

Socrates is alive and living in Hove!

A Socratic approach to teaching is about questioning rather than telling. It's a system of learning based on inquiry, questioning, exploration, and discovery and it's the hallmark of effective teachers and trainers.

- Asking questions
- Learning narrative
- High and low level interactivity

The challenge is to translate this powerful and proven approach from the classroom to e-learning. In all honesty e-learning can't deliver a truly Socratic approach in the sense of prompting a free ranging dialogue with a student. e-Learning is computer-based and therefore pre-programmed.

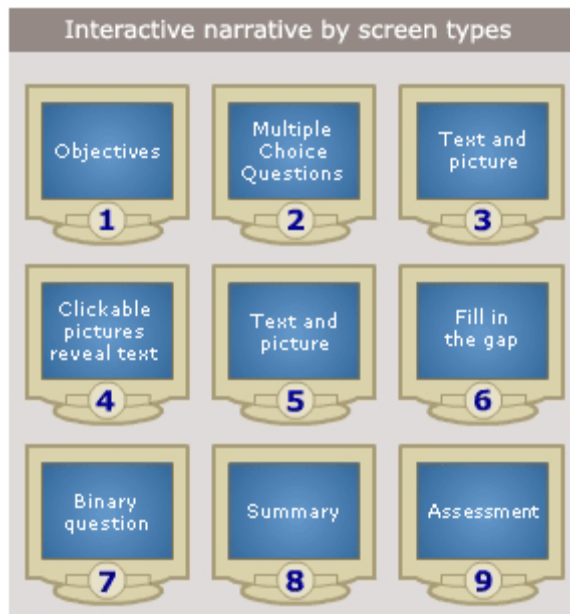
However, at Brightwave we do our best, and at least our designs and scripts are written in the spirit of Socrates!

Asking questions

In e-learning it is common to use a range of question types to assess retention and understanding after we've told the learner something, i.e. 'Teach and Test'. What we mean by a Socratic approach is asking questions before - and instead of - telling: "What do you think is the answer here?" Then reinforce the correct answer in the feedback, along with associated learning points. In other words 'Test to Teach'.

Learning narrative

As well as maximum use of questioning, in general terms we ensure that the 'learning narrative' - any sequence of screens within a learning object - is as consistently interactive as possible.



High and low level interactivity

In learning terms we can categorise interactivity as 'high level' when it challenges the user to think - especially as a result of the Socratic use of question types. 'Low level' interactivity is more information-orientated, as in websites where you click on pictures or text to 'drill down' to content.

Although arguably less cerebral than high level interactions, low level interactions have a definite value in allowing the user to be more self-directed, exploring and reflective in their learning. So to create an effective interactive narrative, a skilled e-learning writer will apply the 'Test to Teach' principle while using a blend of high and low level interactions.

The result should be, if not literally a Socratic experience, then the next best thing - e-learning that is never dull and keeps you on your toes!

Call us on 01273 827676 or email us at enquiries@brightwave.co.uk to find out more about our corporate learning solutions and how we can help your business.