COSTA’S Three Levels of Questioning

LEVEL ONE: Gathering
Level One questions cause students to recall information. This level of question causes students to input the data into short-term memory, but if they don’t use it in some meaningful way, they may soon forget.

- Define - to set forth the meaning of
- Describe - to represent or give an account in words
- Identify - to establish the identity of
- List - a simple series of words or numbers
- Name - to mention or identify by name
- Observe - to see or sense esp. through careful attention
- Recite - to repeat verbatim
- Scan - to examine closely

Which amendment in the Constitution gives citizens the right to bear arms?  
What does the chart show? (scan)

LEVEL TWO: Processing / Applying
Level Two questions enable students to process information. They expect students to make sense of information they have gathered and retrieved from long-and short-term memory.

- Analyze - to make an analysis of, an examination of a thing to know its parts
- Compare - to examine for likenesses and differences
- Contrast - to show differences when compared
- Group - to cluster
- Infer - to derive as a conclusion from facts or premises
- Sequence - chronological order of events
- Synthesize - the combination of parts or elements into a whole

Compare and contrast societal conditions in the US in 1787 that led to the inclusion of the second amendment in the US Constitution with conditions today.  
How does the term “manifest destiny” capture the essence of western expansion in the US? (synthesize)

LEVEL THREE: Creating
Level Three questions require students to go beyond the concepts or principles they have learned and to use these in novel or hypothetical situations.

- Apply - to put to practical use
- Evaluate - appraise, value
- Hypothesize - to adopt as an hypothesis/assumption
- Imagine - to adopt as an hypothesis/assumption
- Judge - to form an estimate or evaluation about something; deduce
- Predict - to declare in advance
- Speculate - to think or wonder about a subject

If there were a Constitutional amendment that prohibited ownership of weapons by citizens, how might American society be affected?  
Which of the characters in Great Expectations suffered the most? (judge)
COSTA’S Three Levels of Questioning

Third Floor - Creating
- Evaluate
- Generalize
- Imagine
- Judge
- Predict
- If/Then
- Speculate
- Hypothesize
- Forecast
- Idealize
- Apply the Principle

Second Floor - Processing
- Compare
- Contrast
- Sort
- Distinguish
- Explain Why
- Infer
- Sequence
- Analyze
- Synthesize
- Make Analogies

First Floor - Basic
- Complete
- Count
- Match
- Name
- Define
- Observe
- Describe
- Identify
- List
- Select
- Recite
- Scan