

Keeping a Wonder Book

Model your own curiosity: Ask authentic questions and jot them down in a Wonder Book.

Preparation

Before the lesson, buy a small notebook—or “Wonder Book”—for each student or make one by folding, cutting, and binding sheets of notebook paper. Also, be prepared to write questions in your own Wonder Book as part of the lesson.

1 Connect and Engage

Gather kids in front of you on the floor, in a comfortable space. Then you might start with, *How many of you wonder about things? I thought so; well adults do too, every single day. As a matter of fact, the more we learn, the more we wonder, so we adults actually spend more time asking questions than having the answers. Did you know that? Turn and talk about it.*

2 Model

Share an example of a question. *Well, I've been wondering about something. My granddaughter, Riley, only likes sugary cereal—but, as you probably know, that kind of cereal is not good for her or any of us. So how can I find a healthy cereal Riley will eat? I'm going to see if I can find information on cereals that are healthy. I'm going to start by asking a few of you for any ideas about cereals that you like that are healthy. Then tonight I will go online and I will probably go to the store and see what I can find. I'll never figure this out without doing the research. Talking to people, going online, and going into the field are all good ways to do research.*

Show your research notebook. Explain that most researchers have notebooks—or, as you call them, “Wonder Books”—in which they jot down their questions and any information they gather as they attempt to answer those questions. *I am going to jot down this question and several more that I have been wondering about here in my Wonder Book. A Wonder Book is a place to hold questions and thoughts so we don't forget them. Remember this: Nothing matters more than your thoughts and questions!*

Jot down and/or illustrate the questions in your Wonder Book. Share your questions and put a star next to the one that you are going to investigate first.

3 Guide

I'm going to research the question about a cereal for my granddaughter. That's the one that I care about most right now, but I will go back to the others when I have researched and answered the cereal question. Have kids turn and share some things they wonder. Then hand out a blank Wonder Book to each student.

4 Practice

Send kids off to collaborate or work independently to jot down at least three questions of their own in their Wonder Books. Encourage them to think of ways to research answers to their questions.


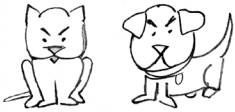

5 Share

Bring kids back together in a sharing circle. Ask them to review their questions and place a star next to the one that matters most to them. Then invite them to share that question with you and their classmates.

Because we rarely have the time to hear from everyone in the group, once several kids have had a chance to share, we have the kids turn to the classmates next to them and share their most important question.

Great work today. Tomorrow we will take some time to address our questions. I can't wait to see what you will find out!

Things I Wonder

<p>How can I find a healthy cereal that Riley will eat?*</p> 	<p>Why is the ocean salty and lakes are not?</p>
<p>Why do dogs and cats seem to fight more than get along?</p> 	<p>What is the best kind of dog for our family?</p> 

**TIP**

Questions and thoughts are like popcorn. They spread quickly around the room as kids talk. More reticent kids are likely to pick up an idea from hearing someone share with the whole group or talking to someone next to them.