

E-3: Check for academic understanding

Determine *if, how much, and why* students do or don't understand

Through scaffolded follow-up questions

What does it mean to “scaffold” questions to determine how much students understand?

Good follow-up questions are scaffolded to push student thinking further or break ideas down into smaller chunks that are easier to digest. The chart below explains the different types of scaffolded questions:

	“Scaffold down”		“Scaffold up”
What?	breaking down a question into more basic, lower-order questions		building on a question with more complex questions that require higher-order thinking
When?	when students struggle with or misunderstand a question		when students give correct answers
Why?	To determine the cause of misunderstanding, and to support students in reaching the correct answer/understanding		To check the extent of student understanding - verifying their understanding and pushing their thinking further
Examples	Original question	Lower-order follow-up question if the student was incorrect or unsure	Higher-order follow-up question if the student was correct
	What is Dudley Dursley’s personality?	Who is Dudley? Who does Harry live with?	How might the story have been different if Dudley had been generous instead of spoiled?
	What’s 9x8?	What’s 9x1? 9x2?	Why? When might you need to know this? What else makes 72?
	Why is Juliet’s death considered ironic?	How does Juliet die? What is irony?	What are some other examples of irony in the play? What is the effect of the irony on the mood? Why did Shakespeare choose to end the story this way? What else could have happened?
	What is the physical change that occurs when water boils?	What are the kinds of different physical states of water?	What other physical changes can water go through? What is happening to the water molecules here?
	What is the difference between its and it’s?	What is the function of the apostrophe?	Use each in a sentence. Determine whether each is being used correctly in the following examples.

E-3: Check for academic understanding

	Why did Chicago become a transportation center instead of Akron?	What are the characteristics of Chicago?	What are other cities that became transportation centers for similar reasons? What does this tell us about the role of geography in the rise of cities?
--	---	--	---

How do I create effective scaffolded follow-up questions?

- Find the cognitive level of your objective using Bloom's Taxonomy
- Develop follow-up questions that are above and below your objective's cognitive level
- If you are trying to scaffold questions to help struggling students, make sure your questions eventually lead to the objective's cognitive level, (when you create lower-order questions, you must also have higher-order questions that are aligned or lead to the level of the objective)