Discussion Map

An activity leader can use this structure for questioning, to stimulate discussion, and to help youth make sense of their own discoveries.

• Ask a broad question.

• Listen to responses and reasoning.

• Ask for evidence or explanations.

• Ask for alternative opinions or ideas.

• Ask a question leading back to the main topic.
Types of Questions Explained

**BROAD QUESTIONS**: Statements or questions with a variety of acceptable and sometimes unpredictable responses.

- Are generally good for starting discussion.
- May go in directions unanticipated by the activity leader.
- Require that children think in ways that are unique to the individual rather than planned by the activity leader.
- Allow children to make sense of and explore their own ideas freely, in their own terms, without restrictions and with only minimal guidance by the activity leader.
- Are useful to encourage children to combine ideas, extend ideas, deduce and predict, or organize ideas into a fresh pattern.
- Encourage children to share during discussion and to value other children’s ideas.

**FOCUSED QUESTIONS**: Statements or questions with particular, predictable responses expected by the activity leader.

- Are generally not good for starting discussion.
- Have specific “correct” responses or sets of responses expected by the activity leader.
- Can require children to remember information or recognize information that is readily at hand. This is useful to help children to remember a fact, define a term, identify something, or review a topic that has been learned.
- Can be used to remember previous experiences and to prepare for new experiences.
- Can help children synthesize information in a particular way as guided by the activity leader.
- May help children compare, contrast, associate, explain, state relationships, or arrive at particular conclusions.
- May help children give explanations in their own words, even if the answer is predictable.