

What Makes You Say That? (Adapted)

A routine for observation, description, explanation-building, and evidence-based reasoning.

- What's going on?
- What do you see that makes you say that?

PURPOSE

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine cultivates observation, description, explanation-building, and evidence-based reasoning. Because students share their interpretations, they are encouraged to see multiple perspectives.

APPLICATION

When and where can I use it?

Use this routine when you want students to look closely at something and uncover their reasoning about the way it works, how it came to be, or why it is the way it is. For example, you can use this routine when students are looking at works of art or historical artifacts, reading poetry, making scientific observations and hypotheses, or delving into broad conceptual topics like culture, change, or creativity. It also is useful for gathering information on students' prior understandings when introducing a new topic.

LAUNCH

What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

To use this routine effectively, it is important to pay attention to the flow of classroom discussion, considering where in that flow the routine could help students expound on their reasoning. For example, listen for students giving opinions, making assumptions, or offering interpretations about a topic and consider inserting the question, *What makes you say that?* As you are planning lessons, you also may be able to anticipate the moments when using this routine will deepen the discussion and help students explore what's underneath their thoughts and assertions.

Asking *What makes you say that?* models for students the type of thinking that you want them to develop. Over time, students may internalize the routine and begin to support their interpretations with evidence without being asked.

Document student responses in a way that maintains the flow of the conversation. Consider recording class discussions, keeping an ongoing list of explanations, or asking students to document their thinking through sketches, drawings, models, or writing. This documentation can be displayed and revisited in the classroom, helping you as well as the students to see the development of their thinking.

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Visible Thinking project at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Explore the full PZ Thinking Routine Toolbox at pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines.