

Constructing knowledge by generating questions

Summary

Teacher Maja from the Buddinge School in Denmark teaches her students about the works of an important Danish author for their literature class. She wanted her students to be more engaged and to understand their interests in the topic. Therefore, she asked them to build online quiz questions by working in teams. While students learn the content better by building quizzes, the teacher got insight into which aspects students were interested in, and which were less covered by the quizzes. She then could fill in the gaps in the next lesson and add more content about the topics that her students were interested in.

Keywords

Classroom polling, online quiz, literature, creating questions

Quick reference sheet	
Country	Denmark
Subject	Mother tongue/Literature
Implementation level	Easy
DFA tool	Classroom polling
Objectives	Adapt the class activities to students' interests and knowledge level
Prerequisites	Teacher account on Kahoot, devices for students
Target group age	12-16
Tools & resources	Kahoot!
Duration	1 session





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Context

Teacher Maja from the [Buddinge School in Denmark](#) takes a social constructivist approach, in which, students can participate in their own learning process. She aims to teach students to be autonomous learners and work in collaboration.

As part of her curriculum, she teaches about the work of Kim Fupz Aakeson, an important author and screenwriter in Denmark with a minimalist, “show but don’t tell” writing style.

Generating questions, is a method that has been shown by [many scientific studies](#) to be very effective in learning new content. When students create their own questions, they become active creators of content, engage more deeply with the topic, and rephrase and shape the content. The content is stored in their memory in more than one way, which improves long-term retention. Teacher Maja uses this method as a main activity of the lesson, asking students to generate their own online quiz questions on Kahoot!.

The activity

Preconception

The teacher started the lesson with a short quiz. This is a preconception activity to check initial knowledge, trigger thinking about the topic and warm up the students with an engaging and fun activity.

Quiz building and collaboration

Students were divided into groups based on their knowledge of Kahoot! and research skills. Sometimes the teacher also divides the students according to a specific interest or whether they function well socially. The groups also depend on the purpose of the assignment.

If students work with the same groups for a longer time period, she gives students specific roles, such as "CEO", "Secretary", "Problem solver" and "Time manager". Sometimes the students have the same role throughout the collaboration and other times the roles take turns. The students like this method, and are good at getting into the role - even if, for example, they are not naturally the CEO type.

The teacher did not ask the children to do research before going to class. They did the research in groups at the beginning of the class. She only provided them with a few websites to look at when starting their research.



Each team created a quiz about an author whom they have to learn about in the subject of Danish. The students independently seek information, rephrase the information into questions, then share their knowledge with the rest of the class. They collaborate in the learning process.

While students were building their quizzes, Maja scaffolded the process; she helped teams that were stuck and kept track of time. She walked around in the classroom and visited the groups to check that they were on the right track. There is usually a group that needs more help than the others. If no one needs help, she uses the time to prepare future activities.

In this case, a group had a hard time agreeing on which questions were relevant to be used in their quiz. The teacher helped them by referring to one of the websites she previously had shared with them and asked them to use the information from that site.

Students then run the quiz as their classmates answer the questions. Each quiz complemented each other, checking students' knowledge in a different stage of the learning process.

The memoirs of Kim Fupz Aakesons

Teacher Maja can check the results before the next lesson and plan and adapt the content, which takes her about an hour. In this case, she added an extra text (memoir) from the author as the students were quite preoccupied with Kim Fupz Aakeson's childhood and family (*Where was he born? Where did he go to school? Who were his parents? etc.*).

In addition, she spent some time talking about what characterises the author's writing style, as this aspect was not covered much in the students' quizzes.

Maja uses the same method in other subjects. For instance, while doing quizzes in the Social Sciences class, she noticed that the students were interested in innovation and product development, and therefore she asked them to work on the topic of business start-ups.

Written presentation and assessment

The final activity is a written presentation. Students are given 3 assignments to choose from. They sit in school and solve the task, for which they have three hours. It is a light version of their final written exam.



If Maja wants the students to give feedback to each other, she asks them to share their documents/questions on Microsoft Onedrive. On Onedrive, they can work collaboratively on the same file, leave comments and give each other feedback.

The teacher can also ask for access to these files, upload the final document to the school's digital portal, and then the students have access to it again.

After the lesson, the teacher goes on the digital school portal that is used by teachers and students for making a descriptive or graded assessments. She compares her own assessment with the self-assessment/peer assessment of students. Sometimes her assessment is in agreement and sometimes there are differences. She can then discuss these discrepancies with the students.

Outcomes and lessons learned

Maja and other teachers in her school often use Kahoot as a digital assessment tool. Depending on the goals of a given assignment, they use it as an initial activity or a mid-term or final assessment.

The school leaders and parents provide moral support and show confidence in the method. Although this kind of lesson takes longer compared to when the teacher gave the information, it keeps students active.

The competition element and quiz format appeal to students, they think it is fun, and they are motivated to work on the assignment. One student says: "Although the activity takes longer than when the teacher just says it, it is worth the time. You remember better if you, yourself, have helped to find the information and put it in the quiz".

