

QFT: the question formulation exercise

Econ 57a, Environmental Economics, Fall 2019

QFT: the question formulation exercise

Please sit with your group members for now

Take two minutes

Give your group an awesome name!!

The Question Formulation Exercise

- ▶ To help you develop and refine questions for your group project
- ▶ To help you think through the various aspects of the project

Four rules for QFT

1. Ask as many questions as you can
2. Do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer the questions
3. Write down every question exactly as it is stated
4. Change any statement into a question

Which of the above four rules is the hardest to follow?

The prompt

- ▶ Pick a topic phrase for your group project if you have not already done so.
- ▶ This can be:
 - ▶ The Green New Deal
 - ▶ Solar Energy
 - ▶ Water Safety
- ▶ Write down the “prompt” on your sheet

The Question

Take five minutes, and put down your list of questions on the sheet

Choose three questions that you find to be the most interesting

Label them yellow and put a star in column A

Type of Questions

A question can be open-ended or close-ended

- ▶ Close-ended question
 - ▶ How much extra death does climate change cause to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts each year?
 - ▶ Rigorous scientific hypothesis testing
- ▶ Open-ended question
 - ▶ What is the economic/societal impact of climate change to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

Label your question as close-ended or open-ended

A question can also be positive or normative:

- ▶ Positive questions: finding facts
 - ▶ How much extra death does climate change cause to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts each year?
 - ▶ What is the economic/societal impact of climate change to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?
- ▶ Normative questions: finding alternatives
 - ▶ Is moving vulnerable population out the BEST strategy for them to adapt to climate change?
 - ▶ What is the best strategy to prepare vulnerable population for the upcoming climate challenge?

Label your question as positive or normative

Take one of the questions, and try to improve the original statement

Put it underneath your list of questions.

Towards the next steps

- ▶ What type of property right governs the good/service of your interest?
- ▶ Who are the stakeholders
- ▶ What are the trade-offs that are involved with your question?