Item Template Ideas

1) Constructing the stem: Clinical Vignettes can include some or all of the following:

- Age, Gender (i.e. patient description)
- Site of care
- Presenting complaint
- Duration
- Patient history
- Family history
- Physical exam findings
- Laboratory findings
- Diagnostic studies
- Initial treatment
- Subsequent findings

Sample clinical vignettes:

1) A (patient description) has a (type of injury and location).
2) A (patient description) has (signs and symptoms).
3) A (patient description) has (signs, symptoms or specific disease) and is being treated with (drug or drug class).
4) A (patient description) has (abnormal findings).
5) Following (procedure, exposure) a (patient description) develops (signs and symptoms). Laboratory findings show (findings).
6) A (patient description) dies of (disease).
7) A (patient description) has (abnormal findings) but (normal findings).

2) Choose the lead-in question and option set to finish the item set.

Sample lists of lead-ins and options to finish the item:

1) Which of the following is abnormal?

   Option sets: list of nerves, list of muscles, list of enzymes, list of hormones, types of cells, list of neurotransmitters, list of toxins, molecules, vessels

2) Which of the following findings is most likely?

   Option sets: list of laboratory results, list of additional physical findings, autopsy results, results of microscopic examination

Creating Well-Written Questions for Class Sessions and Examinations
Summarized from “Constructing Written Test Questions For the Basic and Clinical Sciences” (3rd edition)
National Board of Medical Examiners
3) Which of the following is the most likely cause?

Option sets: mechanisms of disease, medications, differential diagnoses,

4) Which of the following should be administered?

Option sets: drugs, vitamins, amino acids, enzymes, hormones

5) Which of the following is defective/deficient/nonfunctioning?

Option sets: list of enzymes, feedback mechanisms, endocrine structures

6) Which of the following structures is most likely affected?

Other ideas for lead-in questions:

These observations suggest that the disease is a result of the (absence or presence) of which of the following (enzymes, mechanisms)?

The drug acts by inhibiting which of the following (functions, processes)?

Which of the following is the most likely cause?

Which of the following is the most likely finding on autopsy?

Which of the following is the most likely explanation for the (findings)?

Which of the following is the most likely mechanism of the therapeutic effect of (drug or drug class) in patients with (disease)?

Which of the following is the most likely diagnosis?

Which of the following (positive laboratory results) would be expected?

Given the pedigree, what is the likelihood that the next child (specify gender) will have the disease?

Which of the following is the most likely location of the patient's lesion?

Which of the following is the most likely pathogen?

Which of the following is most likely to be increased/decreased?

A biopsy is most likely to show which of the following?

Which of the following is most likely to confirm the diagnosis?