

Questions Worth Playing With

Questions to ask to spark learners' wonder and curiosity

Questions that can make content more meaningful

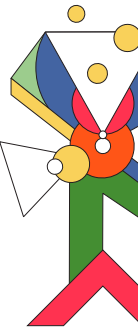
- How might understanding stories of the past help us better understand issues of today?
- What can we do with feelings of injustice in our current experience?
- How might nurturing our relationship with the natural world support our ability to think and act for the good of everyone?
- Why do different people see the world in different ways?
- What happens when people with different worldviews come together?
- How can we move from recognizing that there are different perspectives to seeking understanding of those perspectives?

Questions about community and collaboration

- Who are we as a community?
- What becomes possible when we share our strengths with our community?
- How does play support collaboration?
- What leads people to act on behalf of others as well as themselves and what happens when they do?
- How do you know when you are collaborating?
- What is difficult about collaborating and what strategies make it easier?
- Where do ideas come from?
- How do stories connect us?

Questions about emotion and conflict

- Why do things go wrong sometimes and what would the world be like if they didn't?
- How do you figure out what to do when you don't know what to do?
- What does it mean to care for something bigger than yourself?
- How will encounters with [insects/a literary figure] help us explore powerful emotions that might arise, like fear, possessiveness, wonder, joy, and love?
- What do friendships need to grow and flourish?
- What happens when we hurt someone in our community?
- How can reflecting on thinking and feeling deepen our understanding of ourselves and others?



Tips for Using This Tool

- ▶ Big questions—questions with multiple answers or no definitive answer at all—invite curiosity and wonder.
- ▶ Consider enlisting one or two colleagues and/or students to help you choose a question to enhance learning during one or more curriculum units.
- ▶ These questions are for you and your learners to consider. Some questions may need to be rephrased for young children, e.g., “How do you know when you are collaborating?” might become, “How do you know when you are working as a team?”
- ▶ Hack this list by adapting questions to your own setting or creating questions of your own.

Notes

- ▶ This tool is adapted from “Sample Big Questions” in **Asking Big Questions**, an Inspiring Inventiveness tool co-developed by Opal School (U.S.) and Project Zero. Available at: www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/asking-big-questions