

Five Levels of Content Facilitation Questions — Elementary

When you are a masterful facilitator, you spend a majority of your time working with students one-on-one, in pairs, or in small groups as students are working on differentiated activities. As students are working on their activities, you'll want to have thought through a set of leveled questions to ensure that each of your learners is progressing toward and beyond content mastery. Below are the five levels of content facilitation questions with a couple of examples to highlight the progression.

Question Type	Description	ELA Example	Health Example
Comprehension	Questions that ensure students understand the content's concepts and skills	What are the main events and characters in the story?	What are the main food groups and what does each one do for your body?
Application	Questions that ensure students' ability to apply learning to new situations	Can you explain the problem and solution in the story?	Which food groups would help give you energy during a long day at school?
Connection	Questions that ensure students' ability to apply learning to their lives	How is the character's challenge similar to something you've experienced?	How do your food choices affect how you feel during the day?
Synthesis	Questions that encourage students to create new information from existing data	Can you write a new scene that fits with the story's characters and setting?	Can you design a balanced meal using foods from different food groups?
Metacognition	Questions that prompt students to think about their thinking processes	What reading strategy helped you understand the story best?	What helped you remember the different food groups and their purposes?

But first, access! Prior to pushing students toward and beyond content mastery, it is essential to make sure that each of your students has access to the instructional activities. Is there a language barrier to account for? Are there accessibility accommodations that students need? Do students have a processing deficit? Access questions can be asked after your first observations and throughout the leveled questions explained above. Consider the examples below:

- Are there words here that are confusing?
- What are the action words in the question?
- Would it help to reread or look at an example?
- Do you want to talk it through before writing?
- What language would you like to answer the questions in?

Below is a variety of examples for each type of content facilitation question. After reviewing the samples, use the brainstorm organizer provided to brainstorm your own set of questions for an upcoming instructional unit.

Question Type	Example Questions
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are liquid matter and gas matter alike and different? • What are the main ideas in this text? • What is the character's problem? • What information is important here? • How would you calculate the area of a rectangular garden that measures 12 meters in length and 8 meters in width?
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name another situation where this information would be useful. • Select a character from the book we've been reading and compose a journal entry from their perspective. • Can you apply this rule to a real-life example? • Can you explain how you used the model or tool?
Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you think of a character that reminds you of someone you know? • How do you think tempo (speed) of a song can affect the mood or feeling it conveys? • How does this topic connect to something we learned before? • Why might this learning matter outside of school?
Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you design a solution using what you've learned? • Can you combine two ideas to create something new? • What might happen if one part of the system changed? • Can you create a model, diagram, or explanation to teach someone else?
Metacognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategy worked best for you? Why? • What did you do when you got stuck? • When you're solving a math problem, what strategies do you use to check if your answer is correct? • How do you know you're contributing to your group project effectively?

Brainstorm Organizer — Five Levels of Content Facilitation Questions

Question Type	Brainstormed Questions
Comprehension	
Application	
Connection	
Synthesis	
Metacognition	