

## **Candid Conversations**

### The Teacher's Step-by-Step Guidance to Facilitating the Question-Asking Activity

In advance of the preparatory class, the teacher reviews the Right Question Institute's program and video on the [Question-Formulation Technique \(QFT\) website](https://rightquestion.org/education/) (<https://rightquestion.org/education/>).

**Step #1** – In the Preparatory Class, the Teacher Shows the [Rule of Law Video](#) and the [Civility Video](#). Students fill out the [Civility Self-Reflection Quiz](#).

**Classroom Assignment:** In preparation for the program with federal judges and volunteer attorneys, students develop questions about 1) the rule of law video and 2) about their issues and concerns related to the Constitution, the courts. They are encouraged to ask questions about the roles and experiences of the judges and lawyers

#### **Step #2 – Teacher Explains and Reinforces the Following Rules During the Activity**

1. In your small group, write as many questions about **the rule of law and about your Constitutional rights** as you can. Keep pushing until time is up.
2. Write down “dumb” questions, too. These questions test your assumptions and sometimes reveal surprising answers and information.
3. Do not discuss, judge, or answer the questions. Keep moving to get more questions.

#### **Step #3 – Students Work in Small Groups to Brainstorm and Write Questions**

1. Together students brainstorm the questions verbally. Each student writes down their own questions as they say them – one per sticky note.
2. They put the notes on their small group's flipchart/wall. Duplicate questions are allowed.

#### **Step #4 – When All Notes are Posted on Each Small Group's Flip Chart**

1. The small group changes any statement into a question. The student who wrote the question rewrites it on a new sticky note and puts it on the flip chart.
2. The small group changes any closed-ended question to an open-ended question. The student who wrote the question rewrites it on a new sticky note and puts it on the flip chart.
3. If a question comes up (in the small-group or large-group conversations) that has not been put on a sticky note, the student who raised the question writes it on a note and puts it on the flipchart. The group changes statements to questions and closed-ended questions to open-ended questions.

#### **The Teacher's Role**

1. **Setting Up Students for Success.** The teacher watches the QFT video and takes one class period to facilitate the preparatory activity. They collect the finalized sticky-note questions at the end.
2. **Sequencing.** Prior to the class visit, the teacher selects the best questions on the sticky notes, sequences them in logical order, and numbers them.
3. **Assigning Sticky-Note Questions.** Just before the class, the teacher gives a range of students with different learning styles one numbered question each on a sticky note. Because students will read the question, those who are reticent may feel more comfortable participating because they will be **reading** a question that has been arrived at in the group process.
4. **Calling on Students.** During the program, the teacher facilitates the question-asking by calling on students in chronological order, according to the sequence of numbers on the sticky notes. The teacher also is free to deviate from the sequencing, if needed. Follow-up questions are important. To keep the program lively, and all participants engaged, the teacher calls on students to ask spontaneous, verbal, follow-up questions. Students who read prepared questions from the previous class session,, also may ask their own, spontaneous questions.