

Developmental Hierarchy of Question Comprehension

Children learn to comprehend questions in a developmental hierarchy. This hierarchy moves from the ability to use concrete thinking skills to more abstract thinking abilities. As a student's abstract thinking skills improve so does the ability to answer more complex question formations. Below you will find a list of cognitive processes involved in question comprehension, definitions of the cognitive processes and an appropriate question form. Additionally, you will see approximate ages of when typical language developing children are able to understand specific question formations.

COGNITIVE PROCESS	DEFINITION	QUESTION	AGE
Memory	Recall / recognition	Yes/no What? What (X) doing? Where (place)? Where (direction)? Who? Whose? How many? How much? When?	2.0+ 2.6+ 2.6+ 2.6+ 3.0+ 3.0+ 3.0+ 4.0+ 4.6+
Translation	Change information into another system	Retell Draw a picture	3.0+
Interpretation	Discover relationships	What reason (basic why)? Describe	3.0+
Application	Solve life-like problems using information	What if...? How long (duration)? How often? How does?	4.0+ 4.0+ 4.6+ 4.6+
Analysis	Give reasons based on parts	What will happen...? Why (more complex)?	4.6+ 4.6+
Synthesis	Use imagination to solve problems	What ways might...? What would you do if...? Pretend	5.0+
Evaluation	Establish standards and determine how ideas meet them	Should...? Do you agree...?	5.0+

Adapted from Curriculum-Relevant Therapy: From Design to Delivery, Diann Grimm, Fall 2000