

# SO WHAT?



## Component: Critical Thinking

ILO: To use critical-thinking skills to defend an argument

### TOOL

The term "So what?" is used here not because you don't care but because you want to know more and you want the student to go deeper in defending the point they made. By asking "So what?" you are asking "What would happen if? Why is this relevant? Why is this important?"

You may want to set up your use of So What? so students understand your intent. Use it with care - the aim isn't to make students feel put-down and therefore closed down but rather to lead them deeper into the thoughts they are forming. This could also be used when a student is giving feedback and you want them to explain and justify.

### ACTIVITY

Set up what you mean by So What? so the students understand. Maybe give some examples of how you want the question answered.

Ask them to form a statement about the topic for the session. Then ask them So What? You may want to scaffold their thinking with prompting questions.

### HOW

Encourage students to ask each other 'So What?' if they aren't sure of where to go next with their thoughts.

This could be a written activity, a group discussion or a debate on contentious statements.

### LARGE GROUP TEACHING

With large groups, you can either run this as a small-group activity with students questioning each other and then reporting back in plenary.

### SUCCESS

Students will understand that this means you want more from them and will be thinking around the subject.

### NEXT STEPS

Encourage students to ask themselves the question.

This is a useful tool to use often. Students will understand So What? as a cue to think more deeply.

### LINKS TO OTHER ACTIVITIES

See the READ Backwards TLA for setting up critical thinking.