

Concept Checking Questions (CCQs)

What does a CCQ mean?

A concept checking question is a question designed to help the teacher check students' understanding of a language item (grammar structure, vocabulary, fixed expression). "Do you understand?", "Is that clear?", "We all know that, right?" or "OK?" should be absolute taboos.

When to ask CCQs?

Every time you explain new material or need to check whether students know what you are talking about. CCQs are particularly useful after guided practice and at the end of the lesson as a review. By asking CCQs you will not find yourself in a situation where your students keep quiet or cannot answer questions after your explanations. Make sure to ask CCQs when a concept doesn't exist in the target language, when you deal with idioms or fixed expressions. Avoid overusing CCQs. Students don't want to feel as if they were interrogated by a policeman.

How to ask CCQs?

There are some simple rules that can help you create good CCQs and use them effectively:

1. CCQs should be easy to understand, use simple language in CCQs.
2. Don't use the target language in CCQs;
E.g. *I'll meet her tomorrow.*
 - Bad CCQ: *Will I meet her next week?*
3. Don't use new vocabulary in CCQs;
4. Plan CCQs in advance;
5. Ask at least 2 CCQs to cover all of the important aspects of the target language;

6. CCQs should check the meaning of the target language, not of the situation.
E.g. *She's been in bed all day.*
 - Bad CCQ: *Is he sick?*
7. Some of the most efficient CCQs are yes/no questions along with either/or questions, simple Wh-questions and true/false statements;
8. In order to create good CCQs explain the target language with help of some simple statements, which describe the meaning of that structure. After that, turn those statements into questions.

CCQ ideas

Grammar

Present Simple Tense

I usually **get up** at 7am.

CCQ1: Do I do that every day?

CCQ2: Is this a habit?

Present Continuous Tense

She **is riding** a bicycle.

CCQ1: Does she ride a bicycle every day?

CCQ2: Is she riding it now?

Present Perfect Tense

I've **visited** my granny this week.

CCQ1: Has this week finished?

CCQ2: Do you know the exact day when it happened?

CCQ3: Am I at my granny's now?

Present Perfect Continuous Tense

He's **been working** here since 2008.

CCQ1: Do you know when he started working here?

CCQ2: Is he still working here?

Past Simple Tense

I **saw** my friend last night.

CCQ1: Are you with your friend now?

CCQ2: Is the action finished?

CCQ3: Do you know when it happened?

Past Continuous Tense

I **was fishing** at 10 o'clock.

CCQ1: Did I start fishing before 10 o'clock?

CCQ2: Was I still fishing after 10 o'clock?

CCQ3: Was this action in progress at 10 o'clock?

Past Perfect Tense

I **had fallen asleep** before you arrived.

CCQ1: Are we talking about the past?

CCQ2: How many actions are there in the past?

CCQ3: Did both actions happen at the same time? Which happened first?

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

They **had been having** a party for 3 hours when their mother came.

CCQ1: Was their mother with them when the party started?

CCQ2: How long were they having a party?

Future Simple Tense

There's no coffee, so I'**ll have** some tea.

CCQ1: Is this a plan or a spontaneous decision?

CCQ2: Are you having tea now or you want to have it in the future?

Future Continuous Tense

I'**ll be having** a meeting at 10am.

CCQ1: Does the meeting start before 10am?

CCQ2: Is it in progress at 10am?

Future Perfect Tense

I'**ll have finished** the meeting by 11:30am.

CCQ1: Imagine it's 11:30am. Is the meeting over?

CCQ2: Do you know the exact time when the meeting ended?

Future Perfect Continuous Tense

She'**ll have been studying** here for 2 years by the end of August.

CCQ1: Is she studying here now?

CCQ2: Is she going to quit studying here?

Vocabulary

His pink car **stands out** on the road.

CCQ1: Are there many pink cars on the road?

CCQ2: Do people pay attention to this car?