

Fact First Questioning

Fact First Questioning is a higher-order questioning technique that takes a factual “what” question and turns it into a more complex “how” or “why” question by stating a fact first and asking students to elaborate on it or provide further explanation. This enables students to tap into deeper thinking processes that lead to a more enduring understanding of concepts. When students respond to *Fact First Questions*, teachers gain insight into whether students recall important knowledge at a superficial level or have developed deeper conceptual understanding.

How to implement the strategy:

1. Consider factual questions related to the content. Recall questions from the text are often a good place to start. Rephrase them into *Fact First Questions* by using this general template: Factual statement followed by “Why is x an example of y?” (Black, et al., 2003).
2. State the fact and allow adequate wait time to provide students the opportunity to activate their thinking about the concept.
3. Ask “Why is x an example of y?”
4. Listen carefully in order to ask follow up questions and guide discussion.

Adapted from:

- Keeley, P. (2008). *Science Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction, and Learning*, Thousand Oaks CA. Corwin Press.