Creating and using multiple-choice questions effectively - hinge questions

Hinge questions

What are hinge questions?
Hinge questions are specific, carefully crafted multiple choice questions. They should be a brief formative assessment that helps inform the teacher if the class understands the topic and are ready to move on. Importantly, they also help identify any learners who have specific misconceptions on the topic. You can use learners’ previous work to help you choose the answer options, as this is a useful way of identifying where students’ may need extra support.

Example
This example was used to assess if learners had grasped the idea of gradient with respect to the actual scales of the graph, rather than the numbers a straight line passed through or by counting squares. The aim with the answers was to quickly take stock if problems, evident in earlier work, had been overcome and to identify any learners who still:

- neglected to consider the scales (the top right option)
- confused the gradient with the y intercept (bottom left)
- confused gradients with their reciprocals (bottom right).

Further reading on hinge questions
- Dylan Wiliam’s website
- David Didau - How effective learning hinges on good questioning
- Hinge Question Hub