Additional Preparation: Module 3 Discussion Questions and Reflections

# ****Purpose****

AP Seminar introduces students to academic and professional literature that is complex, argumentative, and methodological. Some texts may stretch students beyond the typical reading of the literary and textbook materials in their other courses. As a result, it is expected that students will need to develop reading strategies for expository reading while also developing practice in developing inquiries. Technical Reading Questions and Reflections assignments ask students to record and further develop questions for discussion as they emerge in their active readings of the texts. Once questions are developed, students should reflect and respond to their own questions. These reflections should be relatively informal but should explore the depths of the reading, the difficulties emerging as they lead to the student’s question(s), making note of the complexities, relevant interpretations, implications, etc. These questions and reflections serve as good preparation for discussions of the texts in a class setting and also serve as good practice for developing the kinds of curiosity that lead to good research questions for tasks later on.

# ****In the Classroom: Set-up****

Teachers may choose to assign all students to each response or may decide to equally divide students, so a group is focusing on one of the three texts for this module. Thus, the text will have a set of focus-group leaders who will help lead and generate the discussion for their assigned reading during full class discussions (in this option, all students still read all texts but are only responsible for formal reflection on their assigned text).

# ****What To Do****

Students will be crafting 2-3 discussion questions in relation to the assigned reading selection. Questions should not simply concern factual curiosities that arise while reading the text, nor should generated questions be answerable by a simple internet search. Instead, student-generated questions should demonstrate careful consideration of the reading. As students read the text closely, some parts may be confusing, or students may not always understand how the author reaches conclusions or explores concepts through complex logic or evidence from secondary sources. These kinds of difficulties are those that may motivate the questions. Questions may also facilitate further inquiry-based approaches and relate to other readings beyond the selected text, other concepts or studies, or real-world applications (note that the text itself should be used as a jumping-off point).

Students must then give considerate reflections of their thoughts to their discussion questions to put their own opinions and biases “down on paper” for the sake of putting them aside for the inquiry process. Reflections to questions that are generated from a lack of understanding should justify the lack, explore the reason for the lack, and make some educated assumptions about what might fill that lack or a way to go about doing so. Questions about broadening the inquiry for the sake of discussion can be explored by addressing the student’s opinions on the matter but should reflect an openness to alternative perspectives.