Answering questions with questions

Foundations for Teaching in Higher Education

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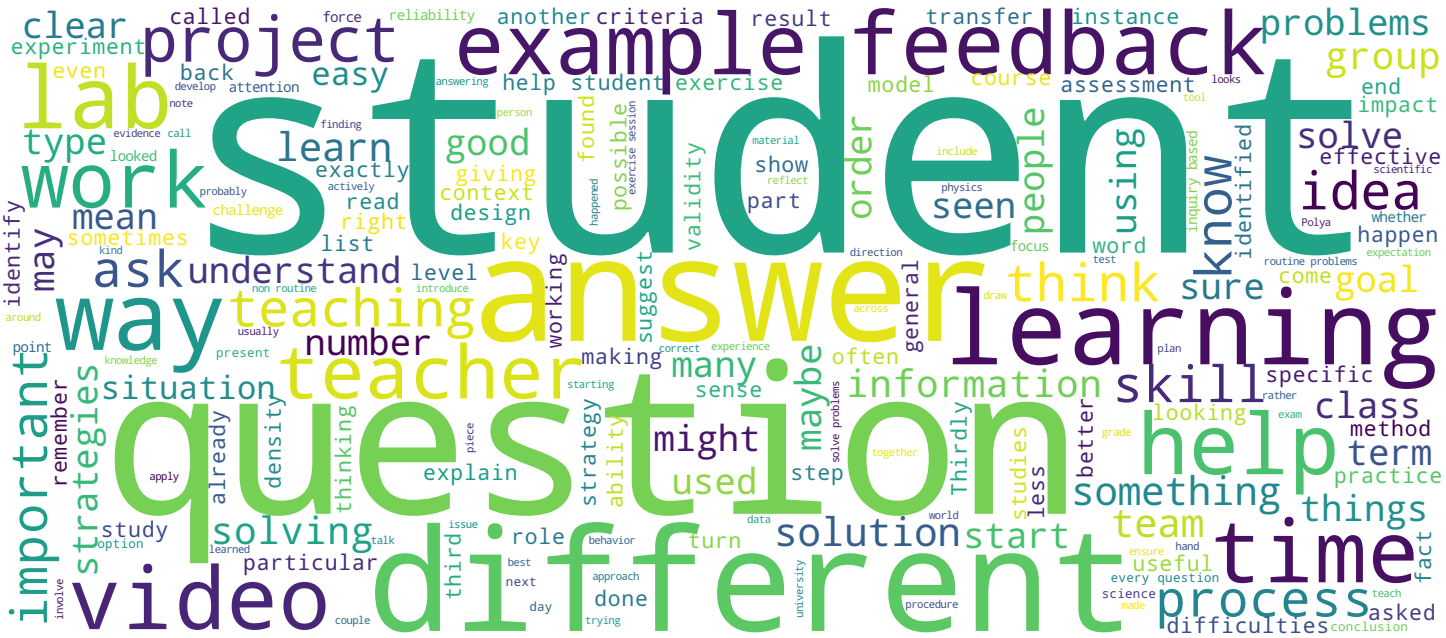

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So, I've been TA teaching Analysis both as a student TA and as a PhD. The idea to answer every question with a question came to me because actually, when I was a student one of my TA's did exactly that and I found it was a very nice way of teaching. So I tried to introduce it myself. So what happens is that you can make sure with that that you're not just giving the answer which is maybe the worst way of answering a question by just giving the answer to the problem the student is facing. So by making sure that every time you answer a question, you do it with a question, you make sure that the student is going to have to think about something in this interaction. One of the nice side effects of answering every question with a question as well is that you can easily detect what I call lazy questions. So when the students just reads the problem, doesn't see a way of starting the problem on the fly and just raise their hand immediately. By asking questions like; "So what did you try?", "What is the problem about?", you can see if the student gave enough thought to the problem or if you should just leave them some time do you think about the problem.

Notes

Summary

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One of the things you have to be careful about though is it is possible to ask a question and making it understood that the answer is easy. This happens especially when you get a little bit more experienced and so sometimes, it doesn't make students very comfortable because for them, the answer isn't easy but if you make them understand that the answer should be easy, they might be a bit upset. That happened to me a couple of times and there is no way to take that back.

Notes

Summary

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