

## Lesson Skill: Framing questions about the text

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### Strand Reading--nonfiction

**SOL** 6.6  
7.6  
8.6

### Materials

- Large and small sticky notes
- Copies of a newspaper or magazine article about a topic of interest to students

### Lesson

1. Students should be able to identify and differentiate between global and smaller clarification questions in their reading. Ask students to brainstorm or review strategies that “good readers” use while reading. Prompt discussion by asking the following questions:
  - How does asking questions help you become a good reader?
  - What would happen if you did not ask questions while you read?
2. Give students the following scenario: “Jim is a student who has been assigned to read about gang violence in America. As he is reading, he does not understand what some of the words mean. He also does not understand all of the possible consequences that gang violence can have in the future. He wonders what kinds of people typically join gangs.” Ask students to list some of Jim’s questions, and record these on the board. Ask, “If you were reading about gang violence in America, what types of questions would you have?” Record students’ questions on the board.
3. Explain to students that there are two basic types of questions: global questions and smaller clarification questions. Global questions are called “thick” questions because they concern relatively large, universal concepts; they often begin with “Why,” “How,” or “I wonder.” Smaller clarification questions are called “thin” questions because they concern the meaning of words and clarification of confusion; they can often be answered with a “yes” or “no” answer.
4. Help students group their questions into two categories, “Thick” and “Thin.”
5. Distribute copies of an interesting article and supplies of both large and small sticky notes. Instruct students to use large sticky notes for writing “Thick” questions about the article as they read it, and small notes for writing “Thin” questions.
6. When all students are finished, have them attempt to answer the questions in writing on the notes, even if they are unsure of the answers.
7. When all students are finished, write two columns on the board and head them “Thick Questions” and “Thin Questions.” Ask students to post their sticky-note questions on the board in the appropriate columns.

8. Review the posted questions with the students to make sure they were put into the correct categories. The idea is to identify the *types* of questions, not to answer the questions, which may not be answerable without additional information. If a question is in the wrong category, simply explain why and move it to the other category.