

Week 7 Lesson 2

Can I use rhetorical questions?

Fast Five

Which of these words use the correct spelling?
Can you correct the ones that are wrong?

1. embarrass
2. reccognise
3. proffession
4. sinsere
5. convenience

Fast Five Answers

1. Embarrass ✓
2. reccognise X recognise
3. proffession X profession
4. sinsere X sincere
5. convenience ✓

What is rhetoric?

- Rhetoric is a special type of speaking or talking.
- It is used to persuade or influence people.
- We often see rhetoric used when in debates or arguments when trying to change people's minds.

Rhetorical questions

- Rhetorical questions are questions which do not need to be answered.



Why do we use rhetorical questions?

- **Because the answer is obvious** e.g. Do you want more homework?
- **To make people think of something they might not have thought about yet** e.g. What would happen if school remained open over the summer?
- **Sometimes a rhetorical question is just a different way of saying a sentence** e.g. Don't you want to have dinner tonight? (Come inside, wash your hands and sit at the table!)

How to tell if a sentence is rhetorical.

Think: does the person asking the question *really* want to know some new information from me?

If the answer is no, then the question is probably rhetorical.

Spot the Difference – which questions are rhetorical?

- Do you want sugar in your coffee?
- Are they ever going to get here?
- What's the price of this T-shirt?



Spot the Difference – which questions are rhetorical?

- Do you want sugar in your coffee?
- Not rhetorical – she wants to know if they want sugar or not.
- Are they ever going to get here?
- Rhetorical – they are bored and want to draw attention to the fact they have been waiting ages.
- What's the price of this T-shirt?
- Not rhetorical – she wants to know how much it costs.



Rhetorical or not?

- Can't you do anything right?
- Can my day get any worse than this?
- Are you hungry?



Rhetorical or not?

- Can't you do anything right?

Rhetorical – she is frustrated he is getting lots and lots of things wrong.

- Can my day get any worse than this?

Rhetorical – she is drawing attention to the fact that having food spilt on her white top is particularly bad.

- What would you like to eat?

Not rhetorical – he genuinely wants to know what they would like to order?



Rhetorical questions - uses

Rhetorical questions can also be used to open a discussion when the question is too difficult to answer simply, or to challenge the reader.

- What would we do if schools were scrapped?
- What would we do without antibiotics?
- What would we do without refrigeration?

This gets the reader to start thinking about the topic before you start to give answers.

“Should mobile phones be allowed in school?”

Think of a rhetorical question FOR this argument

Think of a rhetorical question AGAINST this argument

Answers

FOR -

- Isn't it crazy that you can use mobile phones everywhere else except in school?
- Don't schools want to prepare children to becoming an adult?
- Doesn't texting improve literacy?

AGAINST-

- Is there nowhere you are safe from online bullying?
- Do we want children to turn into robots?
- What's wrong with face to face communication?

“Should we worry about global warming?”

Think of a rhetorical question FOR this argument

Think of a rhetorical question AGAINST this argument

Answers

FOR –

- Do we want animal species do become extinct?
- Do we want to save the environment we live in ?

AGAINST –

- Why worry about global warming when there is an immediate global health crisis?
- How can we afford to worry about global warming in a massive global recession?