

**Figure 7.1:**

## **Nine Strategic Questions that Promote Deeper Learning**

1. ***What are one or two things you can tell me or show me about this?*** • This nonjudgmental question conveys that students' ideas are important to us. Requesting more than one idea promotes elaboration and deeper thinking.
2. ***What do you notice?*** • Asking this question validates the merits of observation, signals that we are interested in their perspectives, and invites students to visually monitor their work or presented data.
3. ***What do you think?*** • This question encourages students to actively engage rather than passively wait for others to supply answers. It indicates our interest and confidence in their ideas.
4. ***How did you figure that out?*** • In some instances, this response can be more significant to children's future learning efforts than merely possessing a correct answer. Prompting students to analyze their process and lift their strategies to a conscious level benefits them and others. Identifying strategies enables students to refine and more effectively apply that process in other learning situations.
5. ***What else can you tell me or show me to help me understand?*** • This follow-up question conveys that we value their reasoning. It asks students to elaborate and think more deeply about their ideas and the connections they are making. It may prompt some learners to quickly sketch an illustration or non-linguistic representation to embellish their meaning. It also allows them to offer evidence for their thinking.
6. ***Why do you think that is valid?*** • *Valid* is an important word to use in context with all ages of students. It conveys that substantiation of credibility is important in this digital age of rapid access to information. Students need to be aware that opinion is frequently posted as fact. This is consistent with respected learning standards that require students to supply evidence to support their reasoning and conclusions.
7. ***How could you change this to make it better?*** • Many gifted students comment that if they had more time or previously knew what they now understand, they would have done something differently. Rather than suggest that a response is flawed, this question invites students to think both critically and creatively about current accomplishments as well as future directions. It challenges them to generate new connections through further analysis and adaptations.
8. ***What's next?*** • Use this question as an invitation for students to identify and share their ideas for different applications, future projects, goals, and generally how to improve the task if completing it again. Probe them to plan steps to continue their learning process. This question communicates to them that we expect and are interested in their continued learning.
9. ***What questions can you ask?*** • Sometimes, we learn more from our students through the questions they ask rather than the answers they provide. Prompting them to form their own questions provides insight into their perspectives and depth of content connections. Their questions suggest ways that they and others can facilitate their continuous learning. Learners posing original questions may tantalize their own curiosities and set them on a quest to learn.