

Course Syllabus

Course:	EDZU 9858 Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions
Credit Hours:	3.0 credits / 45 hours
Instructor:	Danielle Tauriello

Course Description

During this course, educators will learn how to make one simple change- teach their students to ask their own questions. The skill of question formulation can make learning possible for all types of learners. Research shows that learning to ask questions leads to improved learning outcomes, greater student engagement, positive relationships between student and teacher, new avenues for dialogue and inquiry, and more ownership of the learning process. We will explore not only why this should be done, but how to effectively incorporate the Question Formulation Technique developed at the Right Question Institute. The QFT is also a powerful tool that addresses the urgent need to improve education for students in struggling schools as well as improving education for those who already excel at answering questions, but not necessarily asking them. Utilizing these strategies will give us hope and strength for moving forward in the hard work of making education work best for all students.

Course Goals

To Know

1. the steps of the *Question Formulation Technique* (QFT).
2. what student and teacher will do in each step of the QFT.
3. the three thinking abilities (divergent thinking, convergent thinking, metacognition).
4. the similarities and differences between a traditional prompt and a *Question Focus* (Qfocus).
5. the four rules for producing questions

To Understand

1. how to help students refine, prioritize, and reflect on their questions.
2. how the three thinking abilities are brought together in the QFT.
3. the importance of closed- and open-ended questions and how students learn to change their questions from one category to the other as needed.
4. how the ability to ask questions leads to new ideas, new inventions, better solutions, and a more fulfilling learning environment for students and teacher.
5. that promoting questioning can be a building block for creating productive relationships that benefit our democracy.

and To Be Able To

Improve student learning, including those who already excel at answering questions, by designing lessons that:

1. help students learn how to generate their own questions that guide their own learning.
2. promote greater student engagement.
3. give students more ownership of the learning process.
4. increase student achievement, build new relationships between learner and teacher, and open avenues for dialogue and inquiry

Course Outline

Unit 1: The Purpose and Promise of Schools

- Promoting Democracy in Schools
- Teaching for Understanding vs. Knowledge
- Thinking Differently about Outcomes

Unit 2: Why Didn't I Learn This in School?

- What happens when students learn to ask questions? Revisiting the Socratic Method
- What is the QFT?
- Origins of the QFT
- The Importance of Asking Questions
- Understanding the three distinct thinking abilities and how they are brought together in the QFT
 - Divergent thinking: Open the Mind to New Possibilities
 - Convergent Thinking: Synthesis, Analysis, and Making Meaning
 - Metacognition: Learning to Think about Thinking
- The Art and Science of the Question Formulation Technique

Unit 3: Developing the Questions

- Choose the Question Focus
 - Transitioning from the Traditional Prompt to the New QFocus
 - Designing the New QFocus
- Rules for Producing Questions: An Exercise in Metacognition
 - What are the four rules?
 - Introducing and Discussing the Rules
- Students Produce the Questions: Divergent Thinking Unleashed
 - The Teacher's Role
 - The Process
 - Case Studies

Unit 4: Improving and Prioritizing Questions

- Improving Questions
 - Closed-and Open-ended Questions
 - Advantages and Disadvantages for Each Type of Question
 - Changing the Questions from One Type to the Next
 - Troubleshooting
- Prioritize the Questions: Analysis and Convergence
 - Overview of the Process for Selecting Priority Questions
 - Setting Clear Criteria for Prioritization
 - Prioritization Process Steps
 - Case Studies

Unit 5: What do we do with all these questions?

- Using questions to
 - begin a project
 - begin a unit
 - during the middle of a unit
 - at the end of a unit
 - beginning or end a class
- Student Reflection
 - Reinforcing Learning, Strengthening Metacognition, Ensuring Continued Application
 - The Reflection Process

UNIT 6: GRAD STUDENT OPTIONS

- For an “A”- Pamphlet/Poster Guide to the QFT for Students and Parents
- For a “B”- VSL Lesson Plan and a Course Reflection that demonstrates knowledge of the QFT

Methods of Instruction

Teachers enrolled in this course will analyze a variety of primary and secondary sources such as scholarly articles, excerpts from the book *Make Just One Change* by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, video conferences, and links to reputable websites. Through their analysis, teachers will learn how to help students refine, prioritize, and reflect on their questions using the Question Formulation Technique. This course will help teachers reflect on their current teaching practices and inspire them to modify their lessons to reach struggling learners as well their students who are already successful at answering questions. Teachers will also interact through discussion forums to share their opinions, experiences, and insights with their class members as well as the instructor. All assignments, directions and resources are available online at the course Moodle site.

Students will connect with each other throughout the course within forums and various other types of online feedback options built into each class.

Methods of Assessment

In-service and CTLE Students: Satisfactorily participate in all forum discussions and complete all project submissions.

Professional Development Grad Students - for a "B": Satisfactorily participate in all forum discussions, complete all project submissions, as well as a “Pamphlet/Poster/Presentation Guide to the Question Formulation Technique”.

Professional Development Grad Students - for an "A": Satisfactorily participate in all forum discussions, complete all project submissions, as well as a “QFT Lesson Plan” and a “Course Reflection” that demonstrates knowledge of the QFT and its application in schools.

Instructors are online each day of the course and correspond with students through the course itself, feedback on assignments, e-mail, and by phone.

Time Validation

Assignment	Time (in hours)
Students will share their thoughts and experiences as a student. The following questions will be discussed: What do you remember most about your school years? When did you learn the best? Was there something the teacher did to help you better understand the content? How do you view the current education model? (Students will post their thoughts and reply to two other peer responses.)	1.00
Students will read text and then compare and contrast work-oriented vs. learning-oriented classrooms. Students will reflect on their current classroom environment and suggest methods to create a more learning-oriented classroom. Written Submission required.	2.00
Students will watch video excerpts. They will reflect and analyze the concept of knowledge vs. understanding. Written Submission required. Do you believe that this is symbolic of the state of the nation?	3.00
Students will elaborate on the terms “understanding” and “knowledge”. Students will explain what it means to teach for understanding vs. knowledge. Students will examine a lesson that teaches knowledge and revamp it to teach for understanding.	4.00
Students will reflect on the idea of giving students more control over their learning. Written Submission required.	5.00
Students will distinguish the three distinct thinking abilities and examine how they are brought together in the QFT.	6.00
Students will define, identify and list the steps to the QFT. Written Submission required.	2.00
Students will explain how to transition from the traditional prompt to the new Qfocus. Students will plan and design a new Qfocus. Written Submission required.	2.00
Students will summarize the rules for producing questions and develop a method to present these rules to their students. (Students will post their response and reply to	1.00

two other peer responses.)	
Students will read case studies to understand their roles as teachers to help facilitate students' producing their own questions. Written Submission required.	4.00
Students will create a "troubleshooting" form to help with potential challenges that may arise when using the QFT. Written Submission required.	2.00
Students will identify teacher versus student roles when introducing closed and open-ended questions. (Students will post their response and reply to two other peer responses.)	3.00
Students will learn to prioritize student questions. Written Submission required	1.00
Students will create a lesson that uses the QFT. Written Submission required.	5.00
Students will explore what it means to create a classroom where thinking is valued, visible, and actively promoted. Written Submission required.	4.00
Total Time	45.00