

Costa's Levels of Questioning

Arthur Costa, an education researcher, divided questions into three categories. These categories define the complexity or depth of thinking required by different types of questions.

1. Level 1 Questions: Factual

Answers point to one fact or detail in the text. Level 1 questions have only one answer and are very concrete. Words found in Level 1 questions include:

- Define
- Name
- Match
- Complete
- Observe
- Describe
- Select
- Identify
- List

Examples:

- ▶ Define cultural convergence.
- ▶ Name the two major religions represented in the population of Jerusalem.

2. Level 2 Questions: Interpretive

Answers inferred from what the text implicitly states or what can be found in several places in the text. Level 2 questions often have more than one answer, and answers are derived from evidence in text or other media. Words found in Level 2 questions include:

- Analyze
- Group
- Compare/contrast
- Infer
- Classify
- Sort
- Distinguish

Examples:

- ▶ Compare and contrast Jewish and Muslim religious beliefs.
- ▶ What was the main point of...?

Costa's Levels of Questioning, continued

3. Level 3 Questions: Reflective/Open-Ended

Answers are suggested by the text. Level 3 questions facilitate deeper learning and the application of acquired knowledge, facts, techniques, and rules. Level 3 questions ask for judgments to be made from information. Words found in Level 3 questions include:

- Evaluate
- Apply
- Hypothesize
- Imagine
- Judge
- Predict
- Speculate

Examples:

- ▶ Imagine you were a Muslim woman living in Jerusalem today. How would you dress – according to traditional Muslim cultural norms or according to your own style, if different?
- ▶ Predict how your family would react if you were to go against an accepted gender role in your family's ethnic or religious culture?