

QFT: Question Formulation Technique

Ideas with an asterisk are from *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions* (Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana)

The Question Formulation Technique (QFT)* is a research-based approach to helping students ask the “right” questions (with “right” being the nimble use of the process for every context).

QFT has six components*:

1. A *Question Focus*, usually developed by the teacher that serves as the jumping off point for student questions
2. A process for student to *produce questions* using a set of four simple rules
3. An exercise for students to work on *closed- and open-ended questions*
4. Student *selection of priority questions*
5. A teacher and student plan for *next steps*--how they will use the priority questions
6. A *reflection* activity for students to name what they have learned, how they learned it, and how they will use what they have learned

The Right Question Institute Question Formulation Technique*

Produce Your Questions

Four essential rules for producing your own questions:

- Ask as many questions as you can
- Do not stop to discuss, judge or answer the questions
- Write down every question *exactly* as it is stated
- Change any statement into a question

Improve Your Questions

Categorize the questions as close- or open-ended:

- **Closed-ended questions** can be answered with “yes” or “no” or with one word
- **Open-ended questions** require an explanation and cannot be answered with a “yes” or a “no” or with one word
- Find closed-ended questions. Mark them with a C.
- The other questions must be open-ended. Mark them with an O.

Name the value of each type of question:

- The advantages and disadvantages of asking closed-ended questions
- The advantages and disadvantages of asking open-ended questions

Change questions from one type to another:

- Change closed-ended questions to open-ended
- Change open-ended questions to closed-ended

Prioritize the Questions

Choose your three most important questions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why did you choose these three as the most important?

Next Steps

How are you going to use your questions? What do you need to know next?