

Opening Question Level One question. Find the answers in the text. However, this question should be general enough to allow for many different answers. This question is designed to be simple enough for all students to join in the conversation, yet stimulating enough that some thinking will begin.

Opening Question: What reasoning does the article give for NOT assigning homework to students?

Core Questions Level Two questions. Draw inferences using evidence provided in the text (and some evidence from personal experience.) These questions should focus on the different parts of the text: separate aspects of the argument, or different sections of the textbook chapter. These questions should allow for different judgments, but you should still insist that students provide evidence for their opinionated answers.

Core Questions:

- What are some of the good and bad results of homework?
- If homework is given so students can practice what they've learned, what are some better ways students could practice what they're learning?
- Is unguided homework more harmful than helpful?
- Why do parents want their children to have homework?
- Why do administrators force teachers to assign homework?
- Could better use be made of the regular school day--to include time for "homework" practice at school?
- Is this author justified in saying that homework is "a scam"?
- Is the author's initial claim about adults who "seldom bring work home from the office" even true?
- Even if it is true, is that really a good reason to eliminate homework for children?
- Can we compare adults' work at their jobs to children's work at school?

Closing Question Level Three question. These questions will focus on one strand of the issue that the text addresses, then apply it to something outside of the text. A closing question will focus on something more like a theme statement, and students will have to apply what they've just learned from this text to a situation that has not been brought up yet.

Closing Question: What can we, as educators, do to make homework more meaningful?

Follow-up Assignment:

Each Socratic Seminar should be followed by an out-of-class assignment--something simple and immediate. An individual assignment gives each student the chance to show just what s/he got from the discussion. Even those who are too shy to speak can show that they were focused and listening.