LESSON OVERVIEW

Name: Sra. Patty Gómez  |  Grade: 9  |  Subject: Spanish 4H for Heritage Speakers  |  Location: Fort Lauderdale, FL

Context & Purpose: I used the QFT toward the end of Unit 3: The Complexity of the Modern World (La complejidad del mundo moderno). One objective of the unit is for students to practice the art of describing people, places, common objects and inventions using a rich collection of adjectives and creating meaningful comparisons through similes, metaphors and analogies. The QFT was designed with the intention of leading students to generate their own questions about: 1) the critical information to be included in descriptions of inventions to better understand their value and 2) the importance of describing vividly the world around us.

Lesson Procedure:
I will translate the QFT procedure into Spanish and guide the students through it using google slides. Students (some remote, some in the classroom) will follow along synchronously using this work document.

1. On days 1 and 2, students will produce and improve questions. They will prioritize 3 questions that would best help you describe an invention to someone who’s never seen it before.
2. On day 3, students will consolidate the class’s questions, erase duplicates, and pick the 5 most important overall. They will each pick an invention to describe and write an ode to, using answers to the priority questions. They will discuss what additional information they will need for the activity and how they will find that information.
3. Also on day 3, students will prioritize again, picking the 3 questions that would best help them discuss the importance of writing vivid, complete descriptions of the world around us. These will be used for an opinion essay.
4. Lastly, they will reflect on what they learned and how they learned it.

Next Steps (i.e. how student questions will be used after the QFT):
- Students will use the consolidated class list of 5 priority questions (step #2 above) as ingredients to write their own ode about a modern invention of their choice. They previously studied three odes by Pablo Neruda.
- From the second set of priority questions (step #3 above), they will choose one to use as prompt to write an opinion essay. The essay and the poem will constitute their final project for semester 1.

LESSON OUTCOME

Question Focus: [Link to larger version]

Student Questions:
(15 students produced 144 questions in 5 minutes. All questions are included in the work document)

- ¿Cómo se usa el teléfono antiguo? / How do you use the old telephone?
- ¿Qué tipo de energía usa la cosa? / What type of energy does this use?
- ¿Por qué todas las cajas son típicamente rojas? / Why are the phone booths typically red?
- ¿Es propiedad pública o privada? / Is it public property or private?
- ¿Cómo es la textura de las telas? / What is the texture of the fabrics like?
- ¿De qué está hecho? / What do you use it for?
- ¿Cuál es el valor de esta cosa? / What is the value of this thing?
- ¿Cuánto tiempo necesita para construir estas cosas? / How much time does it take to build these things?
- ¿En qué año se inventaron los objetos? / In what year were these objects invented? (C) → ¿Porqué inventaron este objeto durante este tiempo? / Why did they invent the object during this time? (O)
- ¿Por qué es difícil describir algo usando palabras? / Why is it difficult to describe something using words?
- ¿Por qué es frustrante? / Why is it frustrating?
- ¿Por qué es importante? / Why is it important? (O) → ¿Es importante? / Is it important? (C)

LESSON OUTCOME

Quote at the top reads: "Usar palabras para describir algo que percibimos claramente con otros sentidos puede ser frustrante, pero es una manera importante de comprender el mundo que nos rodea." – Anónimo / "Using words to describe something that we clearly perceive with other senses can be frustrating, but it is an important way of understanding the world around us." --Anonymous

Source: The Right Question Institute  |  rightquestion.org
Overall, what did you learn from this experience?

I have said this before, but this is the single most powerful protocol to use in the classroom and in professional development activities that I have learned and used in the last few years. It's adaptable, simple and yields pure gold thinking and experiences for students and teachers alike. The students’ responses and resulting work far exceeded my expectations and far exceeded theirs. I was a bit afraid that they would find the process pointless. I have been reflecting about the origin of that fear and I think our students are so used to just being given information by us that finding themselves as the makers of the information would make them feel uncomfortable. I felt they'd be going through the process wondering quietly in their heads why I didn’t just give them the questions I wanted them to use so they could get to their “actual work” right away. If they think that way it is because we have made them think that way. Luckily since the protocol allows for not revealing from the start where we are going with this, and the whole point is to build thinking together to get somewhere, they had no choice but to follow and be mildly intrigued. That helped them be truly engaged in what they were doing once they passed the initial hurdle of wanting for me to give them examples of what kinds of questions I wanted them to make and me not giving them any.

Source: The Right Question Institute

rightquestion.org