

ANSWERING AND ASKING QUESTIONS



ANSWERING QUESTIONS ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Directly answer the question... especially if the answer requires information that the class members are not likely to have. After responding to the question, ask, “Does that answer your question?”

Redirect the question. In order to promote greater class participation, consider redirecting a question to the class in general. Ask for an answer, additional comments, or elaboration.

Postpone answering questions...

- when you have run out of time.
- when material you will cover next will answer the question.

In this case you can say something like this, “Thanks for your question Bob. I’ll answer your question when we cover the next point in our lesson in just a few minutes.”

Watch out for questions that will cause you to get sidetracked. You could say, “That’s a legitimate question, but it is beyond the scope of today’s study. I’ll be happy to address your question after class.”

ASKING QUESTIONS ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Ask divergent questions... or open-ended questions that can have a number of possible answers, many of which may be acceptable. For example, “What are some ways in which we can bear one another’s burdens?” Divergent questions cannot be answered just from memory. Learners are more likely to attempt answering divergent questions because there is less risk of giving a wrong answer.

Ask convergent questions... or questions to which there is a single accepted correct answer. For example, “What does the text say we should do when someone strikes us on the cheek?”

Be patient. Wait for an answer. Do not be intimidated by pauses or silence. Allow learners time to formulate their answer to your question.