

Examples of Closed and Open Questions

Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens
2024 Garden Docent Training

Closed Cognitive Memory Question



- Write a question(s) starting with:
 - Who
 - What
 - Where
 - When
 - Ask for what you already know or can see. Answers involve simple recall and are either right or wrong.
 - Examples:
 - When did Post buy Hillwood?
 - What did Post collect?
 - What color do you see?
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Closed Convergent Question



- Write a question(s) starting with:
 - In what ways
 - How
 - Why
 - Ask you to do something with the information you already have or can see. Find similarities, differences, patterns, relationships. They ask you to categorize, to organize information, to find central themes. There are right or wrong answers.
 - Examples:
 - In what way is this object different from that one?
 - How are these objects similar?
 - Why is it red?
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Open Divergent Question



- Write a question(s) starting with:
 - Imagine
 - Suppose
 - Predict
 - If...then
 - How might
 - What are some possible consequences
- Ask for new ideas, for inferences. They are open-ended, meaning there is no one right answer. To answer, one must gather information from past experience, link it to new information being explored, and create new understandings and interpretation.
- Examples:
 - Imagine coming here for a dinner party: what would it have been like?
 - How might it be different today if Post had not opened Hillwood to the public?