FOCUS QUESTIONS TO GUIDE FOSS –BASED ACTIVITIES

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| Questioning strategies in general – and the use of focus questions in particular – are the foundation for inquiry-based instruction. |

* What are you trying to demonstrate or prove?
* What have you determined so far?
* How do you know that?
* Why do you think that happened?
* What didn’t work?
* What have you tried? Why? Could you try it another way?
* Is it possible to . . . ?
* Have you considered . . . ?
* What if you . . . ?
* Where could you look . . . ?
* Tell me how you . . . ?
* What other information do you still need?
* What did you discover when . . . ?
* Do we all agree about this?
* What is going on when . . . ?
* What do you see? Is that all you see?
* What questions do you have?
* What would happen if . . . ?
* How might that have been different?
* What does that suggest to you?
* Is there someone you could ask?
* Looking back, tell me about . . . ?
* What is it exactly that you want to find out?
* What data do we need? How can we collect that data?

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During an activity, focus questions can be used to encourage students to:

* Focus attention on a phenomenon, characteristic, or event that might otherwise have gone unnoticed
* Make critical comparisons
* Take some action that might lead to additional observations of a significant nature
* Investigate something they have observed
* Probe of an unexpected outcome or discrepant event
* Explain counterintuitive findings
* Ascertain or refresh prior knowledge
* Reinvigorate a stalled investigation by asking an action, problem-solving, or reasoning question
* Help students discover how they might navigate around misconceptions or errors
* Evoke further questions and inquiries