

How does AnswerGarden work?

AnswerGarden is a minimalistic feedback tool. Use it in the classroom as an educational tool or at work as a creative brainstorming tool. Post it in a tweet or you can embed it on your website or blog to use it as a poll or guestbook.

You create an AnswerGarden by entering a topic on [the Create New AnswerGarden-page](#). We'll show you an example! As we really care for our friends, we feel like asking our friends what makes them happy:

What makes you happy?

After pressing the submit button, you'll be redirected to your newly created AnswerGarden. Since no-one has posted an answer yet, your AnswerGarden will still be empty which looks like this:

What makes you happy?

Submit

20 characters remaining

The next step is to share your AnswerGarden with other human beings. Use it live in the classroom, at a meeting or on a conference. Or place (embed) your AnswerGarden on your blog, site or social network page, using the provided embed code. Or post a direct link to your AnswerGarden on fora or email it to friends. Hey look, we just tweeted about our new AnswerGarden:



Creative Heroes @CreativeHeroes · now

Please visit my Answergarden: What makes you happy? Thanks!

[answergarden.ch/view/46](#)

Expand

↩ Reply

🗑 Delete

★ Favorite

⋮ More

As your AnswerGarden draws attention people will start posting their answers to your question, either by entering their own answers or by clicking on and submitting existing answers. These are then represented in your AnswerGarden in the form of a growing word cloud. Wow, our friends answered to our AnswerGarden:

First create an AnswerGarden (see above). Then copy the embed code underneath the AnswerGarden (click the Share-link first). Paste this code in your website to include the AnswerGarden. AnswerGardens are a happy alternative for polls and comment-systems on your website. The benefit of an AnswerGarden is that it limits the sometimes awfully long rants of commenting users while still keeping the expression lost in polls!

Do you have an example of a nicely growing AnswerGarden?

Yes, visit the garden [AnswerGarden is....](#)

How often can I answer in an AnswerGarden?

This depends. Each AnswerGarden can be set to a different mode. There are several modes. In **Classroom Mode (default)**, respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, but may only submit each answer once. In **Brainstorm Mode**, respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, including unlimited copies of the same answer. This mode is useful if you trust your audience. In **Locked Mode**, the AnswerGarden is closed and no new answers can be submitted. Use this if you're not ready yet for a massive amount of answers and simply open it (set it to another mode) whenever you are!

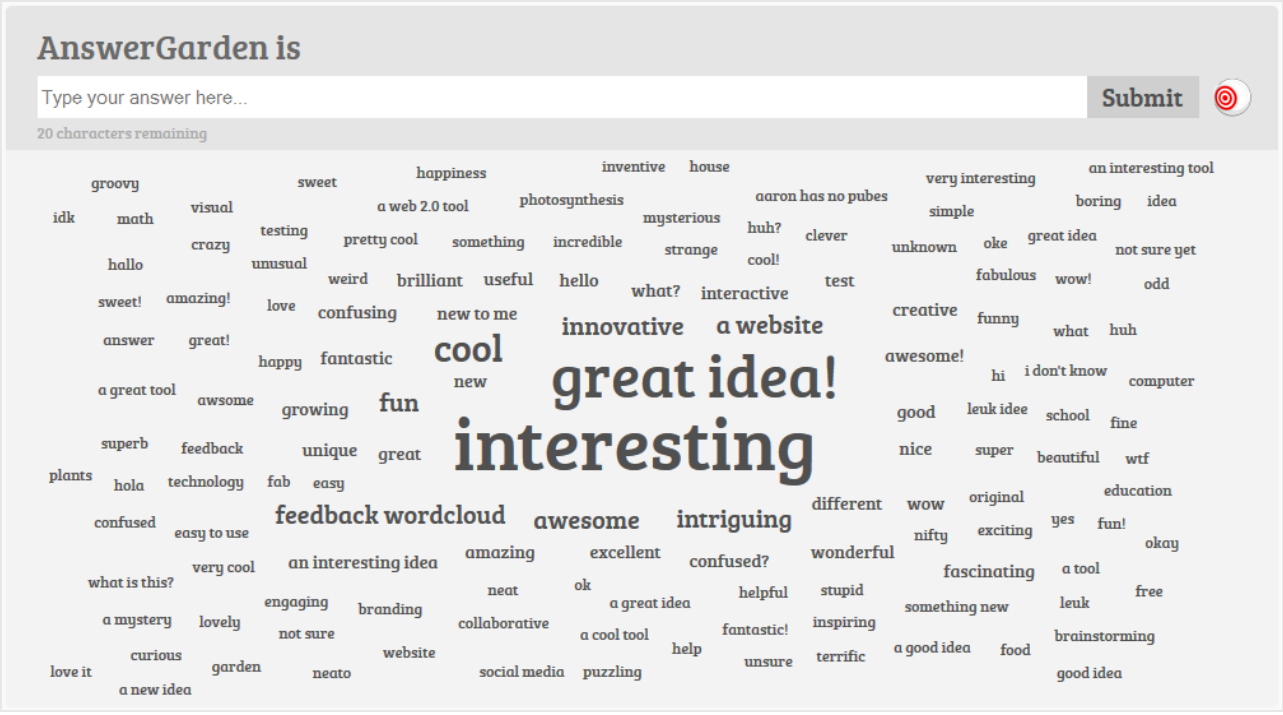
Superduper new is **Moderator Mode**: a mode that redirects each answer to the AntiGarden (the shady side of your AnswerGarden, [see an example](#)). Via the admin panel you can approve only those answers you find appropriate. You do need a password for this option, which you should add when you create your AnswerGarden.

If you create a new AnswerGarden and you're not sure which setting to choose, leave it at the default, Classroom Mode and enter a password just in case.

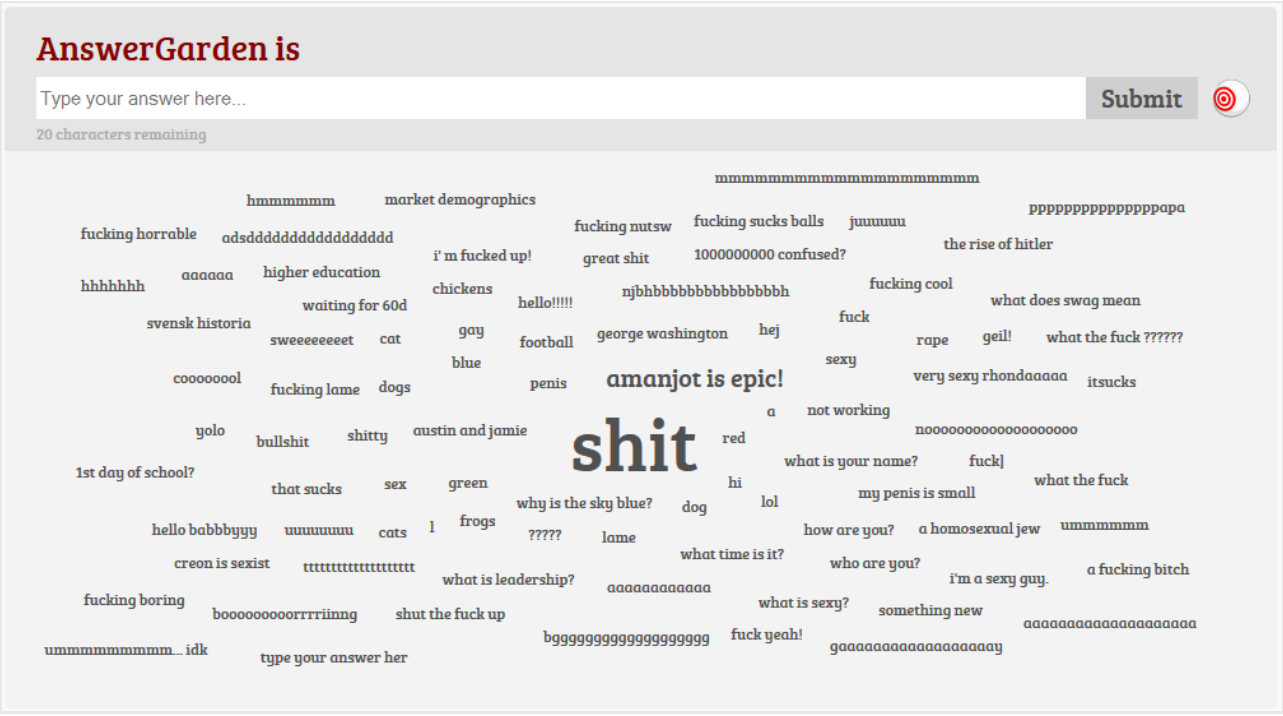
In the Create AnswerGarden form, you see small question marks. If you tap or hover over these, the functionality is explained like this:

1. In Classroom Mode, respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, but may only submit each answer once.
2. In Brainstorm Mode, respondents can submit an unlimited number of answers, including unlimited copies of the same answer. Only use this mode if you have a friendly audience.
3. In Moderator Mode, all answers are redirected to the AntiGarden so you can approve the answers before they appear in your AnswerGarden.
4. In Locked Mode, the AnswerGarden is closed and no new answers can be submitted. You can always change it to a different mode to allow answering later. Mind that you do need to provide a password when you create your AnswerGarden.

A happy AnswerGarden:



The AntiGarden containing the unwanted answers after one user filled our happy garden with their personal 'manure' looks like this:



Now you're in control of the words in your AnswerGarden (as long as you have the password)!

Password? Do I really have to provide a password when I create a new AnswerGarden?

No, you don't need to provide a password when creating a new AnswerGarden. The benefit of providing a password, however, is that it allows you to edit your AnswerGarden later. For instance if you want to switch modes (see question above), or if you want to edit the Topic-text or if you want to remove one or more answers from your garden. Can you keep a secret? If you supply an email address but no password, AnswerGarden will send you a randomly generated password.

I'm a teacher. How can I prevent bullying and foul language?

You can't. As with many Web 2.0 tools you're depending on user input, and some users choose to give unwanted input (simple reason being: because they can!). Yet, if you supply an admin password when you create an AnswerGarden, you can delete these unwanted answers.

We're teachers as well and we've noticed that there are a few things you can do to play a hand in preventing 'childish' reactions: mentioning upfront to your students that you want serious answers (not childish reactions) often can be enough... after all, it's a new way of learning for them as well! Mostly they do not really want to offend anyone but there's a chance one in the classroom might try to post a joke because it's possible. Moderating the answers on another computer while they are being submitted proves to be useful too. And if all fails, walk around and look at your students' devices. Only their answers (including possible nasty ones), will be **underlined**, allowing you to easily spot those students who have submitted an improper answer. Mentioning this to your students upfront will most likely make them think twice about their answering behaviour.

If you have provided a password during the creation of your AnswerGarden you can close an AnswerGarden temporarily and in Moderator Mode you can even moderate the answers if you like before they appear in your AnswerGarden.

Of course, like this the session will be less direct and interactive...so it's up to you to decide what works for your brainstorm audience.

Why is my answer not visible?

Only the most frequently entered words are visible. What you see is the essence of all opinions. In other words: if a garden is growing nicely, all not-so-very-important answers will be hidden. At the moment, 180 tags are visible per garden in embedded gardens and the gardens on our site, see for example this garden. But in Full View (accessible through Options), 100 tags will be visible, as you can see in [this example](#).

Where can I see how many times something has been answered?

To see the frequency of an answer simply hold you mouse cursor over an answer and after a second a number will emerge, showing you the number of times the answer has been submitted.

After an amazingly creative AnswerGarden session, I'd like to print the results on a poster. Is that possible?

Yes, that's really easy! You could export the data to Wordle or Tagxedo. These applications make graphically beautiful (static!) tag clouds. You find these export functions in the options-panel below your

garden. See these examples made with Wordle:



And this is what an export to Tagxedo looks like. Sweet!



Local 'Broadcasted' Geo AnswerGardens...ehh?

Well, actually this is really simple! If you're the admin of an AnswerGarden, you can choose to make it discoverable on your current internet network. What this means is that your audience can find the AnswerGarden via the home screen of the app or by clicking the find icon (a magnifying glass) on the right top of the AnswerGarden website or app.

There are two ways to make an AnswerGarden discoverable on the network. On the create-screen, you see four broadcast-options: 1 hour, 1 day, 1 week or hidden. This refers to the amount of time your AnswerGarden will be discoverable. If you select one of these four options, and press create, your AnswerGarden will be discoverable instantly. No need to type in a URL or scan QR-codes!

The second way is to go to the geo/broadcast options below your AnswerGarden. After providing your custom password, you can access the same four options.

Things to keep in mind are:

- This functionality actually uses your IP-address and maps it to the (geo-) location of your internet access point. For most schools and conference centers, this works flawlessly. If you use this at home, the exact location might be less accurate. This means that for instance, your neighbours might also see your broadcasted AnswerGarden. This is nice, as they can join in, but good to keep in mind!
- If you create an AnswerGarden at home and broadcast it immediately, it'll be discoverable on your home location. If you'd like to broadcast it at a project space, office or school, you need to broadcast it again. Then, it'll be discoverable at that place, and not at home any more.
- If the amount of time has been passed, your AnswerGarden will become invisible again.
- If you want your AnswerGarden to become invisible, just go to the broadcast/geo options and press invisible, and submit.

Double question! a) I like it. But I want to include AnswerGarden in the sidebar of my blog and there's no space.

b) Can I host a poll without showing the current answers?

'Yes, we can!' Have a look at [MicroGarden](#). It's AnswerGarden but smaller.

Can I embed AnswerGarden in PowerPoint?

By default, PowerPoint doesn't support inserting a live web page, but you can easily do this with the LiveWeb add-in. Here's an excellent explanation [how to install and use this add-in](#).

We've also found the [Showroom Plugin \(Commercial product\)](#) which should be capable of achieving the same result.

Feature request: I want answers with more than 20 characters!

We heard you and we are working on it! Check out this test version and tell us what you think of it:

<http://answergarden.ch/view/127183>

I have a problem with my AnswerGarden!

Please make sure you have updated your browser and are running the [latest version of Flash](#). If you keep having problems, please visit our [Support Forum](#).

Where can I submit feature requests or report bugs?

Submit bugs or feature requests in the [Support Forum](#).

What software do you use?

The HTML-view uses a modified version of [jqCloud Plugin for jQuery](#) by DukeLeNoir.

Why does AnswerGarden have a .ch domain extension?

Although .ch is the Internet country code for Switzerland, on this site the extension is used to refer to [CreativeHeroes](#), the creators of AnswerGarden. We do have [other domain extensions](#), but believe [Swiss gardens](#) are the purest.

Is AnswerGarden developed in Switzerland?

No, in The Netherlands! Here's proof: <http://answergarden.nl>

Is AnswerGarden a beta product?

We haven't released AnswerGarden as a beta, but we ARE working on improvement and new features. As many other human beings, we have to prioritize...

If you like AnswerGarden you could help us by spreading the word and [letting us know what you think](#).

I'm Google. Could you describe AnswerGarden with 31 tags?

Yeah. Of course we can: web2.o, brainstorming, tools, collaboration, classroom, workshop, poll, feedback, survey, cloud, free, technology, polls, answergarden, online, blog, answer, resources, tagcloud, embed, answers, tool, polling, questions, comments, surveys, blogs, widgets, fun, brainstorm, forms.

Who are you?

We are Richard and Sander from Creative Heroes, an Amsterdam-based creation studio. We create games such as Gluddle and toys such as DiceForChange. We designed and developed AnswerGarden ourselves and use it for creative brainstorms, in our lectures to young designers and to decide upon the name of our

next game . Feel free to explore at [some of the things we've created](#) and [say hi](#) and [follow us](#) on Twitter for updates on AnswerGarden.