**QUESTION FORMULATION TECHNIQUE**

Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana of the Right Question Institute developed the Question Formulation Technique as “a catalyst for micro-democracy.” When used in the classroom, it encourages learning, engagement, and curiosity, and helps students develop their capacity for inquiry as a foundational skill.

When using QFT students learn to: produce their own questions, improve their questions, strategize how to use their questions, and reflect on what they learned and how they learned it. QFT begins with a prompt (the *Question* Focus), usually provided by the teacher. It can be a word, sentence, photograph, song, or anything to which students can respond. Upstander Project has adapted QFT as a pre-screening activity and, for that reason, generally skips important steps of this technique. Once the teacher introduces the prompt (in this case, the side-by-side photos of the Chiricahua Apaches), we encourage workshop participants (be they teachers or students) to follow RQI’s four essential rules:

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

RQI recommends these additional steps:

1. Number all questions
2. Categorize them as closed-ended (C) or open-ended (O)
3. Discuss the advantages of closed and open-ended questions
4. Improve the questions by changing one (C) to (O), and one (O) to (C)
5. Prioritize the questions while thinking about your *Question Focus*
6. To answer your priority questions, figure out what you need to know (Information) and what you need to do (Tasks)
7. Share the questions you changed from open/closed, plus your 3 priority questions and rationale for choosing them
8. Reflect on what you learned, how you learned it, and how you will use what you learned

For more information on Question Formulation Technique, see Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Press, 2013).