

Strategies for Understanding the Question

Option 1: Ask the student to rephrase the question

Explain the problem (select one):

- I don't understand what you mean by _____ (*insert word or phrase*)...
- I'm not sure whether I understand your question...
- I'm afraid that I'm unclear about your question...
- I'm a bit confused...
- I'm not sure I completely understand...



Make a request (select one):

- ...could you explain it to me?
- ...could you repeat it?
- ... could you rephrase it?
- ...would you mind clarifying what you said?
- ...would you mind explaining it again?

Other ideas for strategies/ Notes:

Option 2: Ask another student to rephrase the question for you

- Can someone help out by rephrasing the question for me?
- Is there anyone that understands what he/she is asking that could rephrase the question for me?
- Can someone that is clear about the question explain it to me?
- Is there anyone that can explain the question for me using an example?
- I do not understand what you mean by _____ (insert word or phrase), can someone help explain its meaning to me?

Option 3: Attempt to restate your understanding of the question

- I'm not sure if I understood you correctly but it sounds like you are asking _____ (restate question). Is that correct?
- I'm a little confused, are you asking me if _____ (restate question). Did I understand you correctly?
- If I understood you correctly you are asking if _____ (restate question). Is that right?

Navigating and Deflecting the Question

Chart 1. Navigate and deflect too broad or off-topic questions

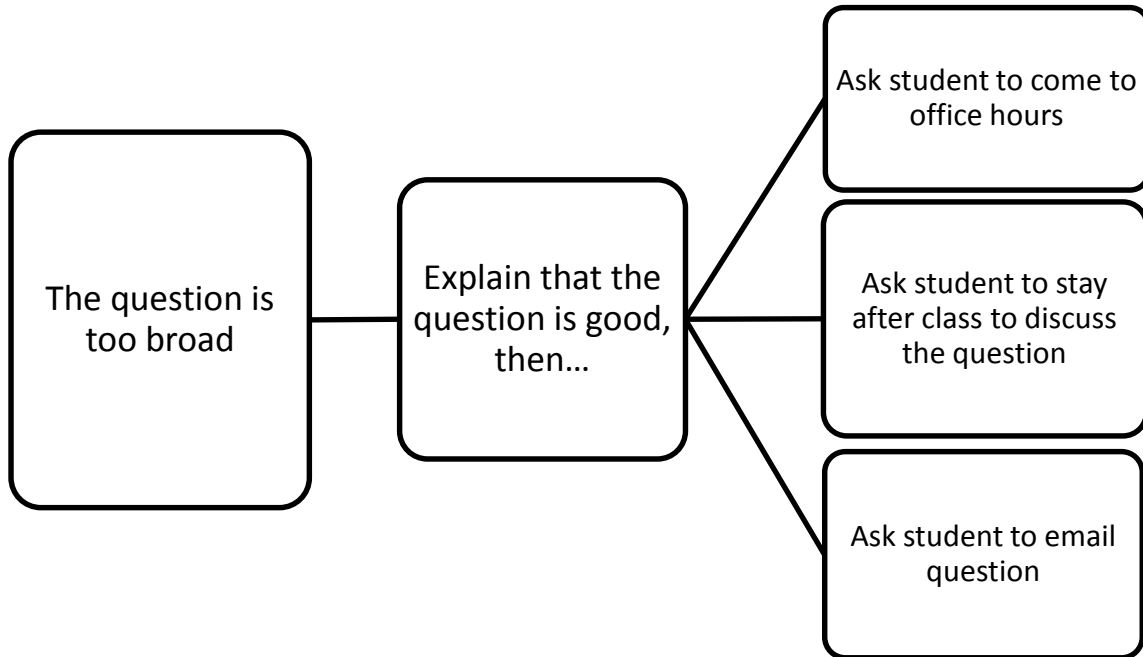


Chart 2. Navigate and deflect irrelevant questions

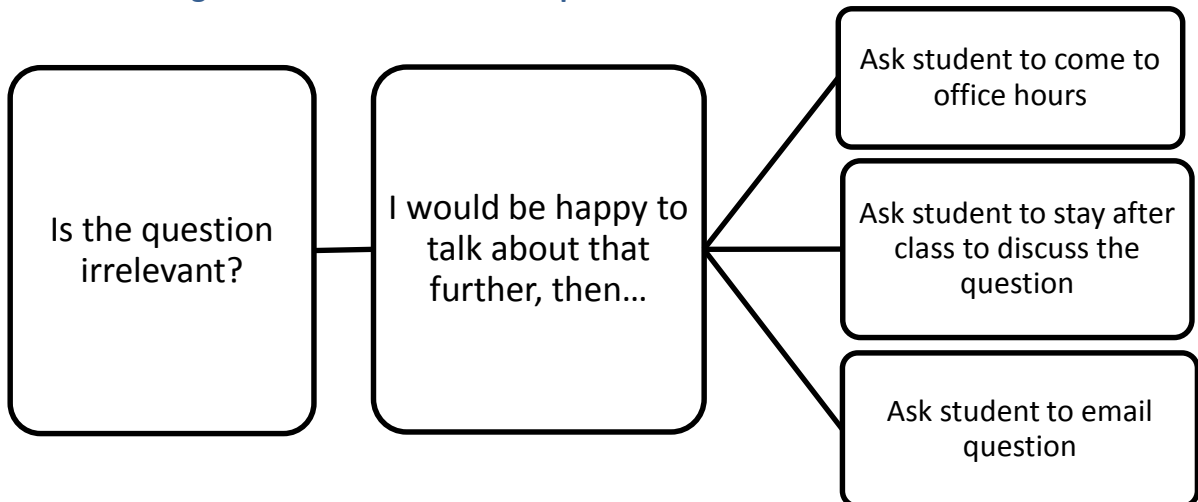
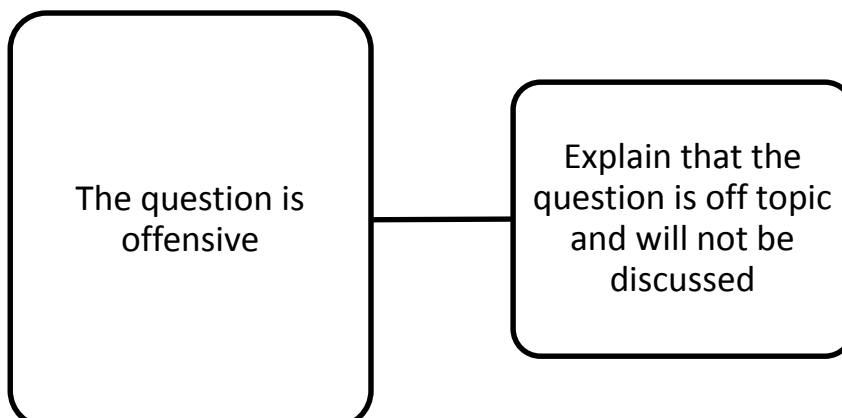


Chart 3. Navigate and deflect offensive questions



What if you understand a student's question but don't know the answer?

- Not every question requires an immediate answer!
 - You just need to know how to handle your class and students.
 - There are many good ways of answering questions!
- What to say when you don't know the answer...
 1. That's a very good question! But, honestly, I don't know the answer right now. Could you email that question to me? I need some time to think about it. I will get back to you soon.
 2. Does anyone know the answer? I want to hear what others think.
 3. I like your question, but I've never thought about that before. I will let you know.

Creating a Question-friendly Environment

