



## Self-awareness

### Title: Color Question Brainstorming

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Grade Level:	7-12
School:	Groups at Work Book
Subject:	Any
NVACS Standard(s):	ELA Speaking and Listening 1.a-d
SEL Standard(s):	1a, 1b, 1c
MyPGS Domain:	3--Instruction

#### **Purpose:**

**Color Question Brainstorming** supports both dialogue and discussion by generating questions rather than answers. The brainstorming pattern keeps it psychologically safe for participants to engage while the focus on exploring questions keeps thinking flexible and fluent.

#### **Intention:**

This interactive and inclusive strategy both taps and stretches the different work style preferences of groups members by requiring a specific mode of question generation at a given time. Brainstorming keeps it psychologically safe and keeps minds open to new possibilities. Colleagues gain insight into one another and grow to appreciate the different thinking styles available in the group.

#### **Instruction to Group Leader/Teacher:**

1. Create task groups of 4-5. Explain the question categories as follows:  
Green Questions: Imagination, Ingenuity, Possibility  
Red Questions: Facts, Figures, Data  
Blue Questions: Judgements, Opinions, Values, Needs
2. Next, direct group members to brainstorm a large quantity of questions (with qualifying or judging them) beginning with whichever chart they choose, working with one chart/one category at a time, and moving on when ready.
3. After designated amount of time (approx.. 20 min.), groups examine their lists, highlighting the questions that seems most relevant to the issue at hand.
4. Additional questions may be added at this time.

#### **Explanation of SEL Connection:**

As students move through this activity, ask them to reflect on:

How does it make you feel to be able to share your thoughts? How does it make you feel to be able to learn from others?

**Example:** Topic: Restructuring the School Schedule  
Green = What might happen if we...change the school schedule to create longer days in a four-day week?  
Red = How many.../How much... How many hours of instruction time are possible with a four-day week?  
Blue = Why is this.../What's the best way to...

#### **Video Example:**

#### **Logistics**

**Materials and Preparation:** Use chart stands or post large sheets of newsprint at various stations around the room (one chart for each task group)  
Have masking tape, additional blank chart paper, and felt-tip markers available. PowerPoint® direction slides

**Time:** 25-30 minutes

**Grouping:** 4-5, full group

#### **Tips:**

Suggest that groups use a Brainstorm and Pass pattern to ensure inclusion of all members.

Abbreviate and synchronize the brainstorming period. For example, after groups have worked on one chart for 5 minutes or so, call time and direct them to another chart.

#### **Variations:**

Insert a walk-about between Steps 3 and 4 so groups can learn from each other's thinking.

Example