s head”



Alex Polson

last seen today at 15:12



June 14, 2019

What is the name of the longest river in Chile?

9:01 AM ✓✓

Uh, uh, I think it is....., eh! Is it the river Lao?

9:01 AM

Nearly, you have the right letters!

9:02 ✓✓

Is it Loa? 9:02 AM

Correct, well done!

9:02 AM ✓✓



What is the name of the longest river in Chile?



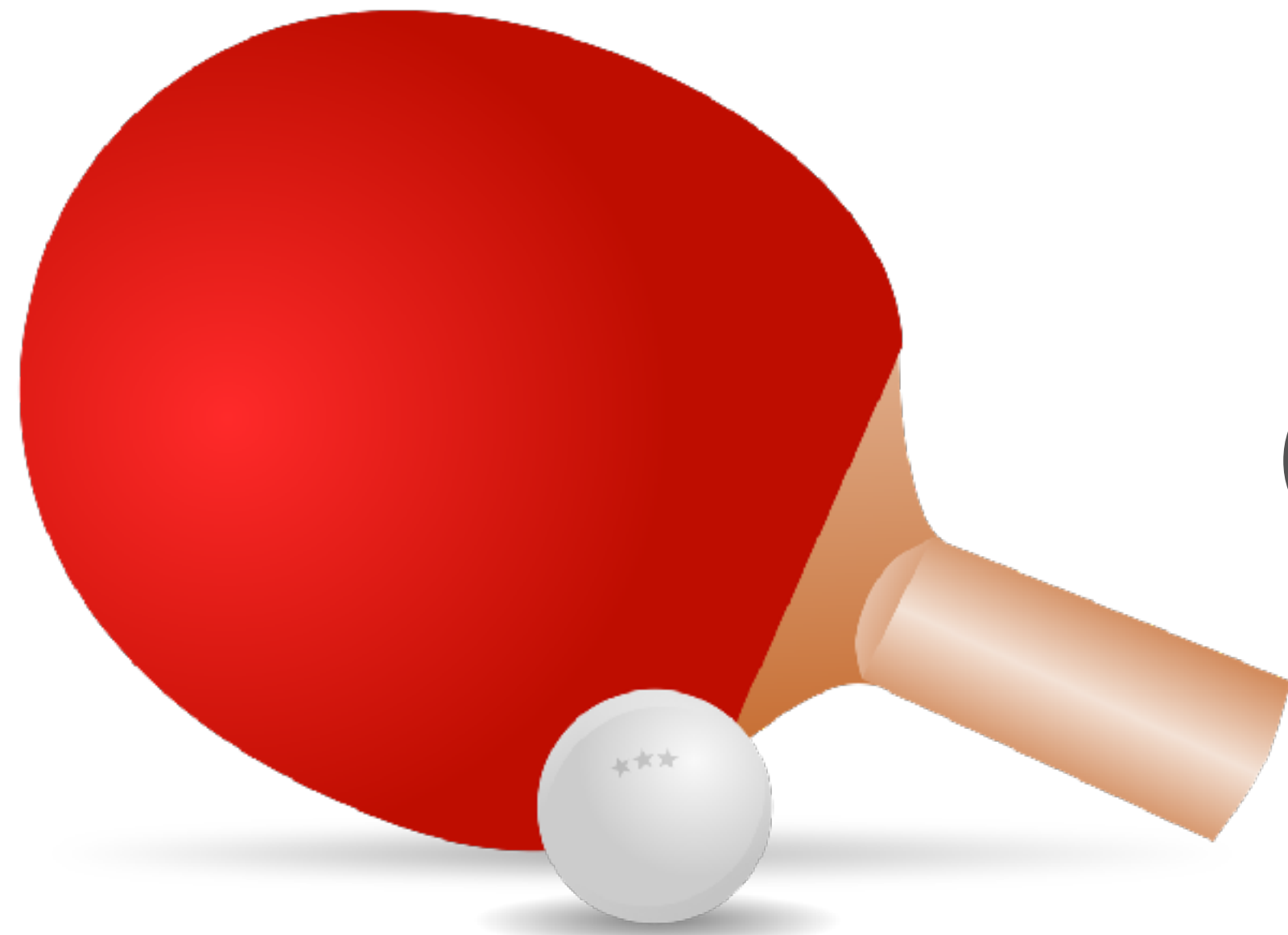
# A PHONE FRIEND

The WhatsApp logo, which is a green speech bubble with a white telephone handset icon inside, is positioned to the right of the text 'PHONE FRIEND'.

Sometimes when students are chosen randomly to answer a question they really do not know the answer, and may feel awkward and embarrassed. It may be useful to allow them to ‘phone-a-friend’, another student in the class who may be able to help them answer the question.



# STYLE OF QUESTIONING



OR



BASKETBALL DISCUSSIONS

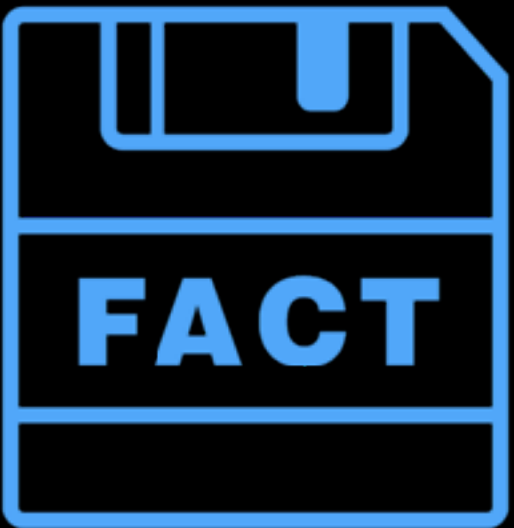
# BASKETBALL DISCUSSIONS



Use a soft ball to throw to a student to answer a question. The student then passes the ball to another student to see whether the second student agrees with the first. The second student then passes the ball to a third student who comments on why the answer is correct or not. This can continue with questions like ‘How? When? How long? Who else was involved? What else could have happened?’ depending on the subject.



## HOT SEATING





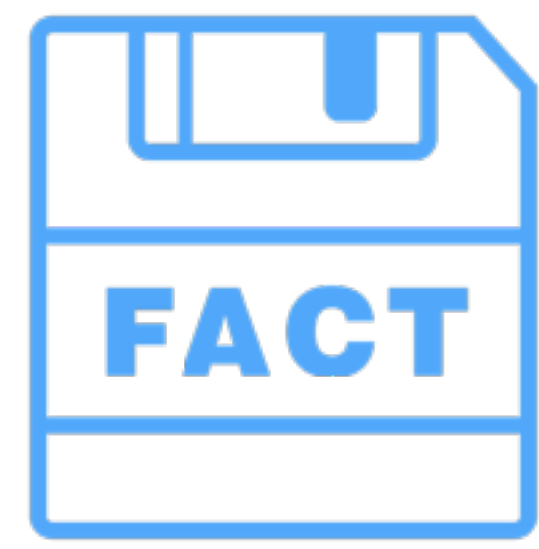
1/2  
Lesson

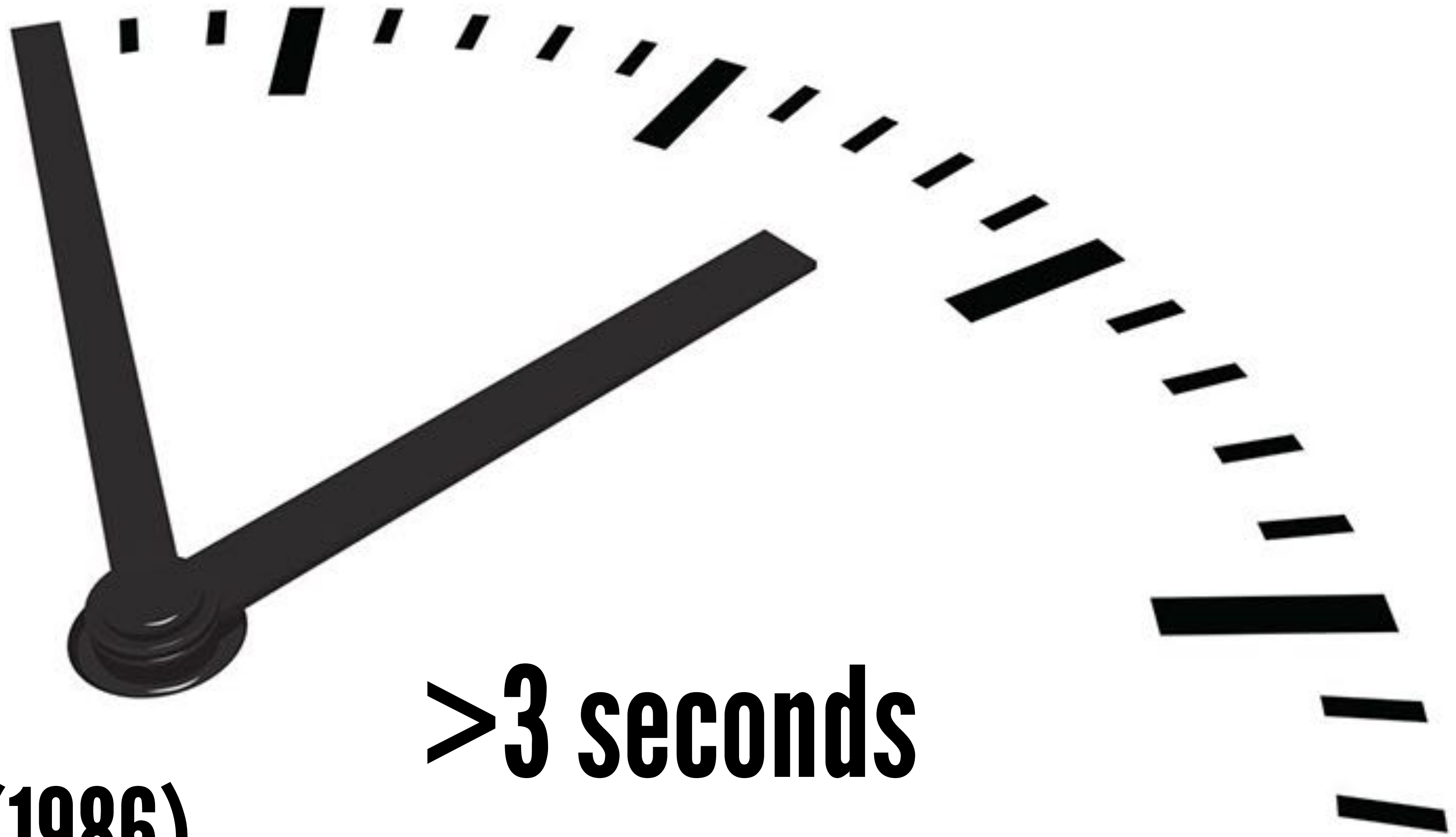
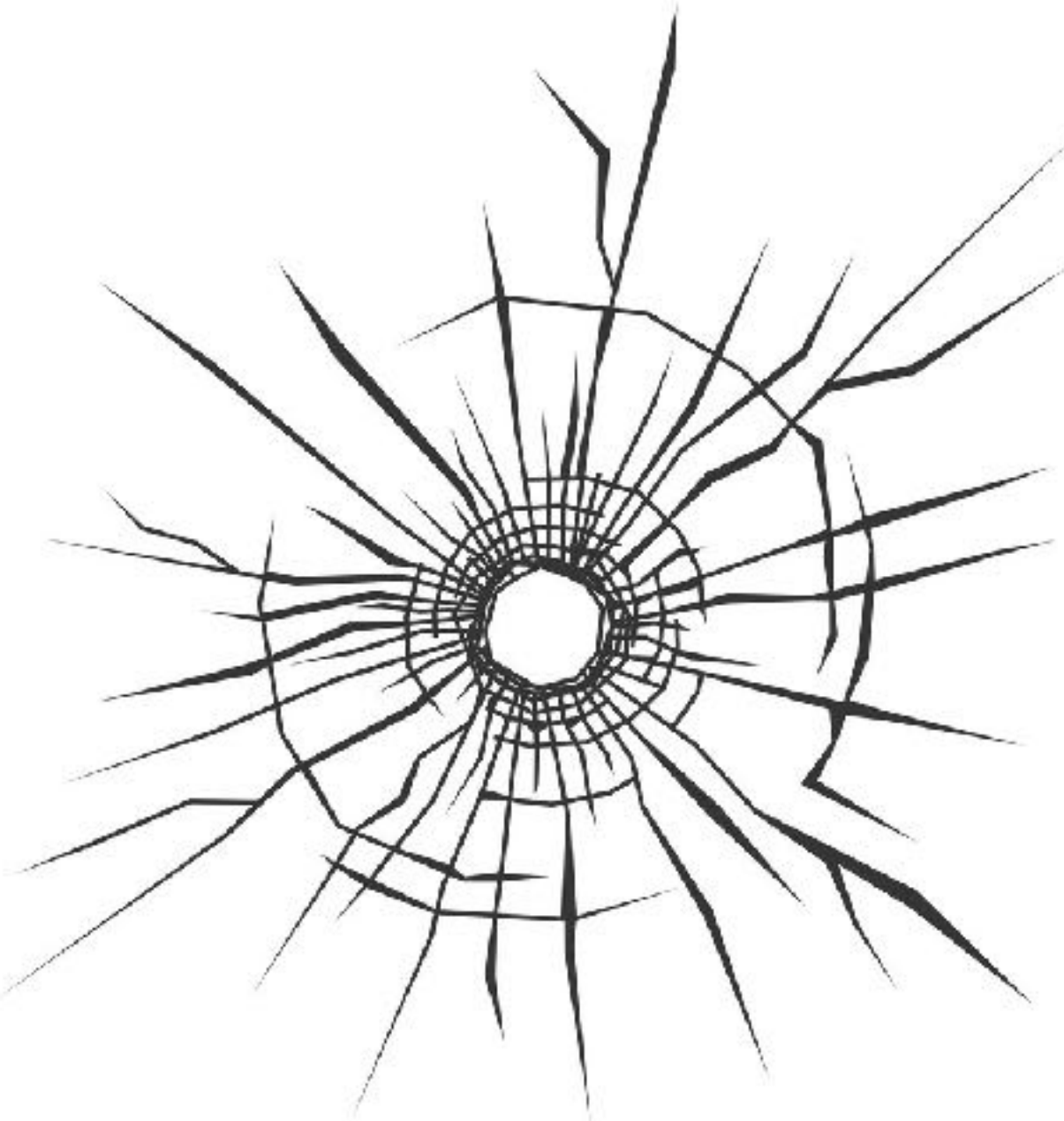
50  
per Lesson

1  
per minute

How many do you plan for?

**WAIT TIME**





**Rowe (1986)**

**> 3 seconds**

# RESPONSE TIME

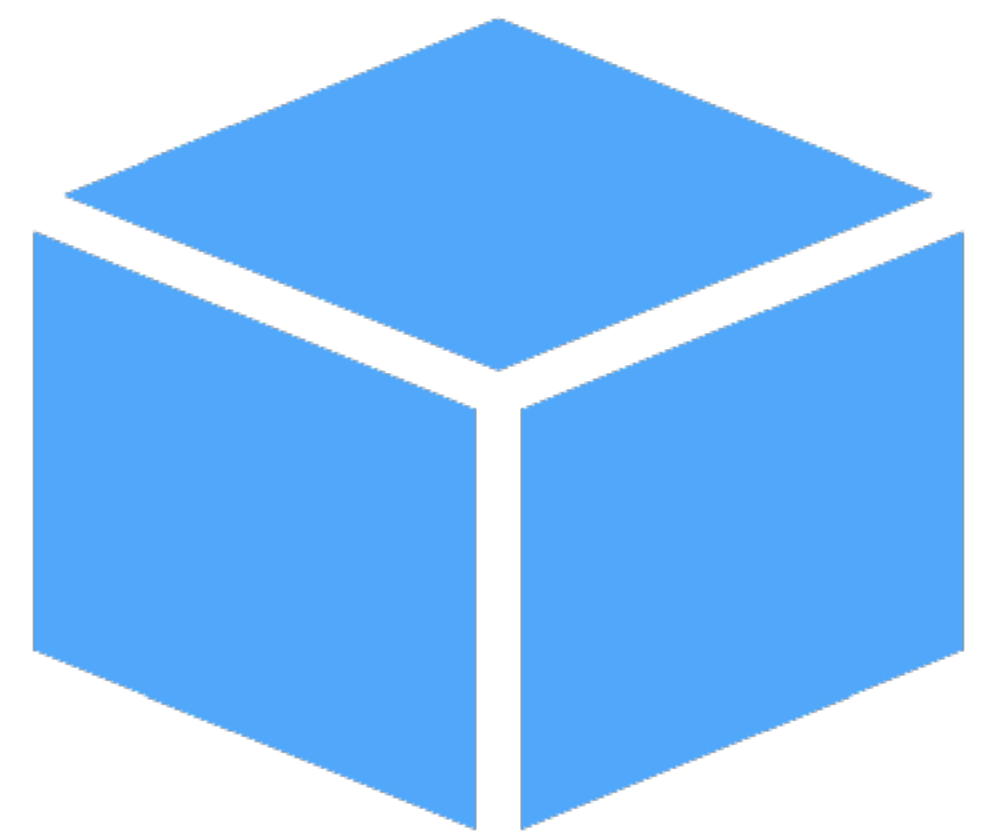
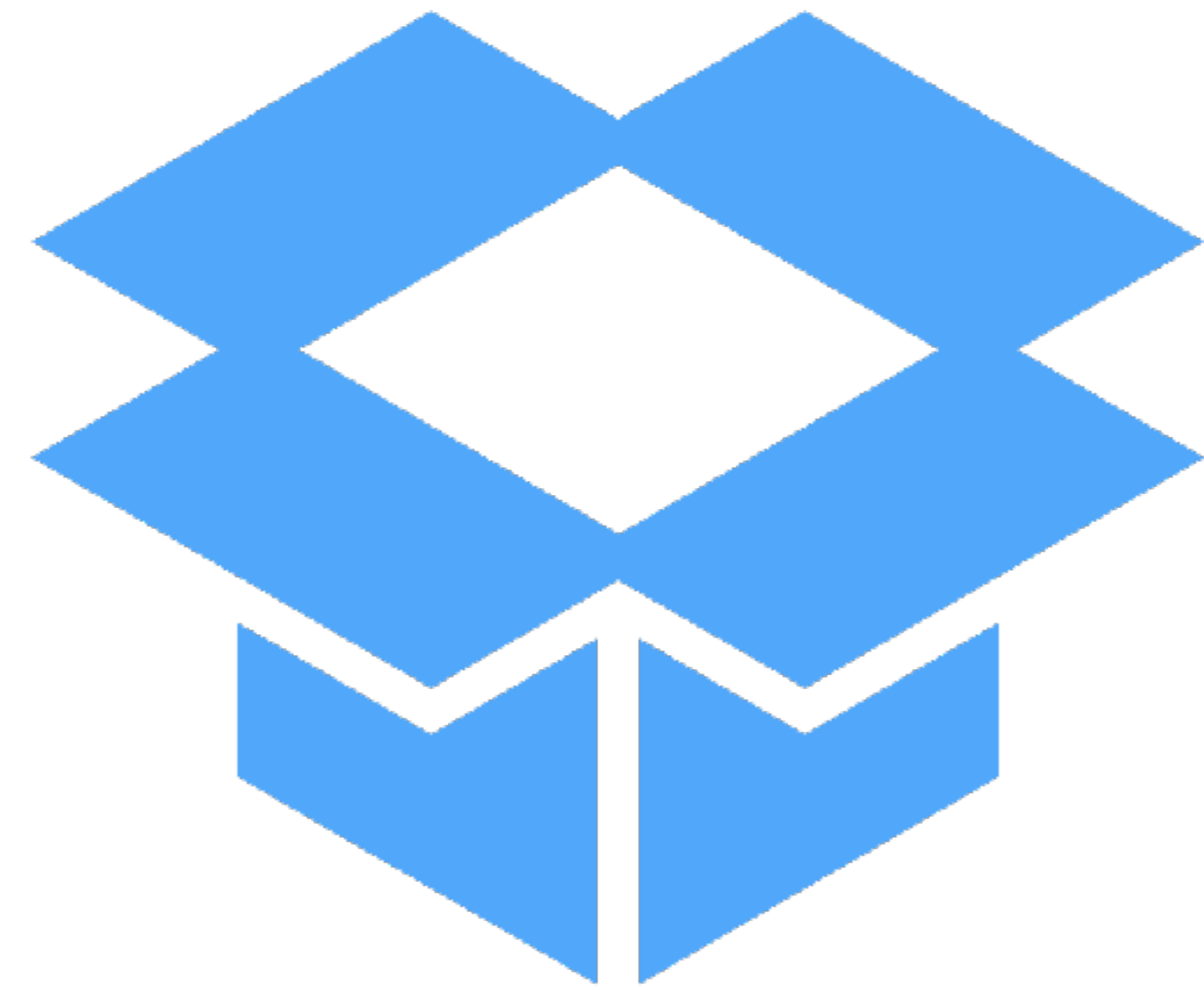
"All great achievements require time."

**"The period of time that will most effectively assist nearly every student to complete the cognitive tasks needed in the particular situation."**

**OR OPEN  
CLOSED QUESTIONS**



**THE GOOD  
THE BAD**





# CLOSED QUESTIONS

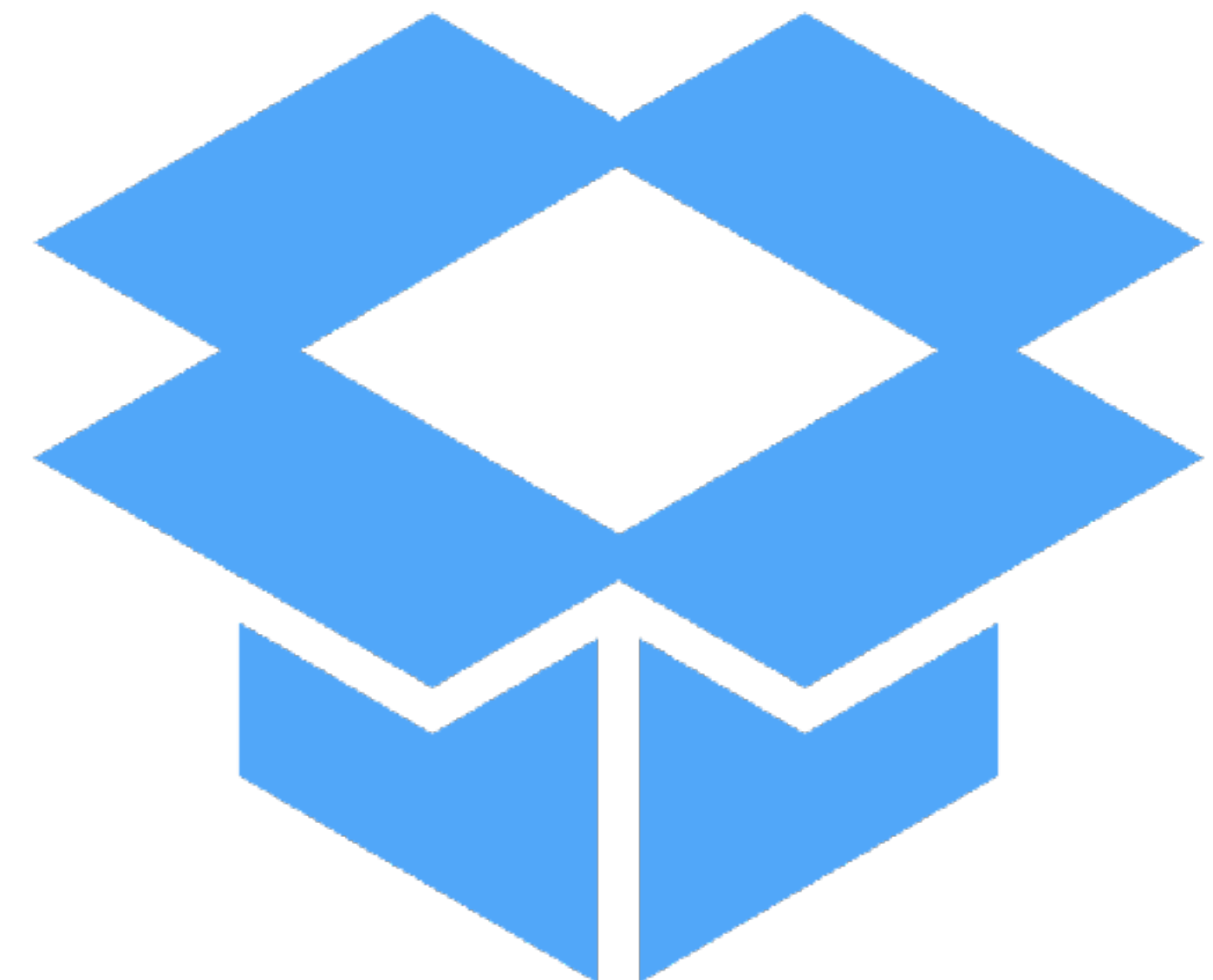
A closed question looks for specific facts and often only requires one word answer which can be yes or no.

- “Did you finish your homework?”
- “What year did it happen?”
- “Are you going to answer the question?”
- “Who won the rugby match?”



FOUNDED 1857

The Mackay School

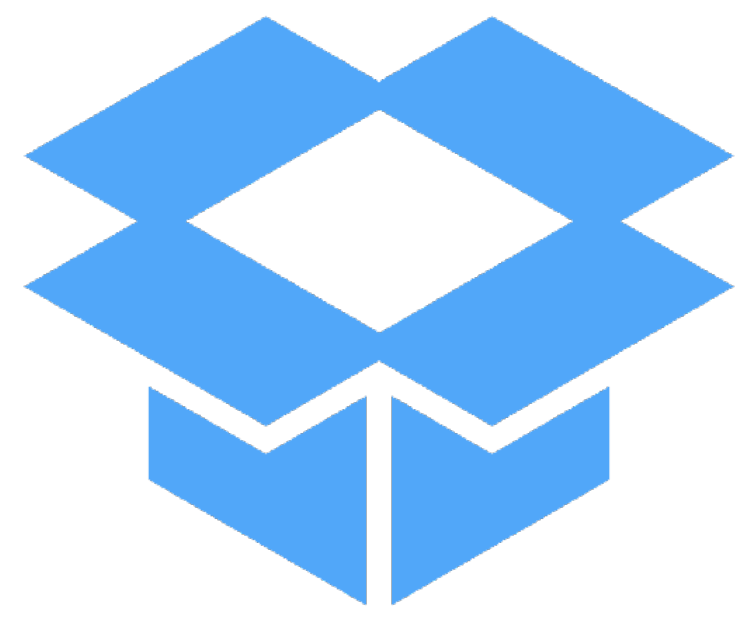




# OPEN QUESTIONS

An open question allows the respondent to develop their ideas without limiting responses or controlling responses. The questions often require more than one word answers.

- “What do you think would happen if...?”
- “Sounds interesting. How does that work?”
- “How do you feel about that?”



# OPEN QUESTIONS



## OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS:

To get facts



## SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS:

To get feelings  
and perspective



## SPECULATIVE QUESTIONS:

To be thought  
provoking, good for  
creative potential

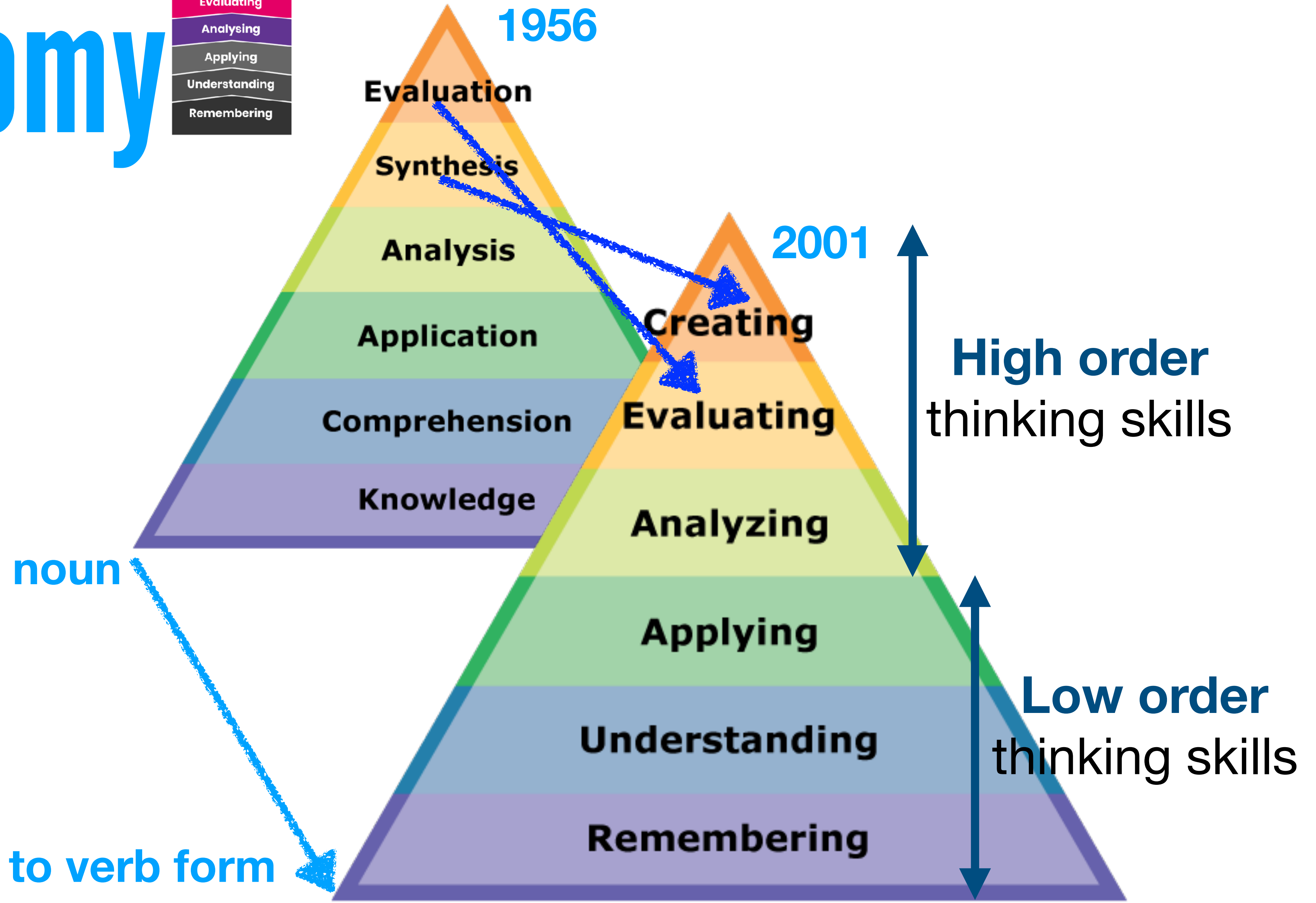
# WHAT IS A GOOD QUESTION?

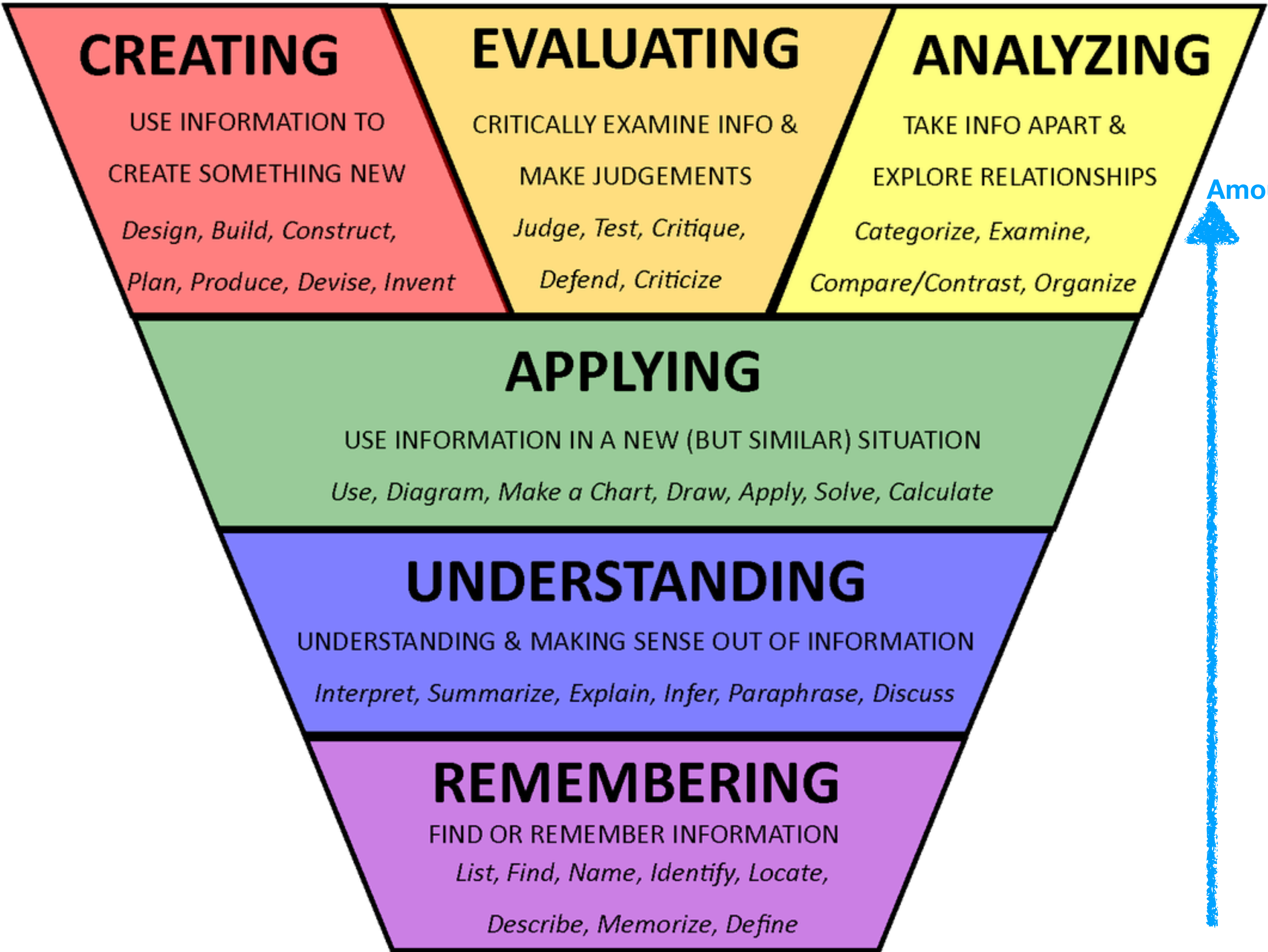


**Questioning** is the key means by which teachers find out what pupils already know, identify gaps in knowledge and **Understand** and scaffold the development of their understanding to enable them to close the gap between what they currently know and **Apply** learning objective.

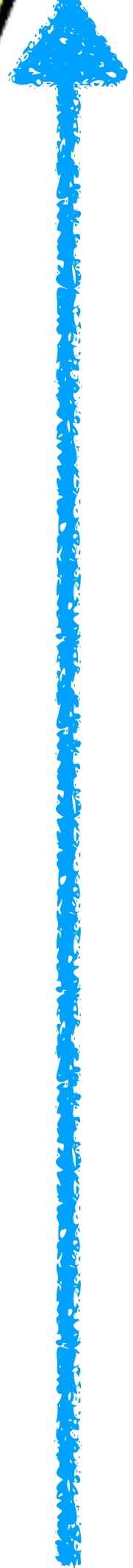


# Blooms Taxonomy





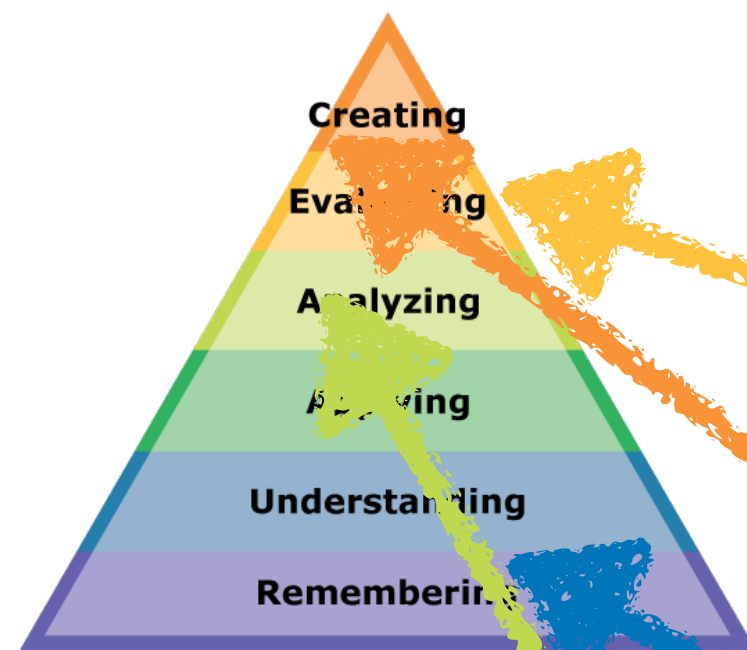
Amount of questions



# Question Planning

Lesson:

Date:

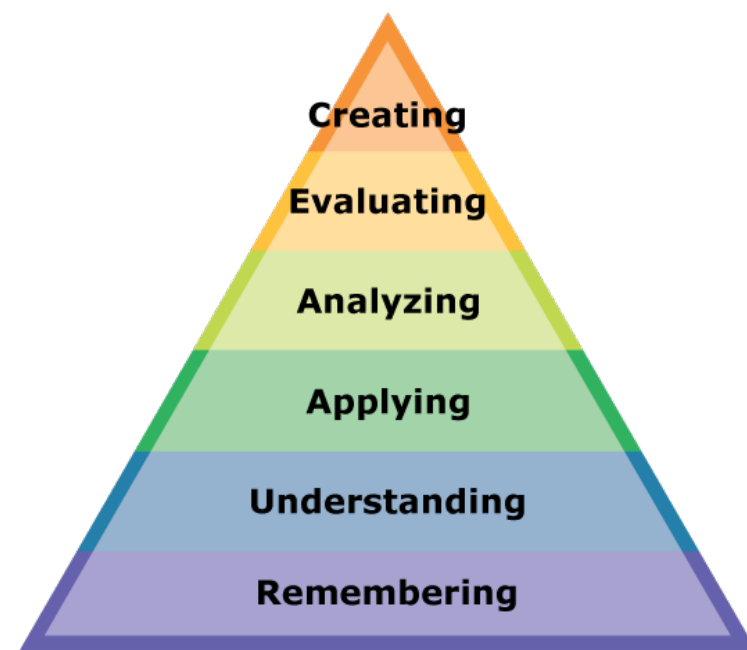


?	IS? present	DID? past	CAN? possibility	WOULD? probability	WILL? prediction	MIGHT? imagination
<b>WHAT?</b> event	<b>Factual</b>			<b>Predictive</b>		
<b>WHERE?</b> where/when						
<b>WHEN?</b> choice						
<b>WHO?</b> person	<b>Analytical</b>			<b>Application / Synthesis</b>		
<b>WHY?</b> reason  <b>HOW?</b> meaning						

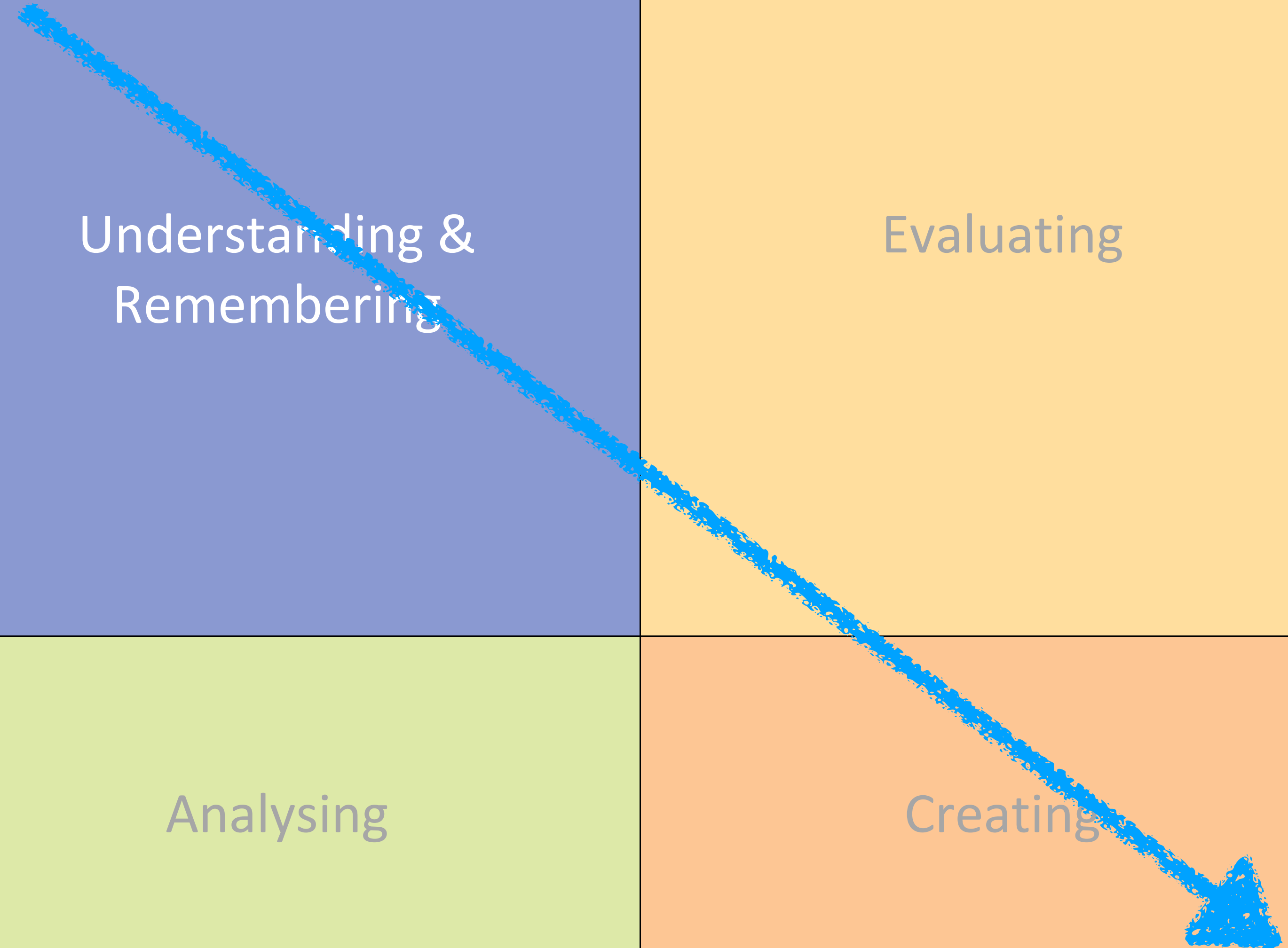
# Question Planning

Lesson:

Date:

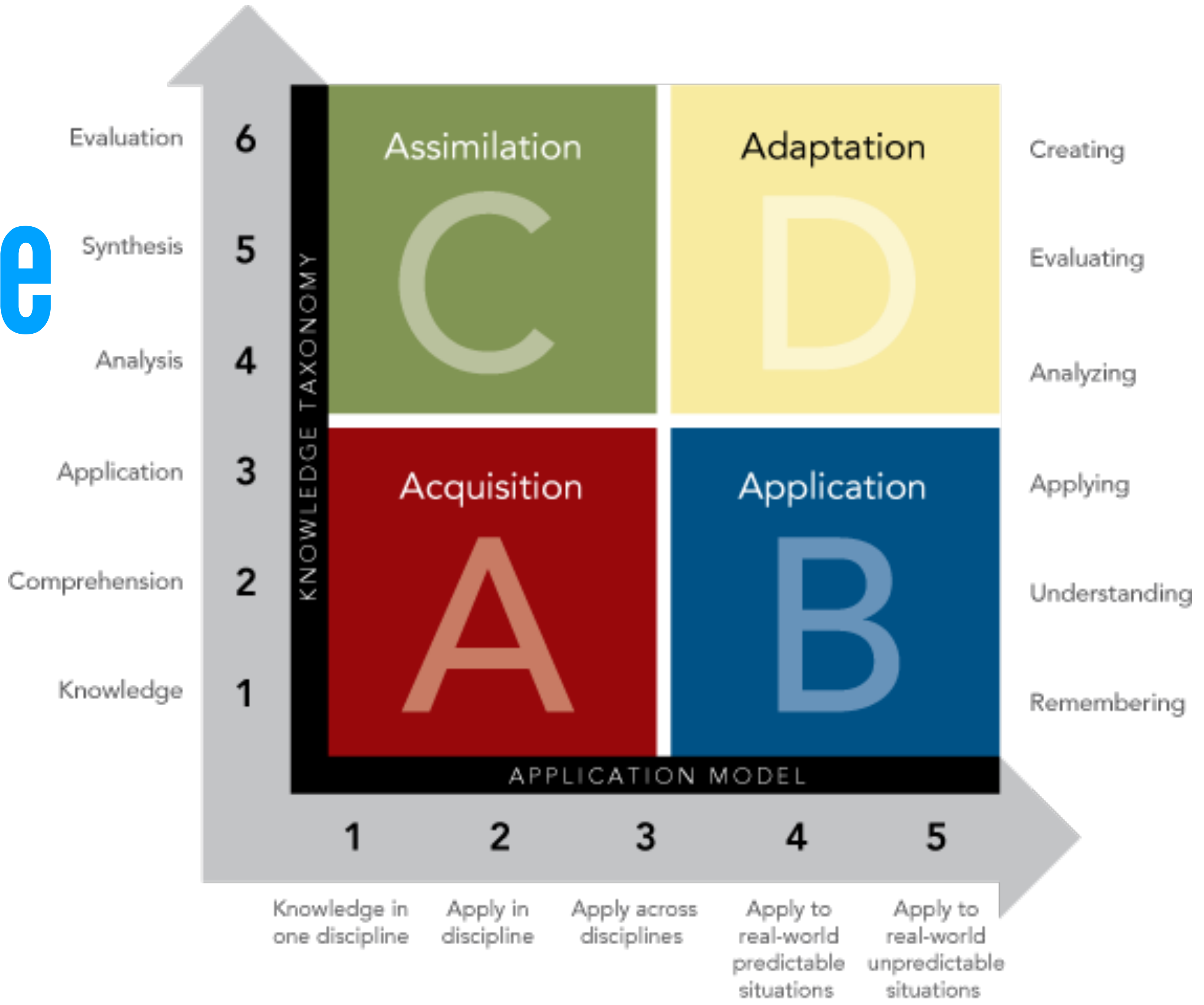


?	IS? present	DID? past	CAN? possibility	WOULD? probability	WILL? prediction	MIGHT? imagination
<b>WHAT?</b> event	Understanding & Remembering			Evaluating		
<b>WHERE?</b> where/when						
<b>WHEN?</b> choice						
<b>WHO?</b> person						
<b>WHY?</b> reason	Analysing			Creating		
<b>HOW?</b> meaning						

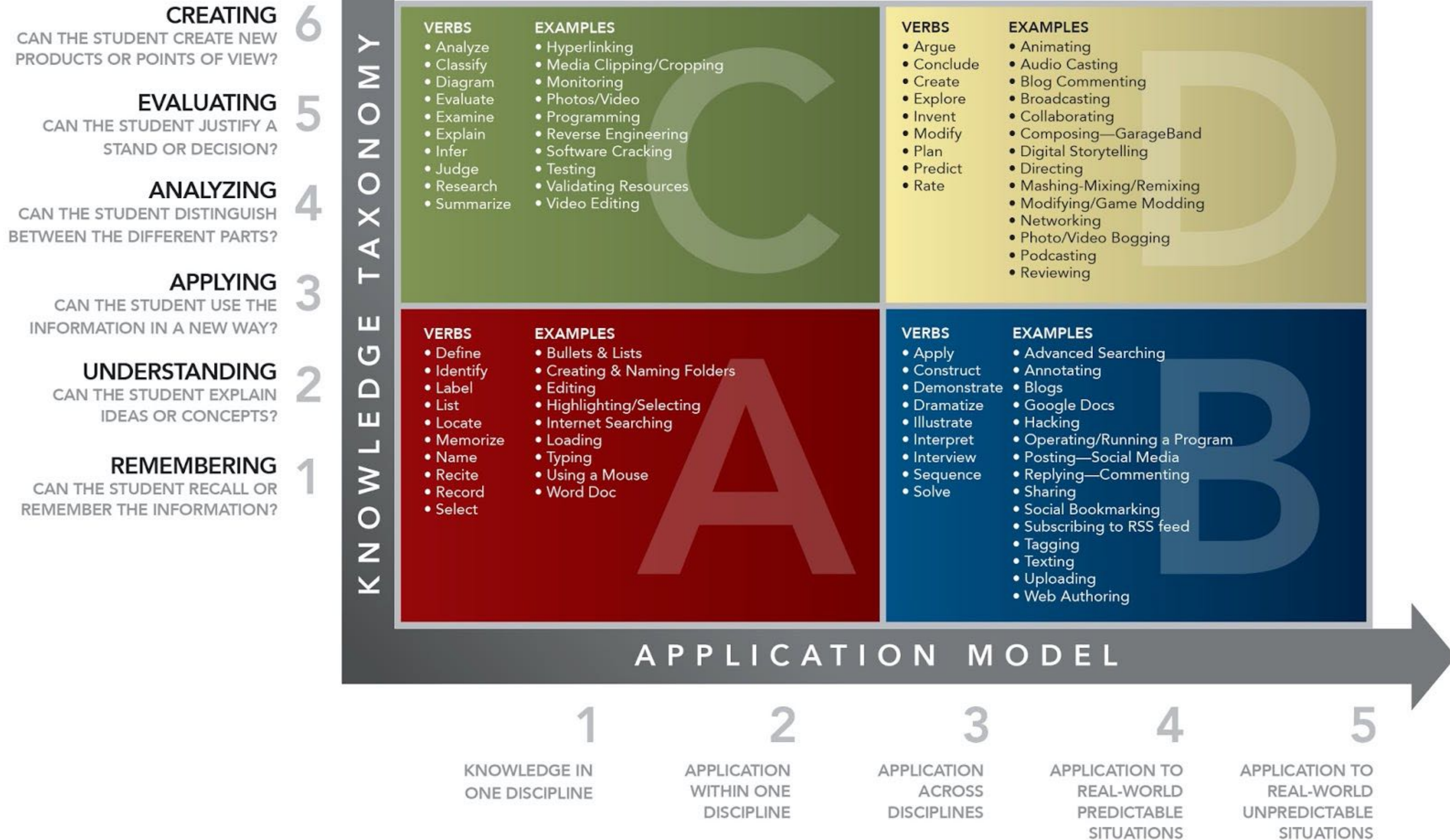




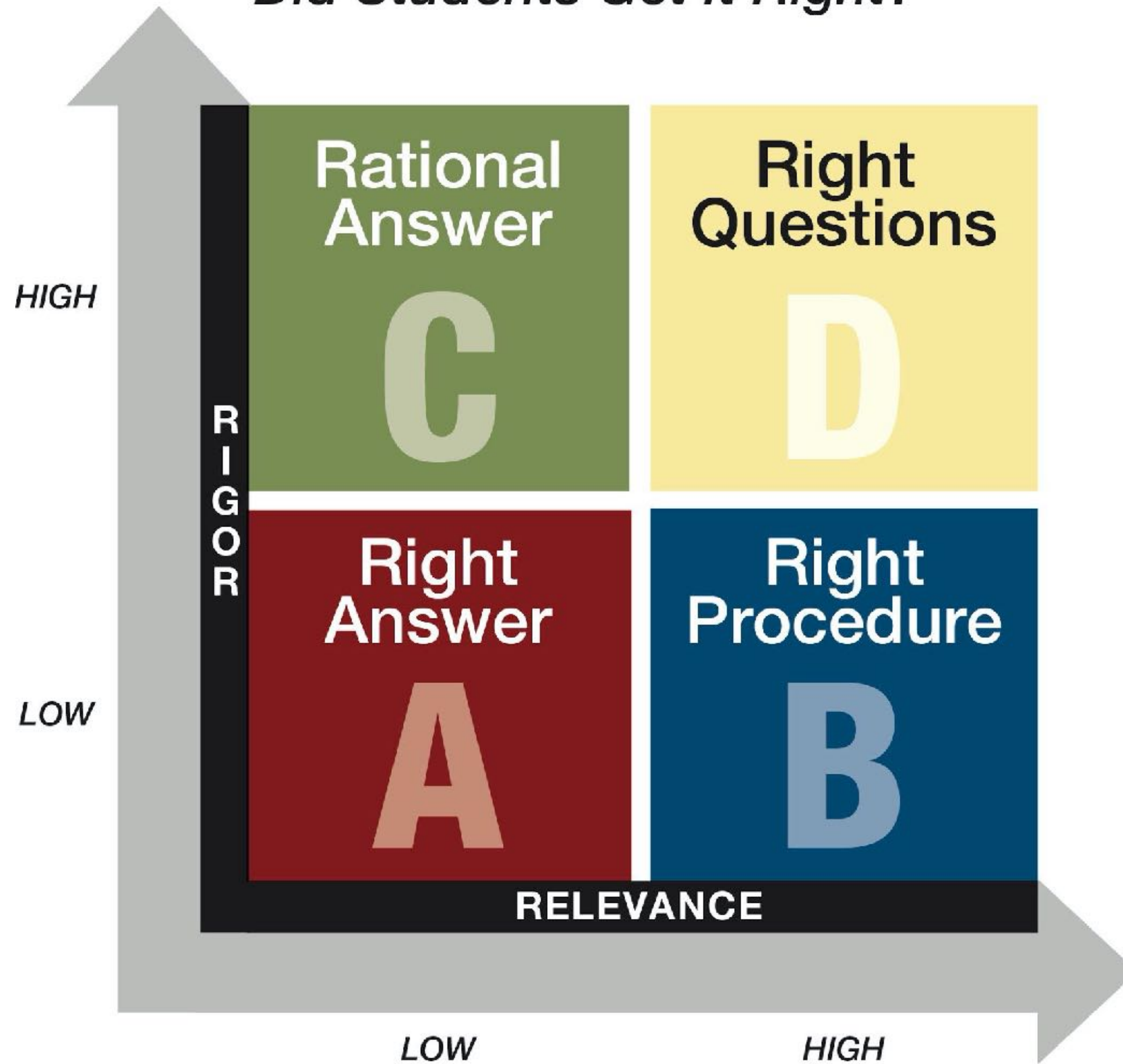
# Framework Rigor Relevance



# Technology Use By Quadrant



# Did Students Get It Right?



## EVALUATE / SYNTHESIS

Create/propose an alternative to \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you improve \_\_\_\_\_?  
Devise a way to \_\_\_\_\_?  
Hypothesize the reason for \_\_\_\_\_?  
Design a fair test for \_\_\_\_\_.  
Predict the outcome of \_\_\_\_\_?  
Develop a theory to explain \_\_\_\_\_.

Propose a hypothesis/an experiment for \_\_\_\_\_.  
Develop a model to represent \_\_\_\_\_.  
Think of an original way to represent \_\_\_\_\_.  
Develop an experiment to determine \_\_\_\_\_.  
What solutions would you suggest for \_\_\_\_\_?  
Elaborate on \_\_\_\_\_.

What could be done to integrate \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you test \_\_\_\_\_?  
What would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you combine \_\_\_\_\_ to create a different \_\_\_\_\_?  
What changes would you make to revise \_\_\_\_\_?

## CREATE / EVALUATION

Based upon the evidence, explain your choice.  
Compare the ideas of \_\_\_\_\_.  
How else would you \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you critique \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you interpret \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you verify \_\_\_\_\_?

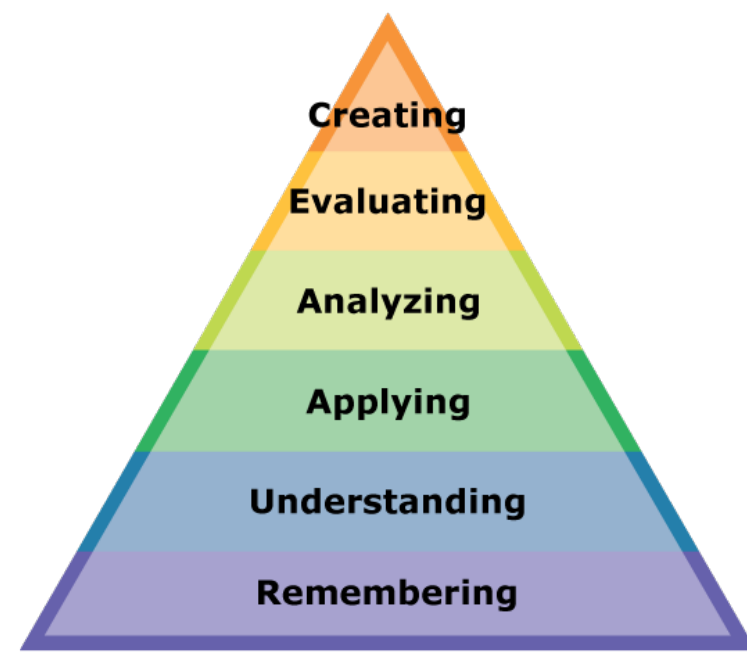
How would you determine the facts about \_\_\_\_\_?  
How would you prove/disprove \_\_\_\_\_?  
Rate the \_\_\_\_\_.  
State a case that would support/reject \_\_\_\_\_.  
What is the most important \_\_\_\_\_?  
What data was used to evaluate \_\_\_\_\_?  
What would you conclude about \_\_\_\_\_?

What is the significance of \_\_\_\_\_?  
What criteria would you use to assess \_\_\_\_\_?  
What choice would you have in \_\_\_\_\_ situation?  
What data was used to evaluate \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is your opinion of \_\_\_\_\_?  
Which \_\_\_\_\_ is valid?  
Would it be better if \_\_\_\_\_?  
Why/why not?

# Question Planning

Lesson:

Date:



?	IS? present	DID? past	CAN? possibility	WOULD? probability	WILL? prediction	MIGHT? imagination
<b>WHAT?</b> event	<div data-bbox="1059 690 1626 1258" data-label="Text"> <p>When did World War II begin?</p> </div>			<div data-bbox="2192 752 2525 821" data-label="Text"> <p>Evaluating</p> </div>		
<b>WHERE?</b> where/when						
<b>WHEN?</b> choice						
<b>WHO?</b> person	<div data-bbox="1192 1553 1526 1622" data-label="Text"> <p>Analysing</p> </div>			<div data-bbox="2259 1553 2525 1622" data-label="Text"> <p>Creating</p> </div>		
<b>WHY?</b> reason						
<b>HOW?</b> meaning						



Why would you think that?

# ANSWERING QUESTIONING



What is the capital city of Chile?

What information does this tell you?

I'm showing my status

33% of class understand

I'am fitting in

Can I go to the toilet!

I don't want to appear stupid

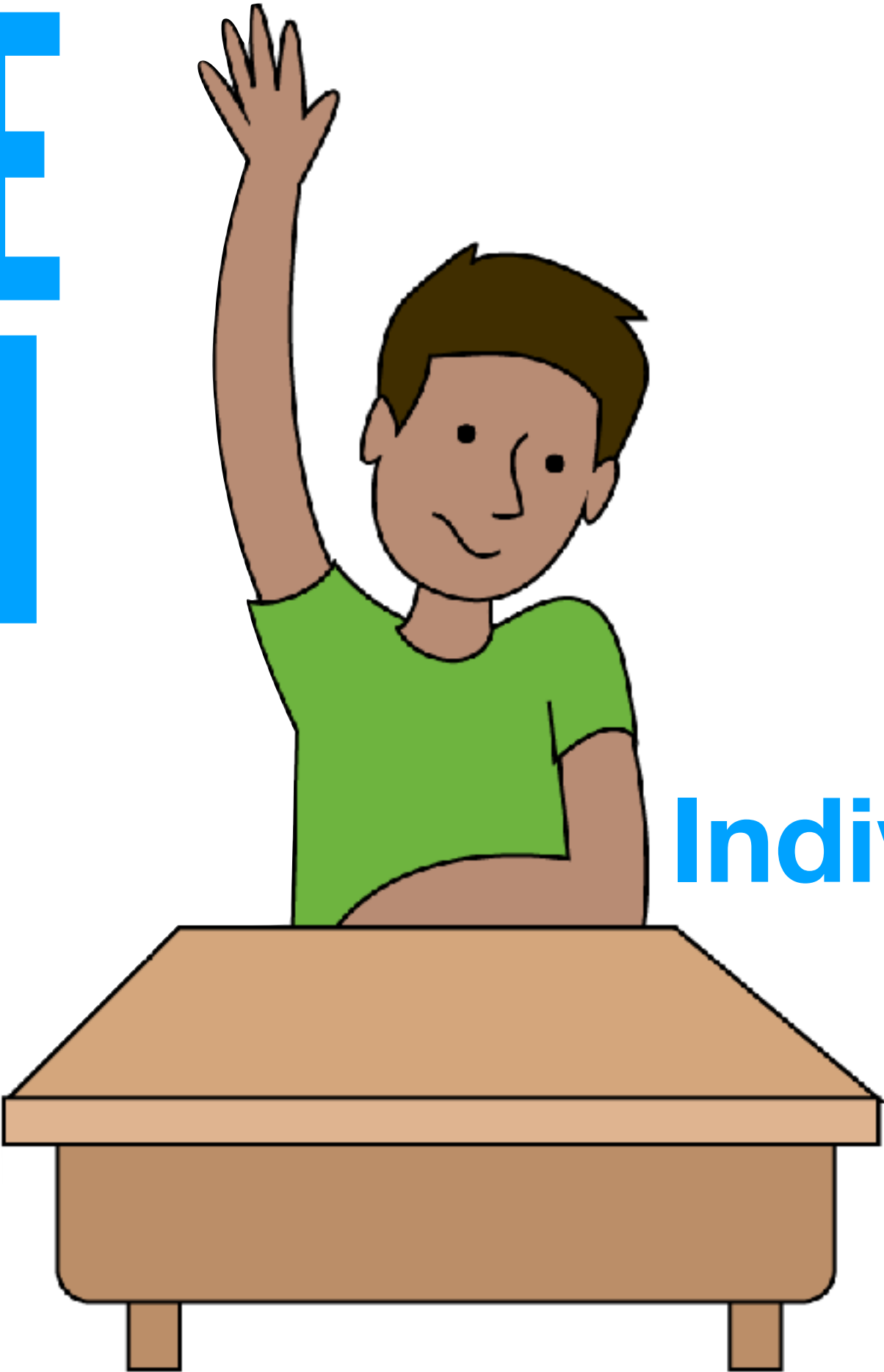
I know the answer

Following expectation of the teacher

I can't be bothered...

I am hoping you won't ask me

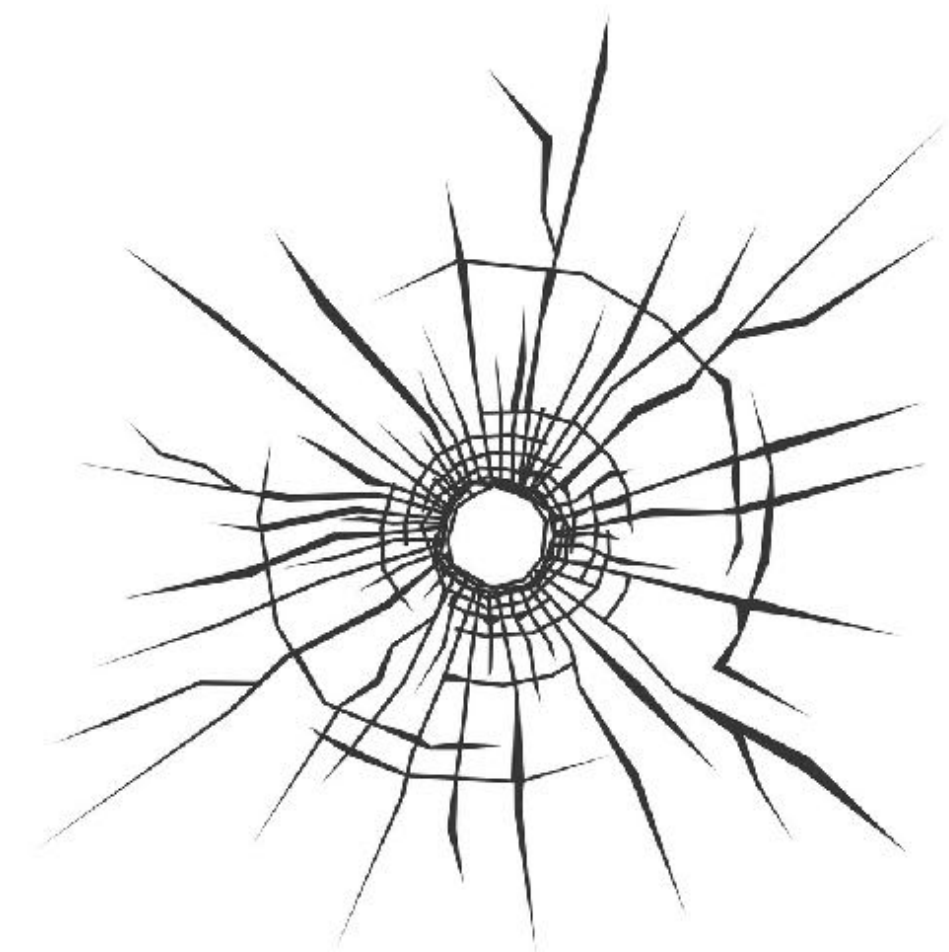
# POSSIBLE PROBLEM



Individual





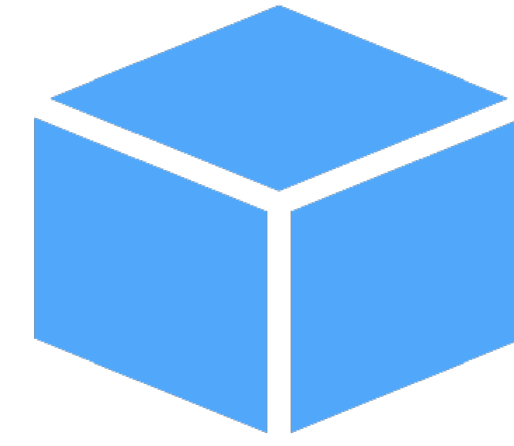


# ANSWERING

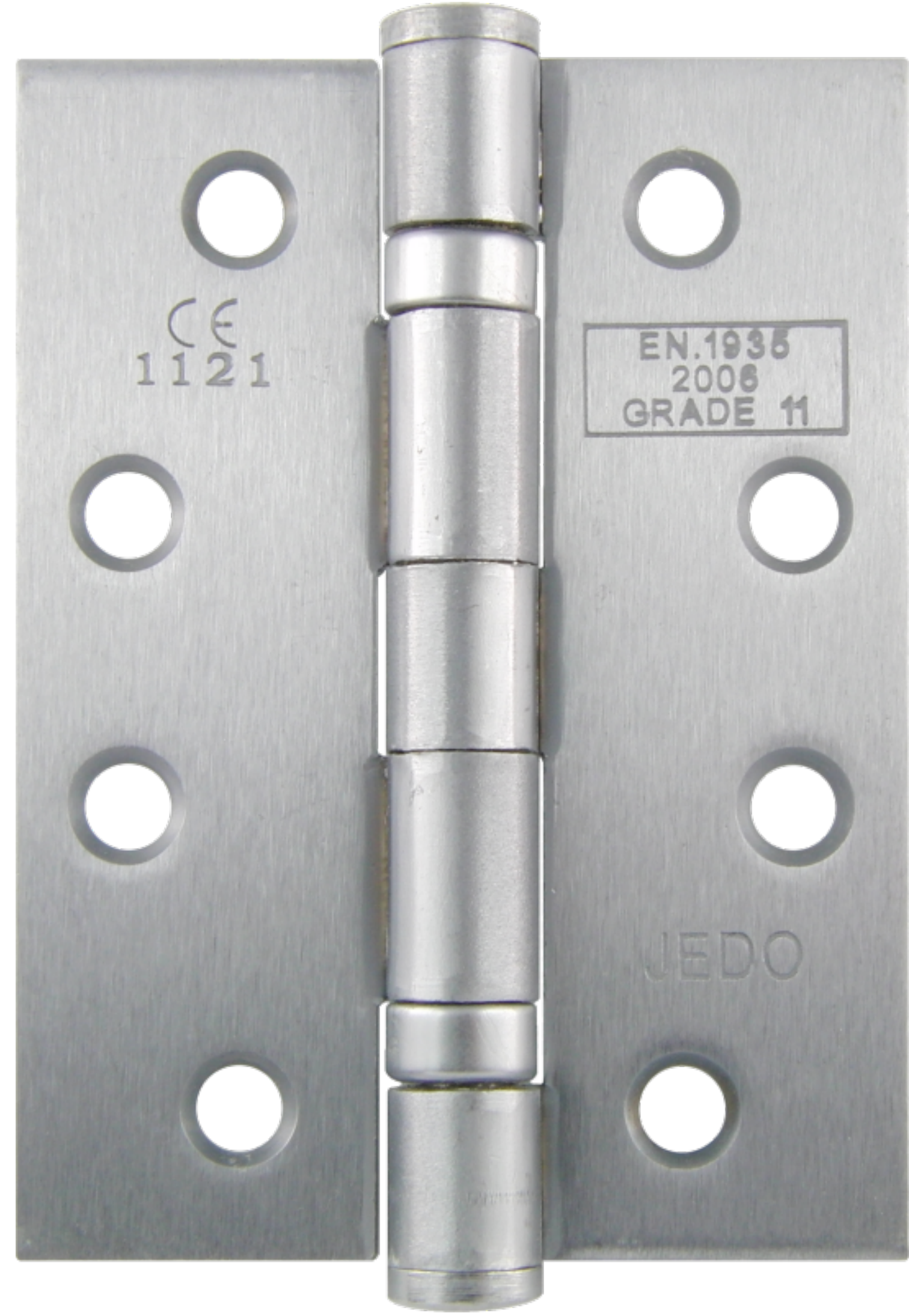




# HINGE POINT QUESTIONS



**Planned**  
Questions



**Pivotal**  
Points

# HINGE POINT QUESTIONS

A hinge-point question is based on a concept in a lesson that is important for students to understand before the teacher moves on in the lesson.

A good hinge-point question meets the following criteria

- it doesn't take too long to ask (e.g. around 30 seconds)
- it doesn't take too long for students to respond (e.g. around a minute)
- all students in the class respond at the same time
- it doesn't take too long for the teacher to scan and interpret the responses (no more than 30 seconds)
- students who get the answer right get it right for the right reason.

# EXAMPLE

Place these decimals in order, from the largest to the smallest:

**0.52    0.732    0.3**

While many students will use correct reasoning to get to the correct answer, many other students believe that the digits to the right of the decimal point are to be treated like whole numbers. They therefore get the number arranged in the correct order with an incorrect strategy.

If, instead, we ask students to arrange the following numbers in order, from smallest to largest:

**0.52    0.7    0.332**

students using this incorrect strategy will get an incorrect answer, so the teacher can be more confident that students who get the answer right do so for the right reason.

# EXAMPLE

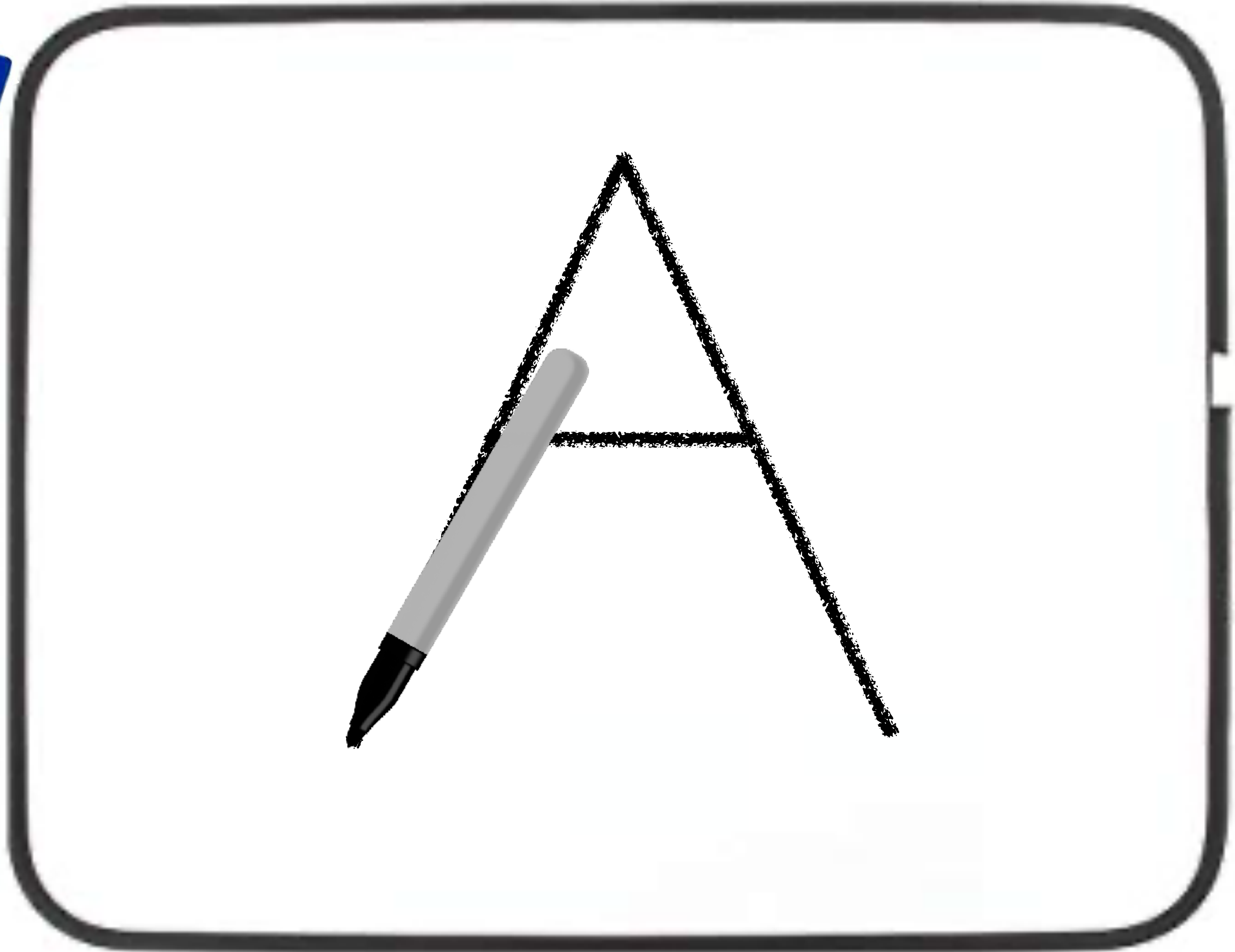
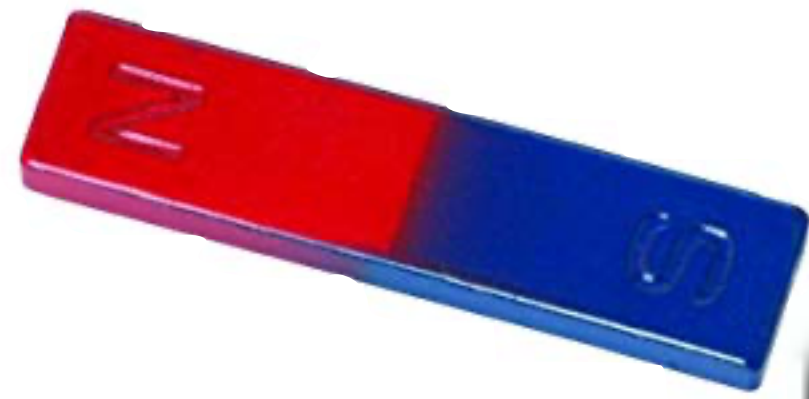
## Magnetic forces



The lesson is about magnetic forces with students learning to recognise the characteristics of objects attracted by magnets. Responses are collected using a white board. The lesson will continue either with most students working in small groups to design an experiment to classify objects attracted to magnets or with those students who understand the characteristics of magnetic objects paired up with those who do not.

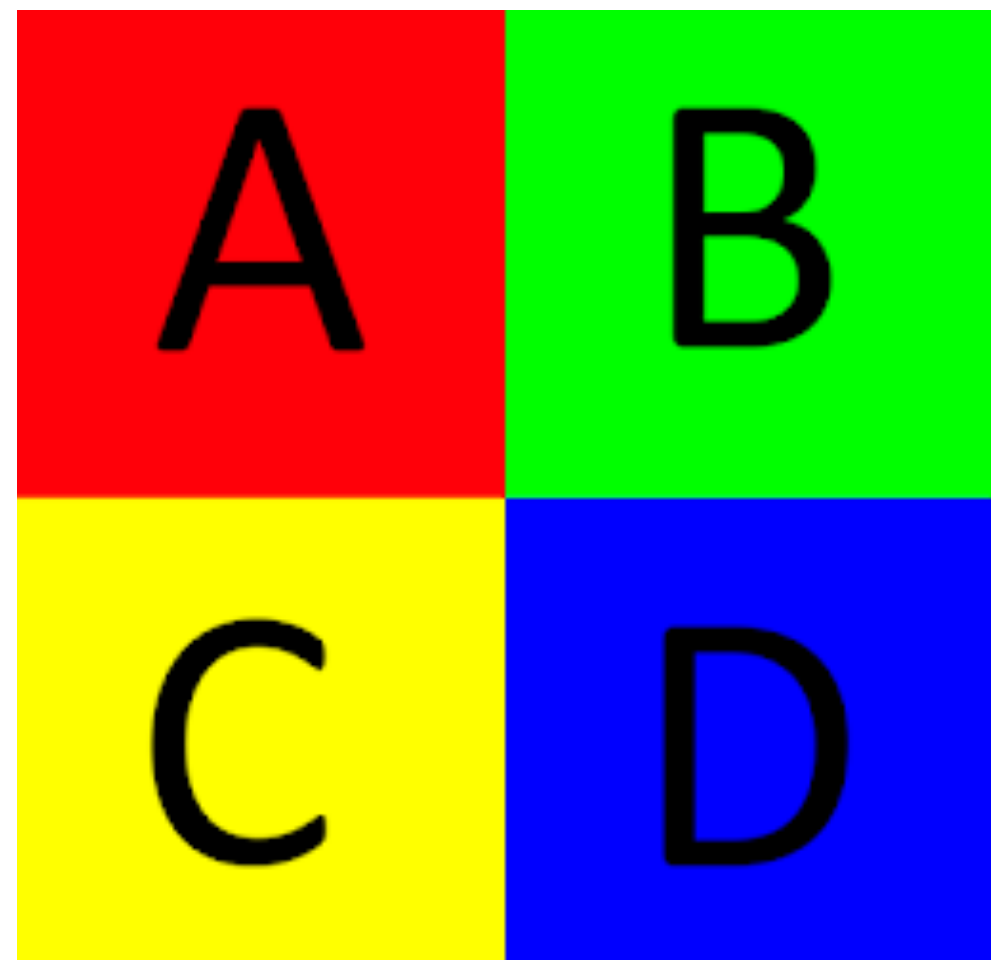
Which object can be picked up with a magnet?

- (A) An iron nail
- (B) A copper wire
- (C) A piece of wood
- (D) A piece of glass

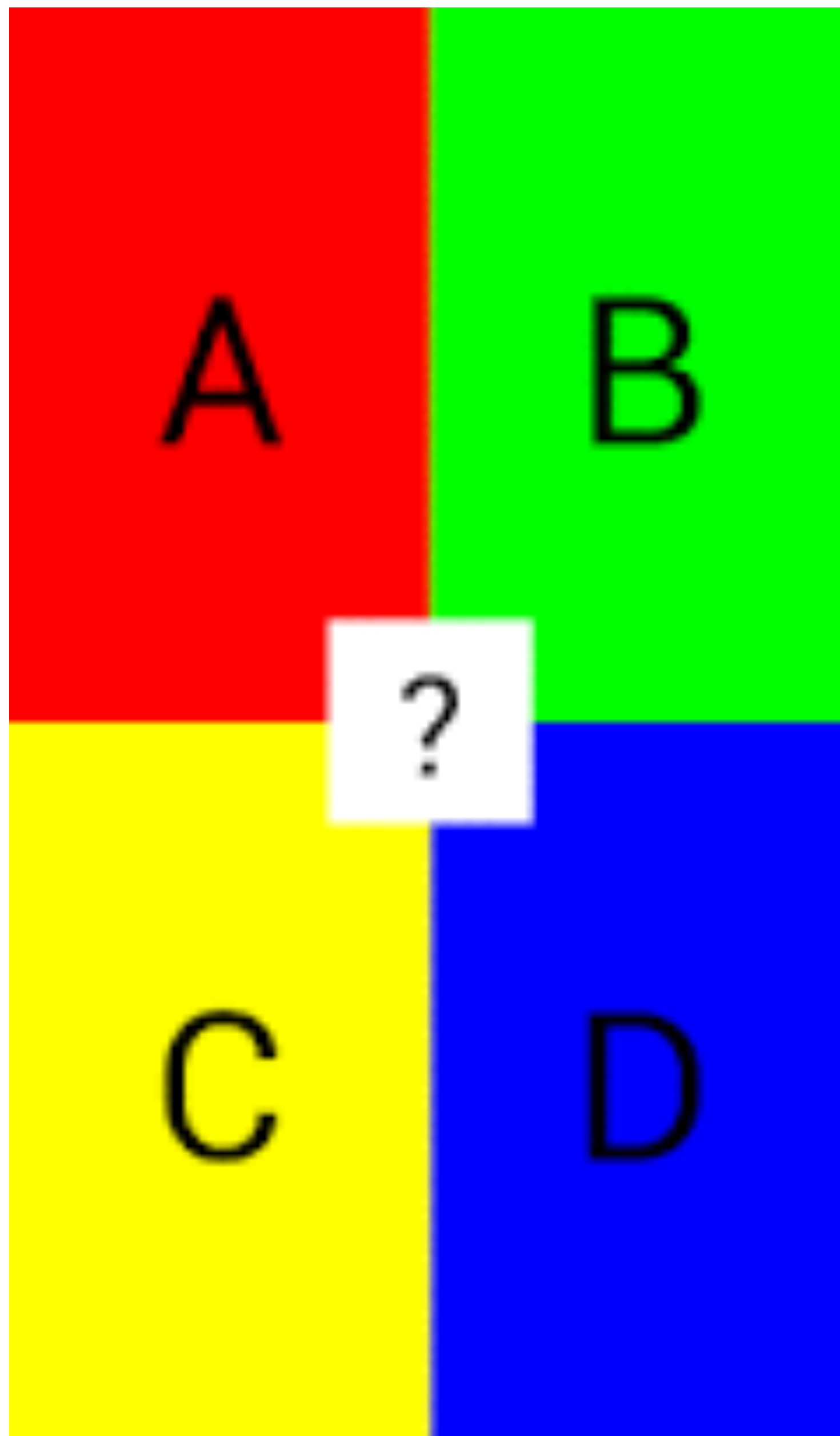




**RECORDING**  
**RESPONCES**

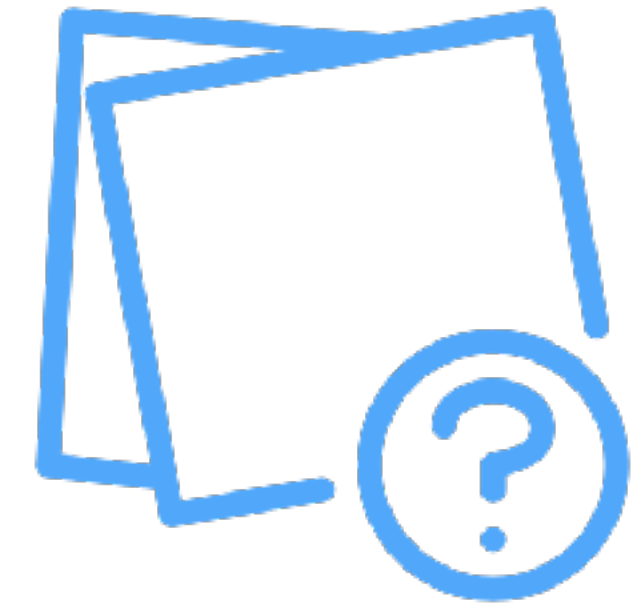
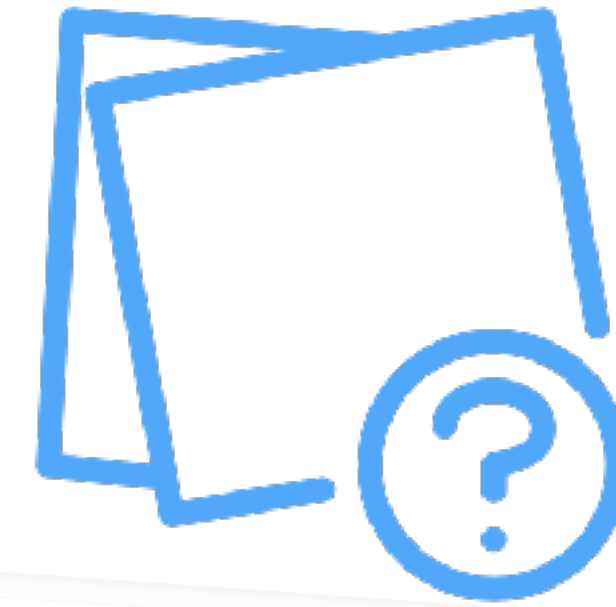
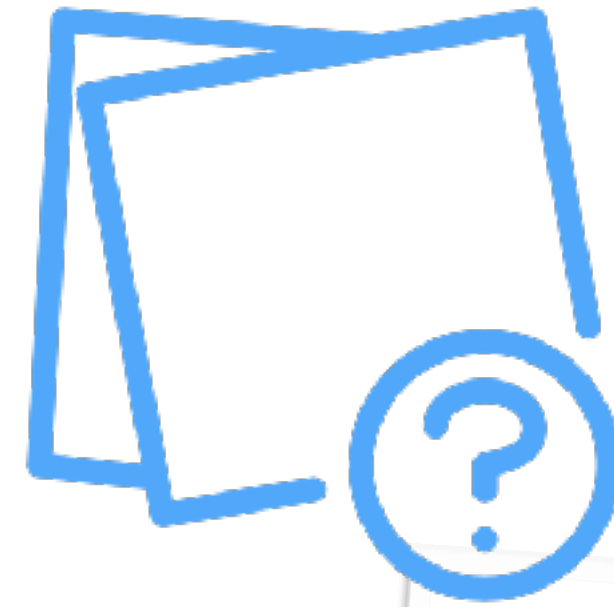


ABCD Cards





Students place questions that they need answered on a 'parking lot'.



# EXIT PASS

**Student survey**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My Question/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one number for each line to show the teacher what you felt about the lesson

The pace	slow	1	2	3	4	5	fast
The difficulty	easy	1	2	3	4	5	difficult
My interest	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
My understanding	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
My learning	poor	1	2	3	4	5	good

**Question Planning** Lesson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

?	IS? present	DID? past	CAN? possibility	WOULD? probability	WILL? prediction	MIGHT? imagination
WHAT? event	Understanding & Remembering			Evaluating		
WHERE? where/when						
WHEN? choice						
WHO? person	Analysing			Creating		
WHY? reason						
HOW? meaning						





# EXIT TICKETS

## Check for Understanding

- 3-2-1:  
3 - things you learned  
2 - ways you supported your own learning  
1 - question you still have
- What did you learn as a result of today's lesson?
- 6 Word Summary:  
In exactly six words, sum up the big idea of today's learning.
- Ask a broken record question.

## Relevance

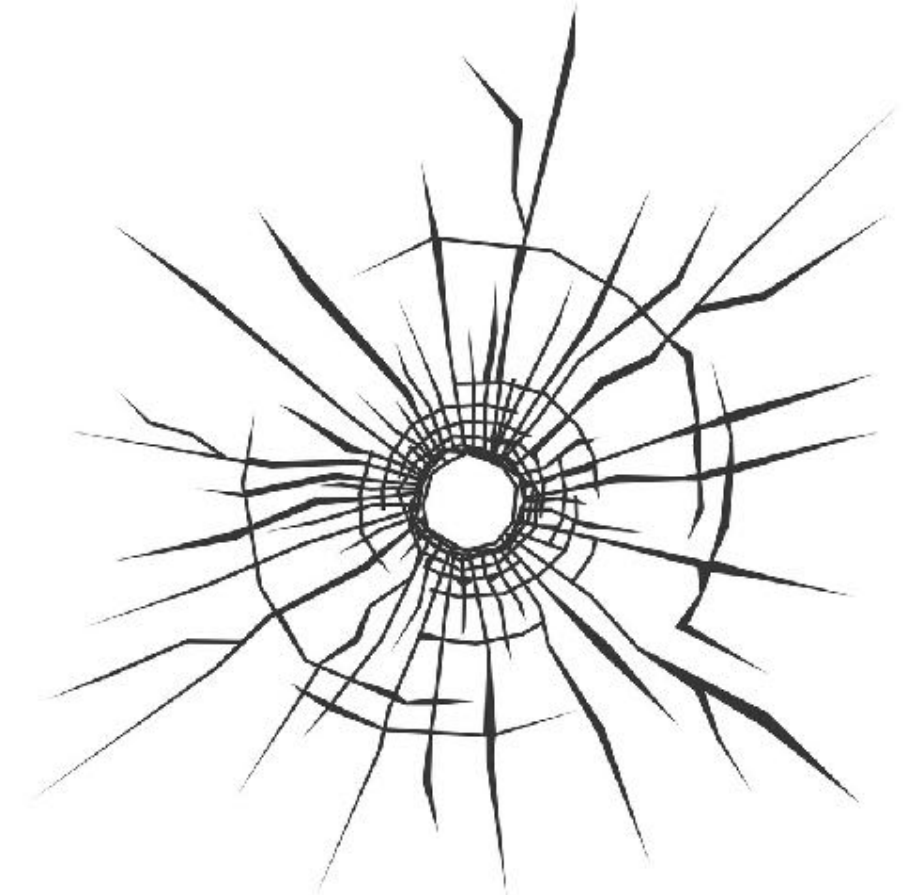
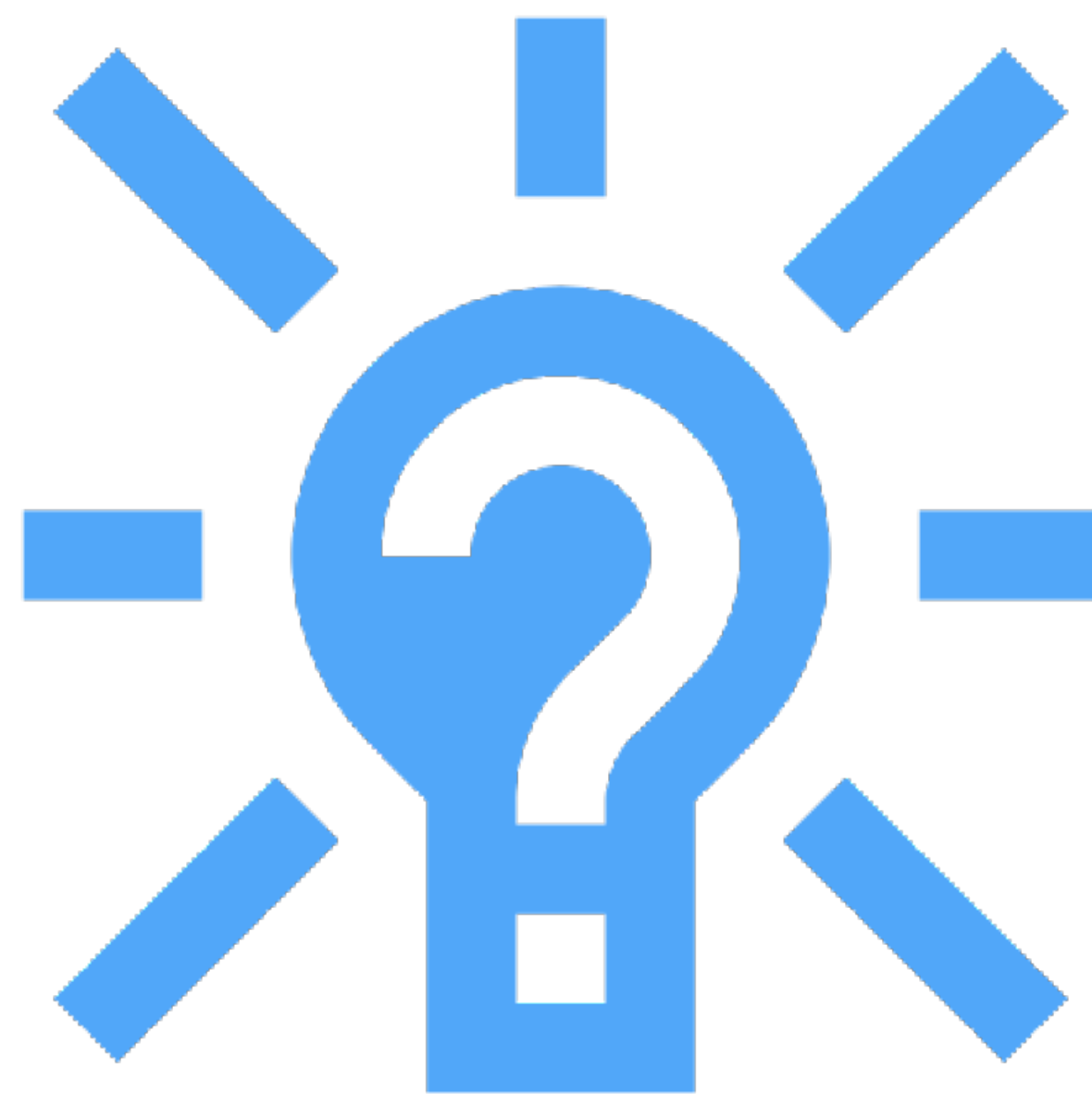
- How will today's learning help you as a reader (author, mathematician, scientist, artist, musician, etc.)?
- When might this learning be helpful to you outside of the classroom?
- Why is it important that you learn about \_\_\_\_ (insert learning target)?
- What kind of careers use this type of learning?

## Self Assessment

- Tomorrow's Help Scale:  
4 - I can help someone else  
3- I will not need any help  
2 - I might need help from my resources  
1 - I will need help from an expert
- How Sure Are You?  
Respond to a check for understanding question. Then quantify your level of confidence in your response with a percent.
- What do you need to learn next?

## Mindset

- What kind of self talk did you have? Was it encouraging, negative, helpful, etc.?
- How did you approach something that was difficult for you today?
- How did your mindset impact your learning today?
- What level of effort was required for your learning today?
- How were you challenged today? What pushed your thinking?



**THE GOOD  
AND THE BAD  
AND THE QUESTION**

Students need to access teachers for content, but they desperately need teachers to develop the skills, knowledge and disposition to be lifelong learners and critical thinkers. We need teachers to help them make sense of information so that they can create new and better ideas that will move us all forward.”