Hillocks’ Questioning Hierarchy

Level 1: This question reveals **Basic Stated Information** that shows that the reader can identify and comprehend **literal information** from the text.

Level 2: This question reveals **Key Details** from the text that are crucial to understanding, but are stated only in **one** place.

Level 3: This question reveals **Stated Relationships** that are essential to understanding, based on the **building up of information** and key details.

Level 4: This question asks readers to identify a **Simple Implied Relationship**, which is an **explicitly stated relationship** between two characters, groups, events, issues, or other pieces of information.

Level 5: This question asks readers about a **Complex Implied Relationship**, in which the reader must **infer** a relationship among a large number of details that are spread across the text. The reader must be able to identify the necessary details and discern the pattern that exists among them.

Level 6: This question asks the reader to make an **Authorial Generalization**, or to think about what the text implies, (through the theme, point, central focus), about the world beyond the text or about the human condition. Students must be capable of justifying the generalizations with a thesis of how details work together throughout the text to express a particular and conclusive point.

Level 7: This question asks the reader to make a **Structural Generalization**. These questions cannot be asked until the students have read the text and have justified an authorial generalization. The students are reading like an author and can describe **how the text was structured** to make a particular point or to bring attention to a particular theme.

Adapted from Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, *Engaging Readers and Writers With Inquiry.*