Question Detectives

Sort questions by how you would use them.

3.13.A "generate questions on a topic for formal and informal inquiry;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

FORMAL INQUIRY

Use a formal inquiry question when you will look in books, trusted websites, or ask an expert for facts.

Why do bridges need strong supports?

INFORMAL INQUIRY

Use an informal inquiry question when you will ask people in casual conversation about their experiences, choices, or ideas.

Which fruit do you enjoy eating most?

1 SORT

8 items

Circle FORMAL or INFORMAL for each question.

1.	What causes a rainbow?	FORMAL INFORMAL
2.	How do beavers build dams?	FORMAL INFORMAL
3.	What snack do you like to eat after school?	FORMAL INFORMAL
4.	Where do sea turtles lay their eggs?	FORMAL INFORMAL
5.	What did you see at the zoo the last time you went?	FORMAL INFORMAL
6.	Which school lunch do you like best?	FORMAL INFORMAL
7.	How does a thermometer measure temperature?	FORMAL INFORMAL
8.	What do sharks use their gills for?	FORMAL INFORMAL

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Choose one topic. Write one new FORMAL inquiry question and one new INFORMAL inquiry question about that topic.

FORMAL _____

INFORMAL _____

CHALLENGE

Choose a new topic. Write two FORMAL inquiry questions and two INFORMAL inquiry questions about it.

ANSWER KEY

Question Detectives

GRADE 3 · TEKS 3.13.A

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	What causes a rainbow?	**FORMAL**	This asks for a science fact that can be researched.
2	How do beavers build dams?	**FORMAL**	This asks for factual information that can be found in sources.
3	What snack do you like to eat after school?	**INFORMAL**	This asks a person about a personal choice.
4	Where do sea turtles lay their eggs?	**FORMAL**	This asks for a fact about an animal.
5	What did you see at the zoo the last time you went?	**INFORMAL**	This asks a person about an experience.
6	Which school lunch do you like best?	**INFORMAL**	This asks a person for an opinion.
7	How does a thermometer measure temperature?	**FORMAL**	This asks for a science fact that can be researched.
8	What do sharks use their gills for?	**FORMAL**	This asks for a fact about how an animal's body works.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **FORMAL**: Why do leaves change color in fall?
- **INFORMAL**: What colors do the leaves turn where you live?

Challenge: Topic: Gardens. FORMAL: What insects help bean plants grow? Why should gardeners pull weeds? INFORMAL: What plant do you like growing? How often do you water plants at home?

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item. Formal questions seek facts through research or expert sources. Informal questions seek information from people through their experiences, choices, or ideas.