



## The Teacher's Playbook: Practical Pedagogy for Classical Educators with Jerilyn Olson

### Lecture 9: Instruction: Socratic Questioning

#### Outline:

##### Socratic Question

- This method is not just for seminars or just discussing literature but can be used across the grades k-12 and across the disciplines.
- This method is about guiding students through observation and questions so the students are doing much of the learning which is intentional but wonder filled.

##### Potential Ditches

- You can have inquiry-based learning that is so exploratory that students have no focus and are not learning.
- We should not be letting the inexperienced student fully leading the process but should instead be guided by the experienced teacher.
- Conversation should be at the heart of what we do.
- We guide our students to the understanding of a concept through carefully planned observation, narrative and questions.

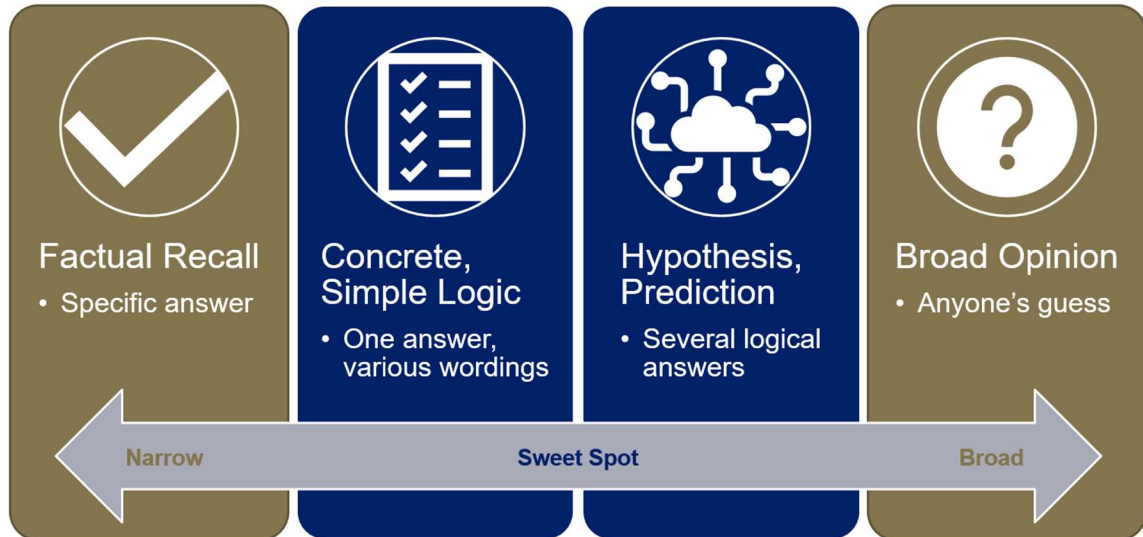
##### Introduction

- We should be starting the lesson with something all students share as an experience, it could be a current observation, demonstration or the recalling of previous material
- Review of past material should be setting up the natural continuation of the story.
- Methods of introductions across the disciplines:
  - Mathematics: manipulatives or a problem that doesn't have a known algorithmic solution.
  - History: a narrative or a piece of art
  - Science: a demonstration or model
  - Fine Arts and Language Arts: a beautiful work on display
- What we start with should inspire wonder and spurs curiosity of the students so they strive to learn more.



## Ineffective vs Effective Questions

- This can look different across the disciplines but we can keep inquiry, problem solving, discussion and wonder as a priority.



- Ineffective Questions
  - Review questions have a place but do not tend to drive the lesson forward.
  - Guess what I am thinking questions
    - These can be lectures in disguise, fake questions or leading questions.
    - Students end up trying to guess what the teacher wants them to say instead of understanding the material.
  - Avoid too broad of a question or a why question since students do not yet have the required information to answer them.
- Effective Questions (sweet spot)
  - They give enough information to take the next step allowing students to stretch their ideas to new thinking.
  - When answering it is ok if the student does not have the correct vocabulary as long as they are reaching for the concept.
- The right types of questions can be the most difficult element of teaching.
- You cannot get into those Socratic moments unless you carefully plan out the end point and the midpoint of the lesson.
- Some experienced teachers will even plan out student misconceptions and who they will use these wrong answers as a way to redirect the student back to the right answer.