

FACILITATING THE QUESTION FORMULATION TECHNIQUE: BEST PRACTICES 1.0

Here are some suggestions for facilitating the Question Formulation Technique™ (QFT™).

Materials/Preparation:

- Decide how you will break students into small groups.
- Make sure to have either newsprint or large pieces of paper for groups to write their questions. It is important that all group members see the questions being produced.
- Have different colored pens or markers available.

Starting and Facilitating the Process:

Be brief when introducing the process. Resist over-explaining or lecturing. Repeat or rephrase the instructions if needed.

Expect some students to initially struggle with the process. Avoid answering questions that interrupt the thinking process or that show your preferences.

Do not give examples of questions or you risk setting the agenda and leading the direction of the questions.

Acknowledge and validate all student contributions equally and be consistent with the words you use. You can use a simple “thank you” for validation.

Have a strategy for using student questions. You, the students or you and the students can decide how to use the questions.

Make visible to students the actions to be taken with the questions.

Taking action with student questions (research, readings, discussions, experiments, etc) will help them take ownership and will motivate them to continue using the question formulation process.

Do not cut the reflection piece from the process. The reflection help students internalize the process and is key in developing their metacognitive thinking abilities. Use the reflection step to help students think about the work they did, what they learned and how they can use it.

Manage the Time and Pace:

Give students a time limit for each step but make adjustments (extend or reduce time) based on your observations.

Trust “pockets” of silence and resist hurrying their thinking process.