



Effective Practices in Leading Shared Inquiry™ Discussion

1. Prepare yourself and the class for discussion.

- Read and take notes on the selection before discussion.
- Choose focus and cluster questions that you and your students are curious about.
- Follow the Five Guidelines for Shared Inquiry Discussion and review them with students frequently.
- Be open to hearing new ideas you hadn't thought about before.

2. Keep everyone on track.

- Return to the text often, asking students to reread passages and find evidence.
- Ask students to connect their ideas to the focus (or cluster) question.
- Use cluster questions to explore the whole text rather than just one part of it.

3. Explore students' responses in depth.

- Ask follow-up questions often.
- Slow down the discussion if it moves too fast. Taking time to make notes on a seating chart will help you keep a reasonable pace.
- Emphasize that differing answers are a good thing—as long as they are supported with evidence.

4. Give everyone a chance to contribute.

- Track participation with your seating chart.
- Help quiet students contribute by asking if they heard an answer they agree or disagree with.
- Help talkative students listen by asking why they agree or disagree with someone else's idea.

5. Have students write in response to discussion.

- Before the discussion, have students record their answers to the focus question.
- After the discussion, have students record their thoughts about whether or not their answer changed as a result of the discussion.
- Assess students' critical thinking and discussion skills by looking over their written responses after each discussion.

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