

**Socratic questioning techniques**

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| 1. **Clarification**   These questions will help you think more about exactly what you are asking or thinking about and prove the concepts behind your answers or argument.   * *Why do you say that?* * *What exactly does this mean?* * *Can you explain further?* * *How does this relate to what we have been talking about?* * *What do we already know about this?* * *Can you give me an example?* * *Are you saying...or...?* * *Can you r**ephrase that, please?* | **2. Challenging Assumptions**  Challenging assumptions will make you think about the presuppositions and beliefs on which your arguments are founded.   * *What else could we assume?* * *You seem to be assuming…?* * *How did you arrive at these assumptions?* * *Please explain why/how...?* * *How can you verify or disprove that assumption?* * *What would happen if...?* * *Do you agree or disagree with...?* | **3. Using Evidence in Arguments**  Probe further into other peoples arguments and challenge un-thought-through or weakly-understood arguments.   * *Can you give me an example of that?* * *What evidence do you have for this?* * *Is there reason to doubt this evidence?* * *How do you know this?* * *Can you support this with a reasoned argument?* * *What do you think causes…?* * *Are these reasons good enough?* * *How might it be refuted?* * *On what authority are you basing your argument?* |
| **4. Exploring other Viewpoints**  Most arguments are given from a particular position. Show that there are other, equally valid, viewpoints.   * *How else could you answer this?* * *Why is…necessary?* * *What is the difference between…and…?* * *What would…say about it?* * *How might a…answer this?* * *What if you compared…with…?* * *What is the difference between...and...?* * *Why is this...better than...?* * *What are the strengths and weaknesses of...?* | **5. Considering the Consequences**  The argument that they give may have logical implications that can be forecast. Do these make sense? Are they desirable?   * *Then what would happen?* * *What would happen if everyone did/believed this?* * *How could...be used to...?* * *What are the implications of...?* * *How does...affect...?* * *How does...fit with what we learned before?* * *Why is...important?* * *What is the best...? Why?* | **6. Questioning the Question**  You can also turn the question in on itself. Use their attack against themselves. Bounce the ball back into their court, etc.   * *What was the point of asking that question?* * *Why do you think I asked this question?* * *Am I making sense? Why not?* * *What else might I ask?* * *What does that mean?* |