ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking questions is one of the fundamental tools coaches have to help kids learn through inquiry. It's important to ask open-ended questions when possible, and to ask the right kind of question at the right time to help guide kids to where they need to go.

Questions to begin the inquiry process:
What do you already know that might be useful here?
What assumptions might we make?
How can you simplify this problem?
How can we get started on this?
What questions do you have?

As the inquiry progresses:
What do you see/notice?
Where have you seen something like this before?
What does it do?
What would happen if…..?
Why might _____ not be working?
What might be another way of doing that?
What would happen if I changed _____ to _____?
Can you form a hypothesis?
Would _____ make a difference?
How could we record this?
Can you find a way to _____?
How many/long/often?

Interpreting and evaluating results:
What patterns can you see in this data? What reasons might there be for these patterns?
What do you think of that argument?
How can we display this data?
What does your data tell you?
In what ways are _____ the same/different?
What do you think about _____? Why do you think that?

Communicating conclusions and reflecting:
What have you discovered?
How do you know?
What method did you use?
What other methods have you considered?
What difficulties did you have?
What strategies did you learn that you can use next time?

Follow-up questions to encourage deeper thinking:
Can you say that again?
Can you explain why that works?
Can you suggest another way of doing this?
What would happen if….?
Can you go through that step by step?

Modified from Click2Science PD lessons on asking purposeful questions and Exploratorium Institute for Inquiry Questioning Strategies.