Questions to Elicit Student Thinking 
(Math Solutions) 
 
Getting Started 
 What is this problem about? 
 Would you please explain that in your own words? 
 What do you know? 
 What problems have you solved that are similar? 
 Where can you begin? 
 
While Working 
 What have you already tried? 
 How did you organize your information? 
 What would happen if…? 
 Do you see any patterns or relationships that might help you solve this? 
 Can you make a drawing or model to explain your thinking? 
 Can you make a prediction? 
 Why did you…? 
 What do you need to do next? 
 What would happen if…? 
 Is there another way to (draw, explain or say) that? 
 
Reflecting About the Solution 
 How do you know your solution is reasonable? 
 How can you convince me that your answer makes sense? 
 Have you answered the question? 
 What were the mathematical ideas in this problem? 
 What did you try that did not work? 
 Is that the only possible answer? 
 How do you know you have solved the problem? 
 How did you know you were finished? 
 
Responding to Help Clarify Thinking 
 Tell me more. 
 Can you explain that in a different way? 
 Help me to understand this part… 
 Would this method work in other problems? 
 Is there a more efficient strategy? 
 Is there another strategy that would work? 
 How could you help another student without telling them the answer?

The Art of Questioning in Mathematics 
The following is a set of questions, which may be helpful in guiding inquiry as an 
instructional strategy to deepen and expand student