

Protocol for Refining the Driving Question

1. Can my students read and comprehend the Driving Question (DQ)? Or will it be fun for them to have some need-to-know words in the DQ?
2. Is the DQ open-ended or can it be answered with a *yes* or *no*?
3. Would the DQ benefit from a local context to either narrow the scope, or increase the scope, and most importantly to allow interaction with local adults and to have power over their local environment? (How can we change the district lunch menu so that it is more nutritious and more appealing?)
4. Does the DQ offer opportunities for students to express voice and choice?
5. Does the DQ ask students to engage in an inquiry that is both rigorous (challenging and full of critical thinking opportunities) and relevant?
6. Does the DQ sound like a traditional teacher/academic question, or does it sound like something exciting and different?
7. Does the DQ show that the students will be doing something relevant and exciting to them (that some might do even if it wasn't required), or are they just going to be doing it for the teacher?
8. Does the DQ allow me to design both individual and collaborative learning tasks that require higher-level thinking skills, or is it make a list and collect some facts?
9. Does the DQ require students to learn new skills and knowledge and to demonstrate higher-level understandings or applications?
10. Does the DQ encourage students to perform tasks and applications that adults would possibly do? Can it result in an action plan presented to outside adults?
11. Will the DQ benefit from referring to the future to make it more open-ended? (How do we build a school in the parking lot in the year 2050?)
12. Should I change the implied audience in the question to increase the challenge? (How do we write a book on global warming for 4th graders?)
13. Should I go up or down the Concentric Circles of Scope (see below)?

14. If I think what the ideal student team would be working on and wrestling with three-quarters of the way through the project (to focus what I am most passionate about in this project), can I change the DQ to more directly get all students to that place?

15. Does the DQ allow students to have experiences that will help them determine their proclivities and interests for certain careers versus other careers?

