

## What do I do with the questions once students ask them?? A Next Steps Continuum\*

\*an incomplete, unscientific continuum of what to do with the physical questions students produce

→ Easy to Implement  
→ Less Time  
→ Less of a Change

Nothing! (Tailor instruction according to questions)  
Nothing! (Students practiced skill of questioning)  
Nothing! (Engagement, Pre-reading, etc.)



Exit Ticket	Do Now
Formative Assessment	Homework
Pop Quiz/Reading Check	Review Game
Summative Assessment	Test Prep

Ask a Guest Speaker/Guest Expert  
Peer Review/Feedback  
Class Discussion      Socratic Seminar  
Close Reading      Primary Source Analysis  
Debate Prep      Writing/Journal Prompts  
Listening Guide for a Lecture or Film

Hang on Walls, Check off as Answered  
Create a Question "Parking Lot"  
Sub Plans  
Look it up, extra credit!  
Student Choice Projects

Experiments & Investigation      Design a Lab  
Designing & Creating      Papers & Projects  
Research      Taking Civic or Community Action

A Longer PBL or Inquiry Cycle  
Essential Questions for the Year/Unit  
Students Suggest and Pursue an Action Plan

→ Harder to Implement  
→ More Time  
→ More of a Change

\*Teachers who regularly use the QFT use student questions in a variety of ways (from *all* parts of the continuum), depending on their instructional purpose, content, students, goals, familiarity with the process, and time. **The goal is not to get to one side of the continuum or the other; rather, any and all of these actions can be good and right!**



## Some Tips for Thinking about What to Do with Student Questions

- ❑ Try to plan how you will use questions BEFORE the students ever start asking.
- ❑ *Tell* the students your projected plans for how their questions will be used.
- ❑ You can always change your mind if the questions go in a different direction than planned. Talk to students about that too. It's important that students see that they are not asking questions idly or as a one-off; rather, there is value to their questions and their questions impact their learning.
- ❑ Give yourself permission; not every question asked can/will be answered. Questions have value even (and sometimes, especially) when they're not directly answered.
- ❑ Give students permission to continue asking and searching for answers beyond the classroom.

### One way you might think about it--

How do you use questions normally in your teaching? (list the times/places)

Now, which of those items/uses could actually be student-written questions? Why?

For example, as a high school English teacher, I gave homework questions that accompanied reading, I gave essay questions, quiz questions, discussion questions, worksheet questions, exit ticket questions, turn and talk questions. I verbally asked questions to deepen and stimulate their thinking or to clarify or challenge their thinking, I had an essential question or two for every unit and every lesson within the unit, etc... When might student-created questions be just as (or more) effective? When might student-created questions be ineffective or insufficient?

### Some cool next steps ideas from educators around the country:

Research Project From an elementary school teacher in Hooksett, NH--

"I have been taking my students outside ... a lot! - We are working with the Hooksett Conservation Commission on a property they own in town. Students developed questions about the property and are now researching the answers - the questions will be posted on the property and the public can access the answers via a QR code adjacent to the question. Cool project!!"

Peer Review/Peer Feedback from a Chicago, IL high school science department chair

Students designed an experiment using water tables to test different types of dams. Each small group passed their design to another group, who asked questions, using the QFT, about the design in front of them.

Questions and designs then went back to the original group as feedback. They had to edit designs to address the questions before testing.

Exit Tickets/"Do Nows" from a HS Social Studies Teacher Los Angeles, CA

At the end of class, students select one closed question and one open question from the class list. They write those questions down and answer each one as their exit ticket that day. (Example → )

EXIT TICKET:

CLOSED QUESTION: How many people were suffering?

1. Write the answer to the closed question in Part III here, using a complete sentence: There were 8 million people suffering.

OPEN QUESTION: What caused to be like this?

2. Write the RESPONSE to the Open question from Part III as your exit ticket. Use at least 3 sentences. (use evidence from at least 1 secondary source and evidence from the film).

The britans forced the Indians to grow crops they didn't need, the Indians could not grow their own food which led to a famine. Indians could not sell anything and they were forced to starve and by what they given.

Source: The

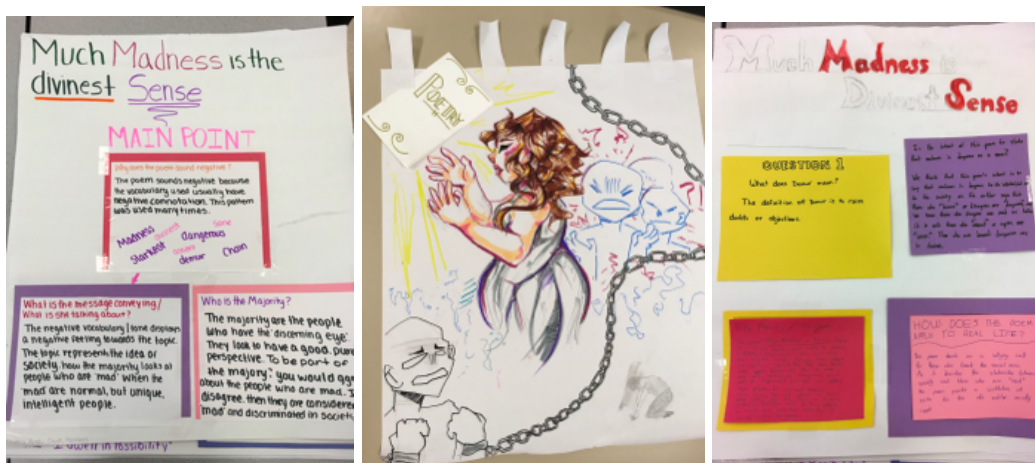
## Creating “Driving Questions” for entire units from middle school Science teachers in CT & NY

Students work with the teacher to organize their questions into patterns and categories. The top categories make it onto the “Driving Question Board” ie. the essential questions for the duration of the unit. The labs and investigations for the rest of the unit are tailored to address these overarching questions/patterns of questions. Questions that don’t fit the categories on the Driving Question Board go in the “Parking Lot.” Parking lot questions can be extra credit, individual research projects, Do Nows, or the teacher will pull a couple articles for the class on the last couple days of the unit to address some of these questions.



## Close reading and small group poetry analysis and presentations, a HS English class in MA

Used the QFT to read and analyze an Emily Dickinson poem, “Much Madness is divinest sense.” In small groups, students worked with the text to develop an answer to their priority questions backed up by textual analysis. Groups created a poster and presented their ideas to the rest of class.



Source: The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) was created by The Right Question Institute (RQI). Visit [rightquestion.org](http://rightquestion.org) for more information and free resources.