

Designing Questions for Crucial Conversations in the Classroom
Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) // KU (Lawrence campus)
Jane Barnette, Professor & Head of Dramaturgy (Theatre & Dance)

How to Form Neutral Questions:

Quoted From: *Liz Lerman's Critical Response Processes*,
by Liz Lerman and John Borstel (first edition). Takoma Park, MD: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, 2003.

Opinionated Question	Embedded Opinion	Neutral Question
Why is the cake so dry?	The cake is so dry.	What kind of texture and consistency are you aiming for in this cake?
Why is the video so long?	The video is too long.	How are you thinking about time in relation to the viewer's experience?
How do you expect the reader to comprehend this passage?	The passage is incomprehensible.	How are you hoping the reader will experience this passage?
What made you put the entire cast in green costumes?	The green costumes don't work. OR There are too many green costumes.	What's the significance of the color green to your concept? OR Talk about your costuming choices.
Are the photos in this series intentionally banal?	The images are banal and therefore unsuccessful.	What kind of reaction are you hoping to elicit from a viewer?
Have you shown the text for the brochure to an editor yet?	The text needs editing.	Where are you in the process of developing the brochure?
Have you thought about getting an actor to read your poetry for you?	Your poems are good but your reading is bad.	What would you like to add to our experience of the poetry through your use of voice and gesture?
Why do you think you need to tell the moral of the story at the end?	The moral is obvious; you don't need to tell it.	Where do you want your listeners to be at the end of the story?
Why would you want to draw dead animals?	Dead animals are an unappealing object.	What ideas do you want to convey through your choice of subject matter?
Do you really understand what this song is about?	Your interpretation of the song shows that you don't comprehend its meaning.	How did you prepare your interpretation of the song?
Why isn't your season programming offering more opportunities to emerging artists?	You aren't offering enough opportunities to emerging artists.	What is your curatorial vision and how does it inform your programming choices?
So, do you always chew gum when you dance?	Chewing gum is distracting or inappropriate while performing a dance.	What's the role of gum-chewing in your performance? OR What attitude are you hoping to convey in your performance?