

# Facilitating Small Groups

## Question Types

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### 1. Factual questions

- Used to get information and open discussions. These are all the “W” questions: what, where, why, when, and who.
- These questions are good at assessing preparation of students and knowledge base but not application of knowledge.
- Example: What are the steps of this procedure?

### 2. Broadening questions

- Used to introduce additional facts and encourage analysis. For example, “What is the relationship between x and y?” “What other facts are important?”
- These questions are good at assessing preparation of students and knowledge base but not application of knowledge.
- Example: How would that treatment differ for a geriatric patient verses a pediatric patient?

### 3. Justifying questions

- Used to challenge old ideas and develop new ones.
- These questions help a student recognize (and potentially challenge) their decision making style and potential biases.
- Examples: “Why do you think so?” “In what ways is this important?” “How should this be done?” “How did you come to that conclusion or opinion?”

### 4. Hypothetical questions

- Used to explore unknowns and when necessary, change the course of the discussion.
- These questions move the student from books and theories to application in complex circumstances. Pitfalls to overly idealistic or all/none thinking can be noted with these questions.
- Examples: “Suppose we did it this way... what would happen?” “Another hospital does this... is this feasible here?” Consider a case where a pt’s family is split on accepting your treatment recommendations for the pt...

Summarized from Whitman and Schwenk (1993)