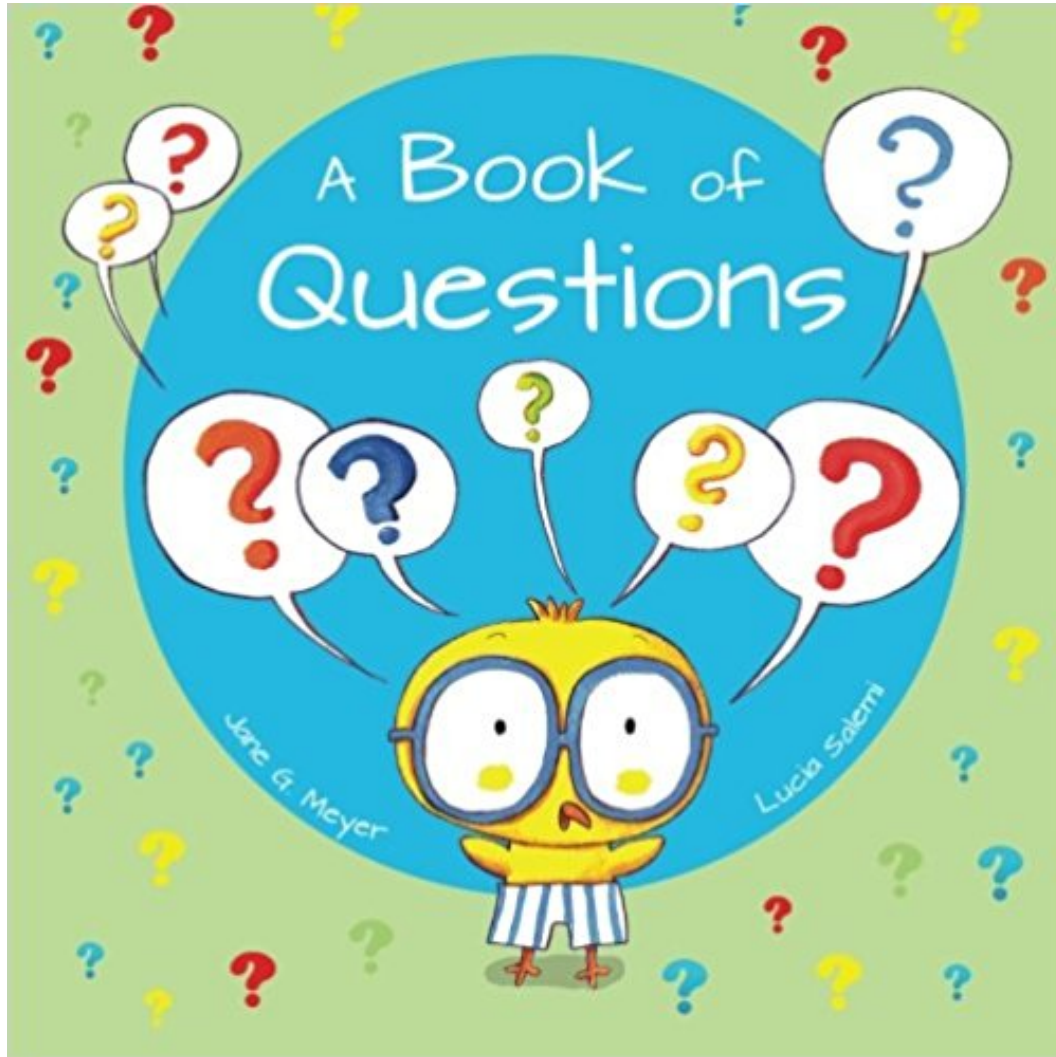


## A Book of Questions Teacher Plan



*A Book of Questions* is a short, whimsical tale that stimulates young minds with questions both silly and thoughtful. Using the time-honored Socratic Method, it encourages children to open their minds to new questions and new ideas, provoking them to seek understanding of themselves and the world around them. It can easily be used as a jumping-off point for further conversations about an array of topics, helping to create an agile and truth-seeking young mind.



### **A bit about the book**

*A Book of Questions* celebrates the Socratic Method, the fundamental human act of questioning, and the beauty of the child's mind. In the context of beautifully drawn whimsy, it asks parents, teachers, and children to open their minds to the possibilities and that there are no silly questions, though there are important ones.

To read and learn more about *A Book of Questions*, go to:

<http://www.janegmeyer.com/books/a-book-of-questions/> (Jane's website)

<http://www.xistpublishing.com/wp/product/a-book-of-questions-by-jane-g-meyer/>  
(Publisher)

[jane@janegmeyer.com](mailto:jane@janegmeyer.com) (Jane's email)

### **Following are three lesson plans:**

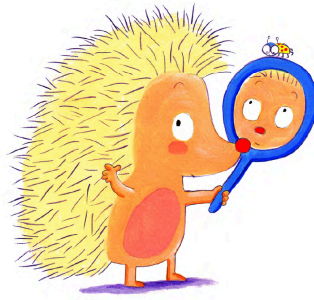
Preschool to early elementary: *The First Questions* (20-30 mins)

2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade: *No Silly Questions*, with writing exercise (40-50 mins)

3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade: *Asking Questions Like Socrates*, verbal dialogue (40-50 mins)

**Lesson Note:** These exercises are about dialogue and questioning. Ensure that the children are afforded every opportunity to engage in a conversation during the lessons, even if things seem to be getting off track. The important thing is to let their minds wander down paths of interrogation with the world around them, so be sure to encourage it!

At what point does a hedgehog say,  
"I really, truly need a haircut,  
indeed?"



### **Activity 1 The First Questions**

**Age range:** Preschool through early elementary

**Materials:** *A Book of Questions*

**Time needed:** 20-30 minutes

#### **Pre-Reading**

Before beginning the reading, come up with a simple, open-ended question to ask your audience. Examples include everything from ‘How are you feeling right now?’ to ‘Why do children grow up?’ Point out that the upcoming book is a book that asks questions—it is not a book of statements.

#### **During Reading**

Read the book slowly, allowing the child to stare into the picture and really consider the question posed. This should take around 10-12 minutes. Either have the children answer the question posed aloud, in the group, or ask them to consider it internally.

#### **After Reading**

When you’ve finished reading, see if the children themselves have questions to ask each other or you. Then, ask them about the question you asked them earlier, see how they respond this time, and ask them if they enjoyed thinking about the questions posed. Lastly, ask the children to come up with a question of their own, either for you or for each other, and write the questions and answers for all to see.



## **Activity 2 No Silly Questions**

**Age range:** 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials:** *A Book of Questions*, writing utensils and something to write on or the print out on the following page

**Time needed:** 40-50 minutes

### **Pre-Reading**

Begin by asking the children if they believe there's such a thing as a 'silly question.' Listen to their answers; ask them if there's ever been anything they've wanted to ask, but have been too embarrassed because they thought it was something silly or something they should have already known. Listen to their answers; if they don't respond, no worries!

### **During Reading**

Read *A Book of Questions*. Should take around 10 minutes; give consideration to each question and allow the children to respond if they seem inclined.

### **After Reading**

When you've finished, ask the children if they have any questions that they've wanted to ask. Ask them to write these down, along with any other questions that pop into their minds. Make it clear that they don't need to share the questions with anyone if they don't want to, but offer to let them share with you and each other at the end of the lesson.

**Publish your student's work:** I will "publish" any writing that your students might want to send along on the *Book of Questions* Facebook page! Feel free to send along word docs, pdfs, or simply include attachments and/or descriptions in an email to: [jane@janegmeyer.com](mailto:jane@janegmeyer.com)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## My List of Questions!

Question for myself

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Question for a friend

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Question just because

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There are no silly questions!



### **Activity 3 *Asking Questions Like Socrates***

**Age Range:** 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials:** *A Book of Questions*

**Time needed:** 40-50 mins

**Note:** Who was Socrates? Socrates was a Greek philosopher, born in 460 BC, who loved discourse. In his search for knowledge and truth, he used a form of questioning that continually deepened the conversation or exposed ideas that didn't yet have answers. He became the tutor for Plato, who wrote about his conversations with Socrates in Plato's *Dialogues*. Socrates believed that the best way to live was in the pursuit of virtue.

#### **Pre-Reading**

Begin by talking about the differences between yes or no questions and open-ended questions. Ask the children to come up with some examples of both, and provide examples yourself. Ask the children to pay attention to the kind of questions being asked in the book, and whether they are open-ended or yes or no.

Example of Yes or No: Are you happy that it's almost your birthday? (*Yes!*)

Example of Open-ended: How do you feel that it's almost summer break?

(*Ecstatic—we are going to a rodeo! Or maybe, Sad, I will miss my friends!*)

#### **During Reading**

Read *A Book of Questions*. Should take 10-12 minutes. While reading, ask the children what type of questions are being posed in the book. Ask them why they think the questions are open-ended, rather than yes or no. Choose several questions from the book and have them answer the questions to the best of their

ability. Then, try to follow up with another open-ended question and see how long you can keep the conversation going.

### After Reading

Discuss the importance of having your mind always open to new questions and answers, and how asking thorny or even wacky questions—‘Why do people in Finland speak Finnish?’—helps us learn new things about the world and expand the ways we engage with the world around us. During this discussion, always make sure to answer the children’s questions and ensure that it is a dialogue, with them participating as well. Additionally, you could talk about how you’ve learned some new things during your time talking about this book—just by asking questions and answering them!

**Publish your student’s work:** I will “publish” any writing that your students might want to send along on the *Book of Questions* Facebook page! Feel free to send along word docs, pdfs, or simply include attachments and/or descriptions in an email to: [jane@janegmeyer.com](mailto:jane@janegmeyer.com)



What makes you sad?

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