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### **Description:**

The Socratic Method is a creative method of teaching through questioning. The instructor uses a series of sequentially developed open-ended questions directed at a particular topic to lead students in a stimulating and challenging examination of the chosen topic. Instead of telling the students the “answer” (which is the easy out for the instructor), the students are forced to think critically; lively and productive discussions may develop and in turn the instructor may also learn more about the student’s level of knowledge on the topic.

### **Uses:**

- Great way to introduce a new topic.
- Excites students and raises their curiosity.
- Stimulates and challenges students.
- Helps students focus and think critically about a topic.
- A quick and useful way to evaluate student’s knowledge and level of understanding about a particular topic. By understanding this, the instructor can then easily adjust materials to meet student’s needs.

### **Materials:**

A prepared series of sequentially developed questions directed at a particular topic that the instructor wants the students to examine and evaluate.

### **Instructions:**

Prepare a set of questions that will lead students to the particular learning outcome. Depending on your situation you can either ask for responses to be given in a formal manner (raised hands) or you can get students to reply spontaneously. Questioning should begin with small parts of a topic with which the students might be familiar and then build to more difficult questions causing the student to examine and evaluate the material more critically. Don’t give the students the answer. Be prepared to restate the question to clarify it should the students appear to become confused. The point is to keep them focused and involved.

### **Tips:**

- Don’t ask questions that can be answered with a yes or no response.
- Be sure to ask questions in the correct sequence to lead students towards desired outcome.
- Be prepared for students to make assumptions or go in a different direction than you originally planned.
- You must have strong knowledge of the subject and be able to think fast on your feet to redirect questioning towards the learning outcome you are intending to reach.
- It is often more difficult than it may seem to pose questions for your particular purpose that can be answered clearly and quickly. Be prepared.

**References:**

Teaching with questions: Socratic method;

[http://ct.essortment.com/teachingsocrati\\_rwfn.htm](http://ct.essortment.com/teachingsocrati_rwfn.htm)

Garlikov, Rick; The Socratic Method: Teaching by Asking Instead of by Telling;

[http://www.garlikov.com/Soc\\_Meth.html](http://www.garlikov.com/Soc_Meth.html)