Craft questions that matter.

"We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually form to any child at any stage of development."—Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education,* (p. 33)

Criteria for Compelling Questions—Does your question….

	Emerge from students' curiosities? Has the potential to get under their skin?
	Require students to apply disciplinary concepts and skills?
	Require students to construct an argument in response?
	Address problems and issues found across the disciplines?
	Ground itself in social studies content?
	Free of jargon and teacher-speak?

If you answered yes to all of the above, congratulations! You have a compelling question. If you answered no, don't despair. Tinker with it and ask: what is really interesting and important about the topic of investigation?

Examples of Compelling Questions:

- Where are we?
- Why do we have laws?
- Are things getting better?
- Why can't I say that?
- What is progress?

- Am I rich?
- Why is Albany the capital of New York?
- Who won the Civil War?
- Does the color of my skin matter?
- Why do borders exist?

Choosing a Form of Action

Formal Channels	Direct Action	Community Dialogue
Possible Actions • File a law suit • Submit an Amicus Brief • Provide evidence to a law enforcement agency • Encourage a candidate to run for office • Campaign on behalf of a candidate • Hold a candidate forum • Volunteer at a polling station • Track the voting record of elected officials • Start a petition • Draft a law or statute • Write a letter to an elected official • Lobby an elected official • Fundraise for an important cause • Other:	*Possible Actions* • Hold a rally or demonstration • Protest in front of a business or office • Conduct a march • Stop buying certain products • Stop using certain services • Start buying certain products • Start utilizing certain products • Refuse to obey an unjust law • Withhold your work • Conduct a sit-in • Hold a flash mob • Conduct a walk out • Hold a noise barrage • Conduct a Die-In • Other:	*Possible Actions* • Hold a community forum • Create a public art exhibit • Build a social media platform • Perform a song or skit • Write a graphic novel • Produce posters • Write a letter to the editor • Develop an informational flyer or report • Conduct a radio interview • Write a news article • Teach a class to others • Collaborate with people of different backgrounds or perspectives • Conduct a poll or survey • Engage in street theater • Draw political cartoons • Other:

QUESTIONS

1. What are the benefits of the action?

2. What are the drawbacks or risks of the action?

3. In what ways does the action reflect our goals?

4. How will we know if we are successful?

HISTORICAL THINKING CHART

Historical Reading Skills	Questions	Students should be able to . . .	Prompts
Sourcing	• Who wrote this? • What is the author's perspective? • When was it written? • Where was it written? • Why was it written? • Is it reliable? Why? Why not?	• Identify the author's position on the historical event • Identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document • Hypothesize what the author will say before reading the document • Evaluate the source's trustworthiness by considering genre, audience, and purpose	• The author probably believes . . . • I think the audience is . . . • Based on the source information, I think the author might . . . • I do/don't trust this document because . . .
Contextualization	• When and where was the document created? • What was different then? What was the same? • How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?	• Understand how context/background information influences the content of the document • Recognize that documents are products of particular points in time	• Based on the background information, I understand this document differently because . . . • The author might have been influenced by _____ (historical context) . . . • This document might not give me the whole picture because . . .
Corroboration	• What do other documents say? • Do the documents agree? If not, why? • What are other possible documents? • What documents are most reliable?	• Establish what is probable by comparing documents to each other • Recognize disparities between accounts	• The author agrees/disagrees with . . . • These documents all agree/disagree about . . . • Another document to consider might be . . .
Close Reading	• What claims does the author make? • What evidence does the author use? • What language (words, phrases, images, symbols) does the author use to persuade the document's audience? • How does the document's language indicate the author's perspective?	• Identify the author's claims about an event • Evaluate the evidence and reasoning the author uses to support claims • Evaluate author's word choice; understand that language is used deliberately	• I think the author chose these words in order to . . . • The author is trying to convince me . . . • The author claims . . . • The evidence used to support the author's claims is . . .

C3 Inquiry Planning Template – Drafting and Brainstorming

General area to explore – Material/ideas/content
Possible compelling questions – bridging student and expert fascination
Possible civic actions/communication/final-assessments
Possible supporting questions – students assembling insights and skills towards CQ
Key investigations and experiences
Possible sources/resources

Compelling Question
Civic Action/Communication
Summative Assessment

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
Investigation 1	Investigation 2	Investigation 3
Skill/concept focus of investigation 1	Skill/concept focus of investigation 2	Skill/concept focus of investigation 3
Crucial source(s) for this question	Crucial source(s) for this question	Crucial source(s) for this question