

Middle School ELA Teachers

10 Questions You Can Ask to Increase Engagement

Ooh, yes! How to keep them **thinking critically, engaged in the reading, and making connections** is always a challenge for us as teachers.

These 10 questions below will help ensure that you always have something to use with pretty much anything you want your students to read and discuss (they'll work best for informational/expository texts but I do have some for fiction and poetry as well).

Skim through the list (of course you can ask these in any order) and then **check out the various ways you can use them that I've got below the list for you :-)**

- 1) Could the writer mean something different here?
- 2) How could you summarize this selection in 6 words or less?
- 3) If this entire passage could be represented in a single image... Can you sketch that image?
- 4) What would be an exception for when this argument/claim/point of view wouldn't be true?
- 5) Could you create a similar idea/argument/piece of information but using better examples?
- 6) What would it take to make this more relevant for us?
- 7) Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)
- 8) Does this way of thinking / type of information always work?
- 9) Where else might you find something like this? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)
- 10) Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing?

Ok, I promised a few ideas on how to actually use these questions:

Option 1

Just keep them on a clipboard or on your phone (whatever you always seem to have with you as you're teaching) so you can quickly refer to the questions at any time.

Option 2

Turn these 10 questions into 10 discussion task cards to use after reading something. I've already done this and I'm sharing the task cards below :-)

Option 3

Assign the questions randomly to students and then give them a set amount of time to respond in writing (just one!). Assuming you have a class of 30, and assuming you can use all 10 for something you've read recently, have them meet up with the other two students in the class who have that same question so they can share responses and come up with a "group" response.

Option 4

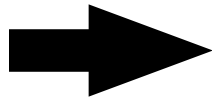
Simply use these as Exit Ticket ideas! Different students can answer different questions, or you can choose one that you want everyone to focus on in order to get a better view of how your students are interacting with the reading as it relates to the one question you chose for them.

Scroll down for the 10 questions
that I turned into discussion task cards :-)

But first —

I'm ALL about up-leveling student engagement while
keeping things 100% realistic and doable for teachers, so . . .

If you haven't already, I'd love to invite you to *join me at one of my free trainings* designed to help you **teach Middle School ELA with less stress on your part and more engagement from students!**



Click on the free training below that resonates with you the most, and I'll see you there **with more freebies, too!**

OPTION A - CLICK HERE

Engaging Test Prep Strategies for Middle School ELA
(that don't feel like test prep!)

OPTION B - CLICK HERE

Centers & Stations in the Middle School ELA Classroom
(easy, realistic, actionable!)

OPTION C - CLICK HERE

Realistic Ways to Differentiate in the Middle School ELA Classroom
(without going nuts!)

Now grab your task cards below!

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| Could the writer mean something different here? | How could you summarize this selection in 6 words or less? |
| If this entire passage could be represented in a single image... Can you sketch that image? | What would be an exception for when this argument/claim/point of view wouldn't be true? |
| Could you create a similar idea/argument/piece of information but using better examples? | What would it take to make this more relevant for us? |
| Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.) | Does this way of thinking / type of information always work? |
| Where else might you find something like this? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.) | Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing? |