

# Using Big Questions for Instructional Support

Part 1 in 4-part Webinar Series

October 3, 2019  
4:00pm



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Today's Presenters

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**Effective, engaging interactions serve as the foundation for learning in early childhood classrooms.**

*Measuring teacher-child interactions consistently and using them to provide feedback to teachers lies at the heart of high-quality early childhood instruction.*

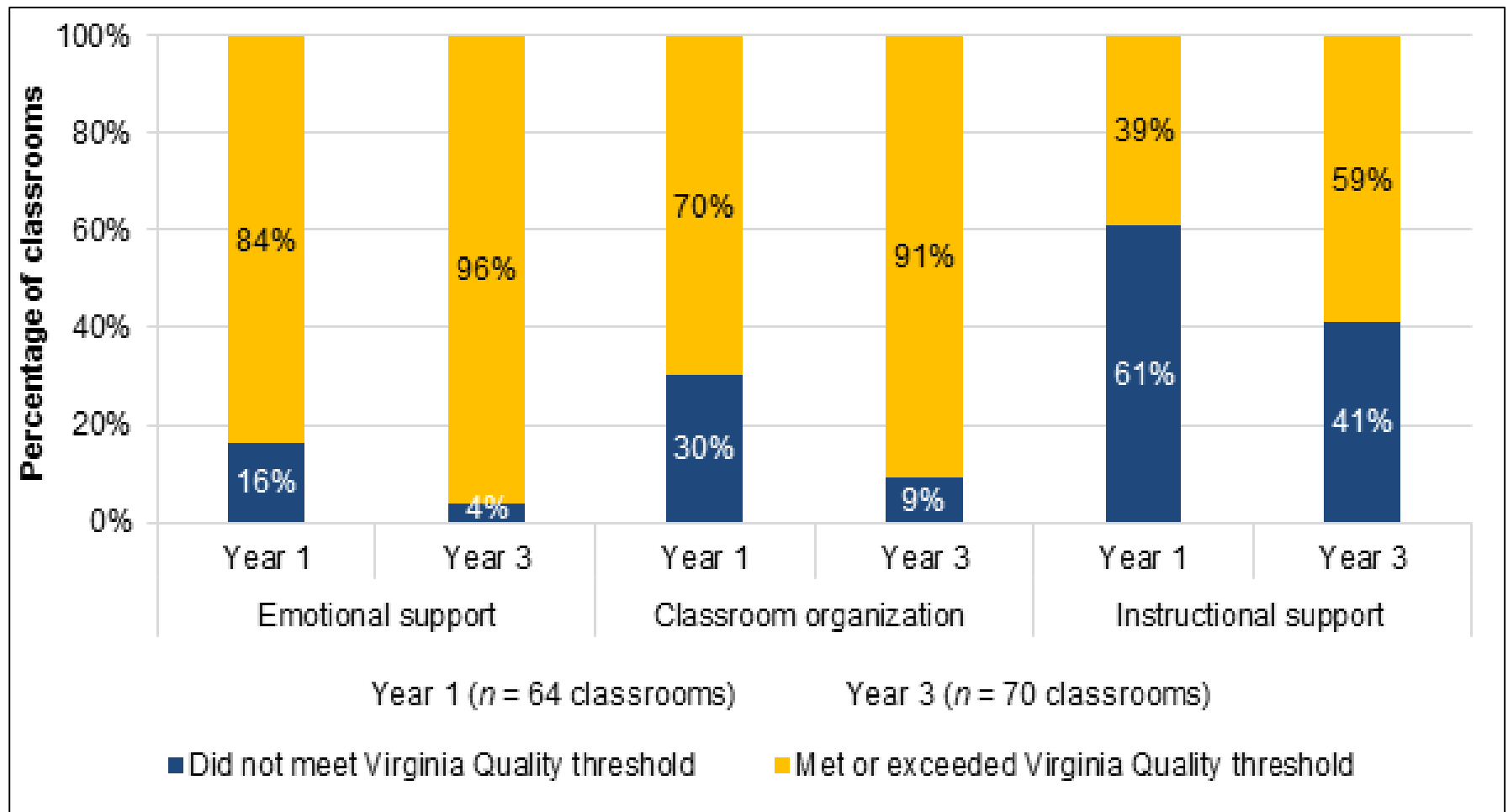


- ✓ EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
- ✓ CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION
- ✓ **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT**



# Improvements to CLASS™ Measured in VPI + 2015 (Year 1) & 2017 (Year 3)

Percent of Classrooms Meeting Virginia Quality Thresholds





# Today's goals:

1. Understand the relationship between the Pre-K CLASS™ and the use of “big” questions
2. Identify the different outcomes when using closed versus open-ended questions
3. Plan learning activities where children have opportunities to answer open-ended questions



# Why does this matter?

- To support the development of the children in your classroom and increase school readiness
- CLASS™ data demonstrates that adult/child relationships are key to child outcomes
- Interactions are essential for development



**When you are using big questions, are you ...?**





# Emotional Support

- Sitting close to the children?
- Making eye contact?
- Matching their enthusiasm?
- Following their lead?
- Providing timely, individualized support?



# Classroom Organization

- Prepared for the lesson?
- Giving clear instructions?
- Using a range of instructional styles?
- Minimizing interruptions?
- Monitoring the classroom?



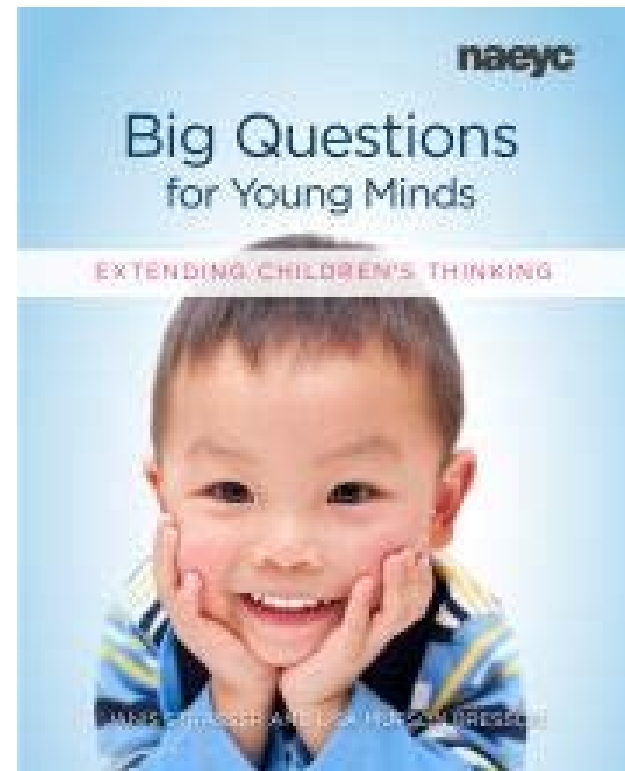
# Instructional Support

- Repeating and extending the children's answers?
- Asking follow up questions based on their responses?
- Sustaining back-and-forth conversations?
- Encouraging them to experiment and problem solve?
- Asking them to evaluate results and explain their process?
- Connecting concepts to previous activities and experiences?
- Focusing on process over product?
- Introducing new vocabulary purposefully?



# One instructional support strategy: using “Big Questions”

What is a “big question”?



# Opened or Closed?

- Close-ended questions have a one-word answer
- Open-ended questions require a more thoughtful response





# Activity – Open or closed?

- Consider the questions provided, and select every open-ended question



# Asking the Big Questions

*LET'S PRACTICE!*



# Important Note

When asking your children these questions, be sure to:

- Consider where the child is developmentally
- Reference real life experiences
- Allow plenty of wait time for the child to respond
- Listen to the child's response so that the back and forth exchanges can continue



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# Activity Idea: Mystery Bag

- Find a small bag you can close that a child cannot see inside (or a box with a lid, like a shoe box)
- Put small items one at a time into the bag (without the children seeing the item)
- Show the children the bag and tell them that they need to try to guess what is inside without looking
  - Invite the children to interact with the bag (hold it, shake it)
  - Prompt their guesses with questions





# Mystery Bag

- What kind of questions can you ask during this activity?
- Try this activity in your own classroom before the next webinar

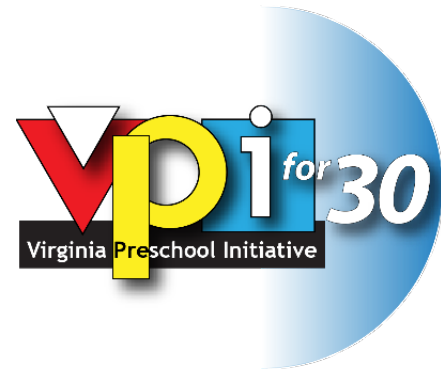


***Coming soon to the Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction in VPI Classrooms website:***

<https://curry.virginia.edu/faculty-research/centers-labs-projects/castl/advancing-effective-interactions-instruction-vpi>

- VPI-for-30 recorded webinar links, handouts, and slide decks

**Certificates of webinar attendance will be sent to school division VPI Coordinators.**



*Next VPI-for-30 Webinar*  
Thursday, November 7, 2019  
4 p.m.

***Raise Those Questions!***

