# 5.1 Ask Feature

## Feature Goal

To provide users with an intuitive, educational interface for engaging in meaningful philosophical dialogues with AI personas, featuring a tiered system of philosophical tones, progressive disclosure of complexity, and seamless integration with the app's concept system.

## System Architecture

### Frontend Components

- \*\*AskScreen\*\* - Main interface for question input and tone selection

- \*\*ToneSelectionGrid\*\* - Interactive grid displaying available philosophical tones with descriptions

- \*\*TonePreviewModal\*\* - Displays sample responses for selected tones before submission

- \*\*QuestionAssistancePanel\*\* - Provides smart suggestions and reformulation options

- \*\*ReflectionPrompt\*\* - Pre-question prompt to encourage thoughtful inquiry

- \*\*ResponseCard\*\* - Mobile-optimized card displaying AI responses with action buttons

- \*\*ConceptBadgeStrip\*\* - Horizontal scrollable strip of concept badges extracted from responses

- \*\*ProgressIndicator\*\* - Animated, tone-appropriate loading indicator

- \*\*ToneExplorationGallery\*\* - Interactive gallery for discovering and comparing philosophical tones

- \*\*ActionButtonGroup\*\* - Container for response interaction buttons (Save, Expand, Clarity, Share)

### Backend Components

- \*\*AskService\*\* - Core service handling question processing and response generation

- \*\*ToneManager\*\* - Handles tone selection, validation, and user preferences

- \*\*ConceptExtractor\*\* - Identifies philosophical concepts in questions and responses

- \*\*QuestionSuggestionEngine\*\* - Generates contextual question suggestions

- \*\*UserPreferenceTracker\*\* - Tracks and applies user tone preferences and history

- \*\*AIRouterIntegration\*\* - Interfaces with the existing AI Router for optimal model selection

- \*\*ResponseFormatter\*\* - Formats AI responses for mobile display with proper styling

- \*\*XPAwardCalculator\*\* - Calculates XP awards for Ask feature interactions

### Database Models

```sql

-- Stores user questions and AI responses

CREATE TABLE ask\_interactions (

id UUID PRIMARY KEY DEFAULT uuid\_generate\_v4(),

user\_id UUID NOT NULL REFERENCES users(id) ON DELETE CASCADE,

question TEXT NOT NULL,

response TEXT NOT NULL,

tone\_id VARCHAR(50) NOT NULL REFERENCES philosophical\_tones(id),

created\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

updated\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

is\_saved BOOLEAN DEFAULT FALSE,

is\_expanded BOOLEAN DEFAULT FALSE,

interaction\_context JSONB DEFAULT '{}'::jsonb,

ai\_model\_used VARCHAR(50),

processing\_time\_ms INTEGER,

CONSTRAINT valid\_question CHECK (LENGTH(question) BETWEEN 5 AND 1000)

);

-- Stores philosophical tones and their attributes

CREATE TABLE philosophical\_tones (

id VARCHAR(50) PRIMARY KEY,

name VARCHAR(100) NOT NULL,

description TEXT NOT NULL,

short\_description VARCHAR(255) NOT NULL,

tier INTEGER NOT NULL DEFAULT 1,

icon\_path VARCHAR(255),

sample\_response TEXT,

is\_active BOOLEAN DEFAULT TRUE,

created\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

updated\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

CONSTRAINT valid\_tier CHECK (tier BETWEEN 0 AND 2)

);

-- Stores user tone preferences and usage statistics

CREATE TABLE user\_tone\_preferences (

user\_id UUID NOT NULL REFERENCES users(id) ON DELETE CASCADE,

tone\_id VARCHAR(50) NOT NULL REFERENCES philosophical\_tones(id),

usage\_count INTEGER DEFAULT 0,

is\_favorite BOOLEAN DEFAULT FALSE,

last\_used\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE,

PRIMARY KEY (user\_id, tone\_id)

);

-- Stores concepts extracted from ask interactions

CREATE TABLE ask\_interaction\_concepts (

interaction\_id UUID NOT NULL REFERENCES ask\_interactions(id) ON DELETE CASCADE,

concept\_id UUID NOT NULL REFERENCES concepts(id) ON DELETE CASCADE,

relevance\_score FLOAT NOT NULL,

is\_primary BOOLEAN DEFAULT FALSE,

PRIMARY KEY (interaction\_id, concept\_id)

);

-- Stores question suggestions for users

CREATE TABLE question\_suggestions (

id UUID PRIMARY KEY DEFAULT uuid\_generate\_v4(),

question\_text TEXT NOT NULL,

category VARCHAR(100) NOT NULL,

difficulty\_level INTEGER NOT NULL DEFAULT 1,

philosophical\_area VARCHAR(100),

created\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

is\_active BOOLEAN DEFAULT TRUE,

CONSTRAINT valid\_difficulty CHECK (difficulty\_level BETWEEN 1 AND 5)

);

-- Stores user-specific question suggestions

CREATE TABLE user\_question\_suggestions (

id UUID PRIMARY KEY DEFAULT uuid\_generate\_v4(),

user\_id UUID NOT NULL REFERENCES users(id) ON DELETE CASCADE,

question\_text TEXT NOT NULL,

based\_on\_interaction\_id UUID REFERENCES ask\_interactions(id),

based\_on\_concept\_id UUID REFERENCES concepts(id),

created\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE DEFAULT NOW(),

is\_viewed BOOLEAN DEFAULT FALSE,

expires\_at TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE

);

```

## API Endpoints

### Ask Question

```

POST /api/v1/ask

```

Request:

```json

{

"question": "What is the meaning of life?",

"tone\_id": "socratic",

"include\_concepts": true,

"user\_context": {

"recent\_concepts": ["ethics", "meaning"],

"session\_duration": 15

}

}

```

Response:

```json

{

"interaction\_id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440000",

"question": "What is the meaning of life?",

"response": "Rather than offering a definitive answer about life's meaning, perhaps we might explore what gives your own life a sense of purpose. What activities or relationships bring you fulfillment? When do you feel most alive and engaged with the world?",

"tone": {

"id": "socratic",

"name": "Socratic Philosopher",

"description": "Guides you to discover answers through thoughtful questions rather than giving direct advice"

},

"concepts": [

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440001",

"name": "Meaning",

"relevance\_score": 0.95

},

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440002",

"name": "Purpose",

"relevance\_score": 0.85

},

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440003",

"name": "Fulfillment",

"relevance\_score": 0.75

}

],

"xp\_earned": 10,

"processing\_time\_ms": 1250

}

```

### Get Available Tones

```

GET /api/v1/ask/tones

```

Response:

```json

{

"tones": [

{

"id": "socratic",

"name": "Socratic Philosopher",

"description": "Guides you to discover answers through thoughtful questions rather than giving direct advice",

"short\_description": "Thoughtful questioning",

"tier": 0,

"icon\_path": "/assets/tones/socratic.svg",

"is\_available": true

},

{

"id": "pragmatic",

"name": "Pragmatic Philosopher",

"description": "Translates philosophical insights into actionable steps for daily life",

"short\_description": "Practical wisdom",

"tier": 0,

"icon\_path": "/assets/tones/pragmatic.svg",

"is\_available": true

},

{

"id": "contemplative",

"name": "Contemplative Philosopher",

"description": "Helps you find inner peace and clarity through calm, reflective wisdom",

"short\_description": "Reflective wisdom",

"tier": 1,

"icon\_path": "/assets/tones/contemplative.svg",

"is\_available": true

}

],

"user\_tier": 1,

"favorite\_tone\_id": "socratic"

}

```

### Get Tone Preview

```

POST /api/v1/ask/tone-preview

```

Request:

```json

{

"tone\_id": "epic",

"sample\_question": "How should I approach difficult decisions?"

}

```

Response:

```json

{

"tone\_id": "epic",

"name": "Epic Philosopher",

"sample\_response": "Stand tall at the crossroads of destiny! Every difficult decision is a hero's challenge, calling forth your courage and wisdom. Like Odysseus navigating between Scylla and Charybdis, you must chart your course with both boldness and foresight.",

"icon\_path": "/assets/tones/epic.svg"

}

```

### Save Interaction to Journal

```

POST /api/v1/ask/interactions/{interaction\_id}/save

```

Response:

```json

{

"success": true,

"journal\_entry\_id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440004",

"xp\_earned": 15,

"message": "Interaction saved to journal"

}

```

### Expand Insight

```

POST /api/v1/ask/interactions/{interaction\_id}/expand

```

Response:

```json

{

"interaction\_id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440000",

"expanded\_response": "When we consider the question of life's meaning, we're engaging with one of philosophy's most enduring inquiries. Rather than offering a definitive answer, the Socratic approach invites us to examine our own experiences and values...",

"additional\_concepts": [

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440005",

"name": "Existentialism",

"relevance\_score": 0.80

}

],

"xp\_earned": 5

}

```

### Get Personalized Question Suggestions

```

GET /api/v1/ask/suggestions

```

Response:

```json

{

"suggestions": [

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440006",

"question\_text": "How might Stoicism help me handle workplace stress?",

"based\_on\_concept": "Stoicism",

"category": "practical\_philosophy"

},

{

"id": "550e8400-e29b-41d4-a716-446655440007",

"question\_text": "What would different philosophers say about digital privacy?",

"based\_on\_recent\_activity": true,

"category": "ethics\_technology"

}

]

}

```

## User Experience Flow

1. \*\*Entry & Reflection\*\*

- User navigates to Ask screen

- Sees reflection prompt: "What are you hoping to explore?"

- Question input field with smart suggestions appearing as user types

2. \*\*Question Formulation\*\*

- User types philosophical question

- System provides real-time suggestions and reformulations

- Voice input option available for accessibility

3. \*\*Tone Selection\*\*

- Grid display of available philosophical tones based on user's subscription tier

- Each tone includes icon, name, and problem-solving description

- First-time users see detailed descriptions; returning users see streamlined interface

- Tone preview available with sample responses

4. \*\*Submission & Processing\*\*

- One-click "Ask the [Selected Tone] Philosopher" button

- Visual progress indicator with tone-appropriate animations

- Background processing allows user to continue browsing app

5. \*\*Response & Interaction\*\*

- Mobile-optimized response card appears with:

- Tone icon and philosopher identification

- AI response text formatted for readability

- Concept badges for related philosophical concepts

- Action buttons (Save, Expand, Clarity, Share)

- Tapping concept badges navigates to concept exploration

- Share options include in-app forum, explore section, and external social media

6. \*\*Follow-up Actions\*\*

- Save to Journal: Stores interaction and awards XP

- Expand Insight: Provides deeper, more detailed response

- Seek Clarity: Opens the 5-pathway Seek Clarity feature

- Share: Options for sharing within app or to external platforms

## Gamification & XP Integration

- \*\*XP Awards\*\*

- Asking first question: 10 XP

- Daily first question: 5 XP

- Saving to journal: 15 XP

- Expanding insight: 5 XP

- Sharing to forum: 10 XP

- Exploring extracted concept: 5 XP per concept

- Trying new philosophical tone: 20 XP

- \*\*Achievements\*\*

- "Philosophical Initiate": Ask first question

- "Tone Explorer": Try all free tones

- "Wisdom Seeker": Ask questions 5 days in a row

- "Concept Collector": Explore 10 different concepts from Ask responses

- "Philosophical Dialogue": Complete a 5-question exchange on same topic

- \*\*Progression Tracking\*\*

- Tone mastery levels (Novice → Adept → Master)

- Philosophical area expertise (Ethics, Metaphysics, Epistemology, etc.)

- Question complexity progression

## Advanced Workflows / Contextual Prompting

1. \*\*Cross-Feature Integration Flow\*\*

- Journal → Ask: "Ask about this journal entry"

- Explore → Ask: "Ask about this concept"

- Forum → Ask: "Get philosophical perspective on this discussion"

2. \*\*Contextual Question Chains\*\*

- System tracks conversation context across multiple questions

- Enables deeper philosophical exploration of single topic

- Provides context-aware suggestions for next questions

3. \*\*Tone Comparison Mode\*\*

- Side-by-side comparison of how different philosophical tones approach same question

- Highlights differences in perspective, methodology, and practical application

- Helps users understand philosophical diversity

4. \*\*Concept-Driven Questioning\*\*

- Suggests questions based on user's concept exploration history

- Builds bridges between isolated philosophical concepts

- Creates personalized learning pathways

## Implementation Considerations

- \*\*AI Router Integration\*\*

- Leverages existing AI Router system (ai\_router.py) for model selection

- Maps 10 philosophical tones to appropriate AI models based on strengths:

- Socratic, Pragmatic, Existential → Grok

- Contemplative, Reverential, Stoic → Claude

- Oracular, Epic → Gemini

- Polemical, Satirical, Playful → ChatGPT

- Extends existing tone-specific prompt files with new tones

- Maintains compatibility with existing model selection logic

- \*\*Tone Prompt Workflow\*\*

- Utilizes existing Context-Specific Tone Prompt Workflow

- Stores tone-specific prompt files in version-controlled repository

- Follows established prompt structure:

- Base prompt + Tone instructions + Model optimizations

- Extends with 10 comprehensive philosophical tone templates

- \*\*Performance Optimization\*\*

- Client-side caching of tone descriptions and icons

- Progressive loading of response cards

- Background prefetching of likely next questions

- Optimistic UI updates before server confirmation

- Leverages existing cost optimization strategies in AI Router

- \*\*Accessibility Features\*\*

- Voice input for questions

- Screen reader compatibility for tone descriptions

- Adjustable text size in response cards

- High contrast mode for visual elements

- Keyboard navigation for tone selection grid

- \*\*Offline Support\*\*

- Cache recent questions and responses

- Queue new questions when offline

- Sync when connection restored

- Offline access to saved interactions

- \*\*Analytics Integration\*\*

- Track question categories and philosophical areas

- Monitor tone popularity and effectiveness

- Analyze concept extraction accuracy

- Measure user progression through philosophical topics

## Implementation Phases

### Phase 1: Core Experience (Weeks 1-3)

- Basic question input and tone selection

- Integration with existing AI Router

- Simple response cards with save functionality

- Free tier tones only (Socratic, Pragmatic)

### Phase 2: Enhanced Interaction (Weeks 4-6)

- Concept badge extraction and integration

- Expanded response functionality

- Question suggestions and assistance

- Tier 1 tones added

### Phase 3: Advanced Features (Weeks 7-10)

- Tone exploration and comparison mode

- Cross-feature integration flows

- Full gamification implementation

- All tones available with proper tier restrictions

### Phase 4: Optimization & Analytics (Weeks 11-12)

- Performance optimization

- Advanced analytics integration

- A/B testing of tone descriptions

- User experience refinements based on data