

# SKY HIGH QUESTIONS

stand  
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teaching

OUTSTANDING LESSON PLANNING



# WELCOME

Welcome to this mini book detailing the 'Sky High' strategy from Standout Teaching.



The strategy is designed to take traditional lesson learning objectives and transform them into aspirational, student centred questions, which can be used within any lesson.

Giving you an overview of the thinking behind the strategy, along with tips and examples, this book is your quick guide to using 'Sky High Questions'.

If you would like additional support, then please take a look at the Standout Teaching website which has a range of resources and ideas for you to try within your lessons.

A tried, tested and very successful strategy, 'Sky High Questions' will challenge every student to aim for the top.

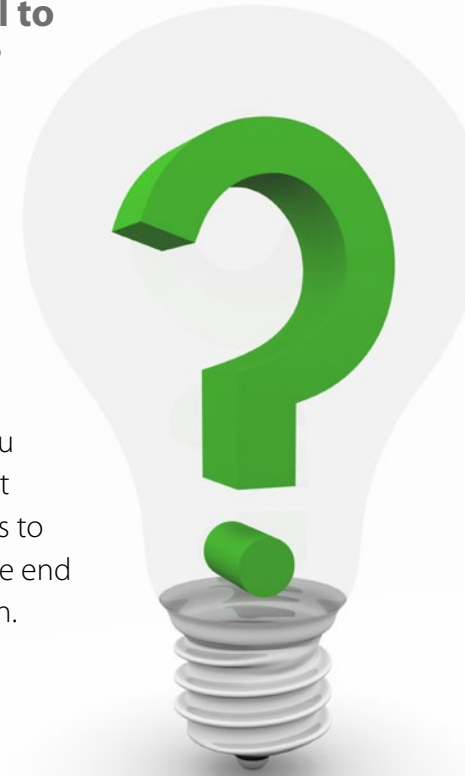
All the best

**John Winwood**  
*Founder & Teacher*

# WHAT ARE 'SKY HIGH QUESTIONS'?

Let's answer a question with a question, what are Sky High Questions and why are they beneficial to learning?

In simple terms Sky High Questions are the most challenging, aspirational questions you would expect your students to answer by the end of your lesson.



They are designed to replace the need for communicating complex, lengthy learning objectives to students, through pitching them in the form of a student centred question.

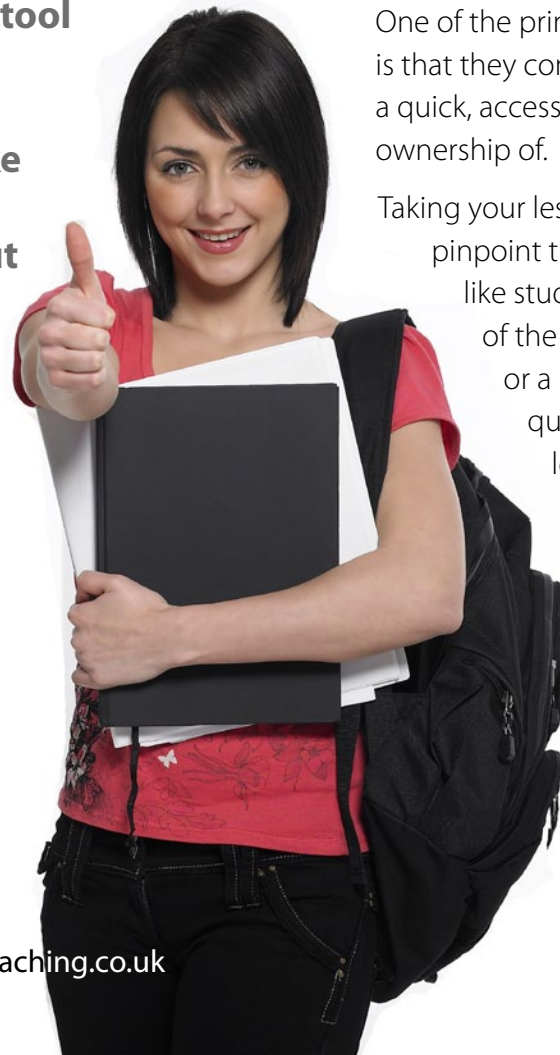
These aspirational, student questions carry many benefits as a result-

- They are focussed on the student
- They support challenge within the lesson
- They communicate the learning for the lesson in a simple, quick format
- They can be used to track progress
- They can be differentiated
- They promote aspirational mind-sets for all students

Sky High Questions are a powerful way to support learning and ensure you meet the need of each individual student.

# SKY HIGH QUESTIONS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Traditional learning objectives are a tool for teachers to ascertain what learning will take place within their lessons, but are often too complex for students to understand.**



This is where Sky High Questions help out.

One of the principals behind Sky High Questions is that they convert the lesson objectives into a quick, accessible format for students to take ownership of.

Taking your lesson objectives, the task is to pinpoint the key learning that you would like students to demonstrate by the end of the lesson and pose it as a question or a series of questions. These questions should reflect the highest level of learning achievable within the lesson. These are what you will use within your lesson rather than lesson objectives.

**These are Sky High Questions!**

# TYPES OF SKY HIGH QUESTIONS

**As the name suggests the primary way to present your sky high learning objective is through the use of a question.**



However there are many ways that you can communicate this sky high level of challenging learning. Various approaches to presenting this information could be as follows:

- Go traditional, set a question or questions
- Combine your question with a picture or series of pictures
- Use video clips to support the posing of a question
- Replace your question with props to feed inquiring minds
- Reverse the process; consider asking your students to pose their own questions based upon a set of facts

However you choose to pose your question, the fact that it is a question will grab your students attention straight from the start.

**What a hook!**

# DIFFERENTIATING SKY HIGH QUESTIONS

**Aim for the top and you may get there, never aim and you will never get there!**

Sky High Questions are about all students aspiring to achieve the answer to the ultimate question for the lesson.

SkyHigh Questions are designed so that all learners can achieve the highest level of learning within the lesson, but many will need support to achieve this, you will need to differentiate.

This is where Standout Teaching's GAP Strategy fits perfectly with Sky High Questions.

Instead of setting a single question, try remodelling the Sky High Question into 3, Green, Amber and Pink. Although they are aimed at demonstrating the same learning, you could extend understanding through using Bloom's Taxonomy.

**Green** Demonstrate knowledge and comprehension

**Amber** Demonstrate the ability to apply

**Pink** Demonstrate the ability to synthesise or evaluate

The other consideration is how you differentiate the learning so that all students have the opportunity to be able to answer the question. Yet again, differentiating your tasks using GAP would support this.

**Green** Give the students support to be able to answer the question

**Amber** Students work towards answering the question

**Pink** Students are given additional challenge to answer the question

# WHEN TO USE SKY HIGH QUESTIONS IN YOUR LESSONS

**Sky High Questions reflect the learning taking place within the lesson, hence they can be used as a signposting tool to show progress within your lesson.**

The initial introduction should be through the starter activity at the beginning. Including it in the starter means that the students have that immediate chance to engage with them and start the ownership process.

But the use of Sky High Questions should not stop before the lesson has really started. They are an ideal tool for use throughout the lesson at various stages to check student progress. Include them in your AfL activities to track student understanding and adapt your lessons accordingly. At this stage you may wish to consider breaking the question down into sub questions which build up to the final answer.

Last but not least, Sky High Questions are the perfect plenary where your students show if the learning that has taken place means they are able to answer the question and achieve the ultimate lesson goal!





# SKY HIGH QUESTIONS SUPPORTING ASPIRATIONAL LEARNING

**'Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve.'**

*Napoleon Hill*

Sky High Questions are all about aspirations, giving all students the opportunity to achieve great learning within their lessons.

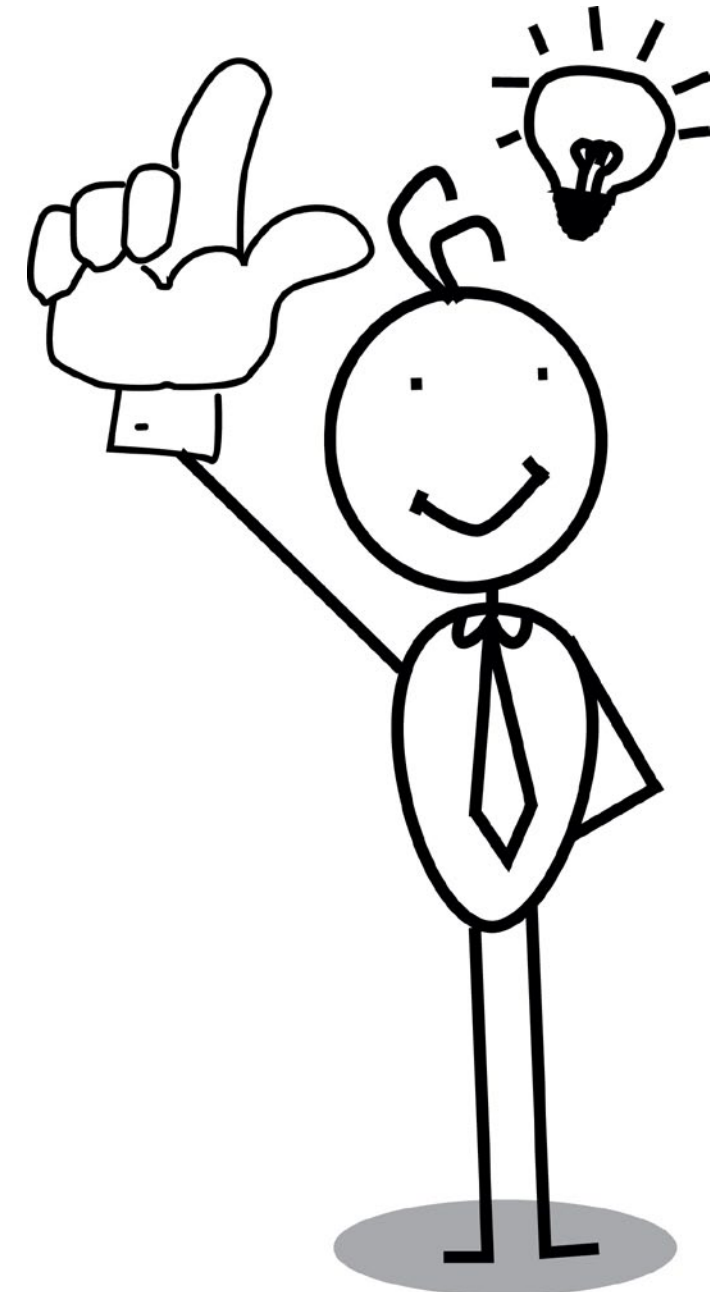
The concept is designed to be student orientated, flexible and creative. Use it as a tool to track progress and demonstrate learning.

When combined with the GAP strategy from Standout Teaching, Sky High Questions give a clear focus for every lesson that is built around the needs of the individual.

A tried, tested and very successful strategy every teacher should give Sky High Questions a try.

If you need more advice, support or ideas related to this strategy then please visit the Standout Teaching website.

Give every student the chance to aim for the sky!





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