

Blank's Levels of Questioning

What Is 'Blank's Levels of Questioning'?

Blank's Levels of Questioning is based on the work completed by Blank, Rose and Berlin (1978). The model is comprised of four levels that support the development of the students' understanding of language and sets of questions which go from concrete (level 1) to abstract (level 4).

What Are the Levels?

Level 1 – Matching perception

At this level, the student can:

- Point to an object. e.g. Where is the cow?
- Find a matching object. e.g. Can you find another flower like this?
- Name an object. e.g. What is this?

Generally, children develop this level of understanding at 2-3 years of age.

Level 2 – Selective analysis of perception

At this level, the student will need to look at specific features of the picture or object. Questions at this level will ask the student to look at and describe different features of the object, such as its function, attributes or qualities.

At this level, the student can:

- Describe an object by function. e.g. Point to something that... What do we use a fork for?
- Find an object by attribute or description, such as its colour, size, texture, shape or quantity. e.g. Can you find something red? What shape is this?
- Tell you items that go together. e.g. What goes with a bucket?
- Finish a sentence involving an object. e.g. You can tell the time using a...
- Answer 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions from a picture stimulus. e.g. Who can you see in the picture?
- Identify differences. e.g. What is the difference between these pictures?
- Explain what is happening in a picture.

Generally, children develop this level of understanding at 3-4 years of age.

Level 3 – Reordering perception

At this level, the student needs to use prior knowledge and their own experiences to be able to make deductions, predictions and generalisations. The student is able to retell stories and empathise with the characters. It is at this level that the student is beginning to use higher level language skills.

At this level, the student can:

- Summarise events. e.g. What happened?
- Predict events. e.g. What will happen next?
- Retell a story or complete a sequencing activity. e.g. What happened first in the story?
- Deduce characters' emotions. e.g. How does the character feel?
- Define a word. e.g. What does this word mean?
- Identify similarities. e.g. Can you think about a similar event in the story?

Generally, children develop this level of understanding at 4–5 years of age.

Level 4 – Solving problems and justifying

This level involves higher level language skills, such as prediction, explanations, solutions and problem solving.

At this level, the student can:

- Give reasons as to why something cannot be done.
- Justify a prediction.
- Justify a decision.
- Solve a problem.
- Predict changes.
- Identify why an event happened.
- Infer characters' feelings and decisions.

Generally, children develop this level of understanding at 5–6 years of age.