



Learning shouldn't end at the first "right" answer. Stretch It rewards "right" answers with more knowledge and further challenge (Lemov, 2012). This practice has two primary benefits. First, teachers can ensure that student responses are more reliable. By asking more questions it can eliminate the possibility that a student gave a right answer by chance. Second, the technique motivates students to apply knowledge in new situations, think spontaneously, make real world connections, and/or engage with questions that are more challenging.

- Ask a check for understanding question.
- Solicit a response from a specific student or from the whole class.
- Allow student(s) to share the correct answer. Stretch it by choosing one of the following approaches that best suits the content or student needs:
 - Inquire how or why: Provide students opportunities to explain their thinking process. (How did you get that? Can you elaborate?)
 - Inquire for another way to answer: Ensure students know multiple ways to answer a question. (Is there a simpler way? Can you give me another alternate answer?)
 - Require for a better word: Ask students to use new words, re-phrase the answer using more rigorous vocabulary, or to use more specific descriptions. (Can you answer with a different word? How about using one of our vocabulary words?)
 - Demand for evidence: Train students to defend their conclusions and support opinions. Teachers do not have to agree, just ask for the proof. (So you said the character was angry. How do you know the character is angry?)
 - Ask students to integrate a related skill. (How can you put that in past tense?)
 - Invite students to apply the same skill in a new setting: Ask students to apply a mastered skill on a more challenging situation. (If you were that character, what would you do? If you could move this character to a different setting, how would that character react?)



Additional Tools

Wait Time

Wait Time refers to a few seconds delay that teachers can add after a question and before a student answers. How much time you provide is a critical factor in determining the quality of the answers you get and the number of students who participate. (Lemov, 2012, p. 233)

Probing

Probing is a series of questions, which require students to go beyond the first response. Subsequent teacher questions are formed on the basis of the student's response. Once a student gives a response, probing can help stretch student thinking and have student rethink their answer. Probing is helpful when students answer incorrectly or give a limited response.

For more strategies and/or resources, visit houstonisdpsd.org.



ALERTS

Stretching the response too far can get the teacher or student off topic and derail the conversation from the main objective. It can also get students discouraged. Help them stay focused by giving probes or clues to enrich their responses. Students that lack the content knowledge or vocabulary will struggle stretching their responses. Make sure you introduce or interact with both, the content and vocabulary, as many times as possible.



QUICK TIPS

Stretch It can be used as a simple differentiated instructional strategy by tailoring questions to meet students where they are and push them to the next level.