INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



5W Cube

The 5W Cube is a portable strategy to target open-ended questions (beginning with who, what, when, where, why, and how) as a means of exploring content and conversational speech. The 5W Cube helps students formulate questions and foster meaningful connections with content. This strategy can be used across the curriculum.

5W CUBE

Summary

Students or teachers can make their own 5W Cubes—small or large—by making a paper cube with one of the 5W question words on each side and “How” on the final side. The 5W Cube can be used for small-group and whole-class learning by tossing the cube and having students ask and answer questions beginning with their rolled "W." These in-depth, open-ended questions promote content-related discussion and help students apply critical thinking, content knowledge, and language skills.

Procedure

1. Invite students to make a paper cube with one of the 5W question words on each side and “How” on the final side. Walk through these directions together and provide an example to students. If students struggle to create their own cubes, you may opt to use a plastic six-sided die in its place, assigning each number to a question word.
2. Ask students to add one of the 5W question words to each side of the cube (who, what, when, where, why, and how).
3. Given a topic, reading passage, or prompt, ask students to take turns rolling the cube and asking a question that begins with the 5W question word displayed. For small-group discussions, make sure each group has a 5W Cube.
4. Ask group members (or students in the class, if a whole-class discussion) to take turns responding to the question before passing the cube to a classmate.