



INQUIRY FIELD GUIDE

*20+ PRACTICAL STRATEGIES AND
PROTOCOLS TO PROMPT QUESTIONS
AND FACILITATE INVESTIGATIONS*

The Question Formulation Technique

The What

The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) was developed by the Right Question Institute to help anyone produce, improve, and prioritize questions. Use it to generate investigation questions that will help students address meaningful, targeted content.

The How

1. Prior to the lesson, design a QFocus to jumpstart the production of questions.
 - A QFocus is a simple statement or image (NOT a question) that will lead students down a line of questioning that is relevant to the inquiry and the content you intend to address.
2. Review the rules of the QFT with students. (2 minutes)
 - Groups will ask as many questions as they can.
 - Do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer the questions.
 - A recorder writes down every question exactly as it is stated.
 - Change any statements into questions.
3. Present the QFocus, set a timer, and have students produce questions in response. (4 minutes)
4. Guide students to categorize their questions. (4 minutes)
 - Categories may be for closed-ended vs. open-ended questions, testable vs. researchable questions, or questions that relate to certain topics.
 - Students identify categories by labeling their questions. For example, closed- and open-ended questions can be marked with a C or O.
 - Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each category of question.
5. Help students improve their questions. (4 minutes)

- Instruct students to change 1 question to fit in the opposite category. For example, change an open-ended question to a closed-ended one.
6. Guide students to prioritize questions by having them write their top 3 questions each on their own sticky note. (3 minutes)
 7. Invite groups to share their prioritized questions with the class. Similar questions are clustered on a wall or “Investigation Questions” anchor chart for ongoing reference throughout the Unit.

Visit [inquired.org/fieldguide](https://www.inquired.org/fieldguide) for the following resource(s):

1. *QFocus Planning* teacher worksheet: This tool supports the planning of a relevant and meaningful QFocus for QFT activities.
2. *Generating Investigation Questions* slide presentation: This slide presentation guides students through a scaled version of the steps of the QFT.