

Asking Appropriate Questions

The ability to ask good questions is the cornerstone of establishing dialogue with a group. Effective questioning is a skill that develops with practice, but here are some general guidelines:

- ◆ prepare a list of questions you might ask.
- ◆ prepare a list of general questions, progress to the specific.
- ◆ avoid calling on a person before asking the question. This excludes others from participation.
- ◆ avoid questions that can be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no', unless you want to encourage the entire group to shout out an answer.
- ◆ pose one question at a time
- ◆ instruct students to raise their hands if they wish to respond to a question.
- ◆ use good question starters (see next page)
- ◆ give as many students as possible the opportunity to participate.
- ◆ when you want them to respond in unison, design a way to signal them when to start and finish.

Question Starters

1) To find out if the students **know the information**, use question starters like **record, list, name, collect or identify**. Some examples of good questioning techniques would sound like this:

- ◆ *List all the different things pigs eat ...*
- ◆ *Identify the most important reason why the sow is in this pen...*
- ◆ *Collect two things from the table that are made from a pig...*
- ◆ *Name three things that we get from a pig besides food...*
- ◆ *When you go back to your classroom, record....*

2) To find out if the students **understand the information**, use question starters like **describe, explain, classify, compare, interpret, combine**.

- ◆ *Using the pieces displayed, sort and classify the pieces into a correct order...*
- ◆ *Combining all of the information you now have, what would happen if...*
- ◆ *Describe what it would be like if pigs lived in the mud in Canada...*
- ◆ *How is your nose (feet etc.) different than a pig's nose?*
- ◆ *Explain why the sow is kept in the farrowing pen.*
- ◆ *Combine a pig name with a food name and create a new word. (e.g.sowapple)*

3) To find out if the students **use the information** use question starters like **apply, rate, choose, judge, predict**. Some examples of good questioning techniques would sound like this:

- ◆ *Choose the correct item that matches....*
- ◆ *Predict what would happen if...*
- ◆ *Rate in order of importance the items needed for.....*
- ◆ *Compare how much a pig weighs to what an adult weighs...*
- ◆ *Identify the things your pet needs that a pig needs ...*
- ◆ *Explain the process of....*

