

Who, When, and How Should You Answer Questions?

Questions come up in every classroom, but they are handled differently in an inquiry setting. One of the starkest differences I see between a traditional classroom and an inquiry classroom comes down to *who*, *when*, and *how* questions are answered. Record one of your lessons (or ask a colleague to come in) and observe what happens in your own classroom.



Who answers most of the questions? Is it usually you, the teacher; the same two or three students; everyone equally; the textbook; experts?



When are questions answered? Do your students need to answer immediately, or do you allow questions to simmer for a while? How long are you willing to allow students to be “wrong” about something before finding a way to correct them?



How are questions answered? Are they posted and reviewed periodically? Do they come with evidence? Are they definitive or tentative? How do you correct wrong answers?