



3

**Use Questions:
Help Your Students
Connect
God's World and Word**

Part 3 of a 4-Part Series

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What can you do to get started using this kit?

- Look at the session guides, noting the title and goal of each session.
- Read "Session 1: Why use questions to help students connect God's world and Word?" (page 6) and "Reading 1: Use questions to help your students connect God's world and Word" (page 13).
- Read through the facilitator guides, especially "Let's help each of our students connect God's world and Word in each subject" (page 2) and "Frequently asked questions" (page 4).

Use questions

To connect God's world and Word, your students need to think. Asking questions is an effective way to get your students to think and to make connections.

These 7 interactive sessions will help you...

1. Evaluate and improve your use of questions to help your students connect God's world and Word.
2. Analyze and explain why God asks questions.
3. Analyze and explain how questions help students connect God's world and Word.
4. Understand and apply the characteristics of good questions.
5. Document and then ask your students questions to help them connect God's world and Word.
6. Get your students to respond sincerely to the questions you ask.
7. Increase your commitment to using questions to help your students connect God's world and Word.

I would enjoy learning about how you are using questions to help your students connect God's world and Word. Please email me at [*<learnmore@closethegapnow.org>*](mailto:learnmore@closethegapnow.org).

—Michael B. Essenburg



Michael

I'm passionate about helping students connect God's world and Word.

Key ways to do this include targeting connections, using assessments, using questions, and meeting student learning needs.

Session 1: Why use questions to help students connect God's world and Word?

Connect with a colleague

1. In terms of student learning, what is one thing you're excited about?
2. In one of your classes, what are your students learning about God's world and how people are using it?
3. What are some questions you ask your students?

Focus on this session's goal

To evaluate and improve your use of questions to help your students connect God's world and Word.

Read

We want students to connect God's world and Word. Using questions can help. And knowing why you should use questions can help you find ways to better use questions. To learn more, read "Reading 1: Use questions to help your students connect God's world and Word."

Discuss the reading

1. What is one thing that interested you? Tell me about that.
2. What is comfortable/uncomfortable about using questions to help students connect God's world and Word?

Find ways you can use questions

To find ways you can more effectively use questions to help your students make connections between God's world and Word, complete this self-assessment. Rate each item, using the following scale:

4: Strongly agree • 3: Agree • 2: Disagree • 1: Strongly disagree

- ___ 1. I can readily explain why God (who knows everything) asks questions.
- ___ 2. I can readily explain how using questions can help my students connect God's world and Word.
- ___ 3. I can readily explain the characteristics of good questions.
- ___ 4. I have documented the questions I want to ask my students to help them connect God's world and Word.
- ___ 5. My students respond sincerely to the questions I ask to help them connect God's world and Word.

Reflect on your self-assessment data with a colleague

1. How many 4s, 3s, 2s, and 1s do you have?
2. What is satisfying/unsatisfying about your data?
3. To help your students make better connections, what is one self-assessment item you want to make progress on? What are your reasons for selecting that item?
4. What 3 or more things could you do to make progress on that item?

Commit to action

1. What 2 or more action steps are you going to take before our next session in order improve your use of questions to help your students connect God's world and Word?
2. What are your highlights/insights from this session?
3. How can I pray for you? (Pray together.)

Reading 1: Use questions to help your students connect God's world and Word

Interview with Michael Essenburg, school improvement coordinator

Why use questions to help students connect God's world and Word?

Michael: Two reasons. First, because it's doable.

What do you mean by "doable"?

Michael: Well, you already know how to ask questions. Your students already know how to answer questions. And you don't have to have all the answers. You can start with the answers you have. You can use questions anywhere, at any time, and without equipment—you don't need a whiteboard, sound system, projector, or computer.

Bottom line? You already have what you need to use questions. Today. Right now. During your next class. Just ask a question. How about "How can we use what we are learning to serve others?"

You said you had 2 reasons for using questions to help students connect God's world and Word. What's the other reason?

Michael: Because it works. Students connect God's world and Word as they consider questions—"How can I be a wise steward?" "How can I bridge cultural differences?" "How can I use math to make sense of God's world?"

Got any examples to support that?

Michael: Sure—one student shared, "Questions challenge me to think in new ways and help me be a discerning thinker, to use a biblical perspective."

And another student shared, "The question 'What's wrong with the world?' helped me. Many times in literature the characters are searching for truth and trying to escape whatever is wrong in their situations, so this question helps me connect to the Bible because the Bible tells us what exactly is wrong and how we can solve it (connecting to Christ)."

Do teachers think questions help students make connections?

Michael: Yes. An elementary teacher said, "My students have learned to apply a biblical perspective to course content. I ask them questions like, 'How can I show that I obey God?'"

A middle school teacher said, "In my classes I ask questions like 'How do authors help us see truth?' Using questions like this helps my students see God's will in all that they do and understand that God's Word applies to all subjects." And a high school teacher said, "Using questions has helped my students think through a biblical perspective and apply it to course content and to their lives."

So I should use questions because it's doable and it works.

Michael: You got it. You can use questions right now. Using questions will help your students connect God's world and Word.

Now what?

Michael: Take action. Do something to get better at using questions to help your students connect God's world and Word. You can do this by discussing this reading, by taking a self-assessment on using questions, and by using your assessment data to identify 2 or more action steps you will take to help your students make connections.

To help your students make connections, ask questions like...

What's true?

How can you be a good caretaker?

How should you deal with injustice?

How should you respond to competition?

How can you make healthy decisions?



Heidi, Science 5

I ask my students, "How does God show creativity?"

In our weather study, a student wrote, "No two things made by God are the same." In our current health unit, which focuses on growing and changing, one student responded, "God made us with detail. Each one of us is different."

Using questions helped me teach more intentionally.