

Preparation: Module 2 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 their other courses' literary and textbook materials. As a result, students will need to develop reading strategies for expository reading while developing practice in generating 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 they generate questions, students reflect and respond to them. These reflections can be informal but should explore the depths of the reading; the difficulties emerging as they lead to the student's question(s); and make note of the complexities, relevant interpretations, and implications. These questions and reflections may be used as preparation for discussions of the texts in a class setting and serve as good practice for developing curiosity that leads to good research questions for later tasks.

In the Classroom: Set-up

Teachers may choose to assign all students to each response or may decide to equally divide students into groups focusing on only one of the three texts for this module. If groups are assigned, each 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. Students still read all materials but are only responsible for formal reflection on their given text.

What To Do

Students will craft 2-3 discussion questions from their assigned reading selection. Questions should not simply concern factual curiosities that arise while reading the text, nor should they 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 understand how the author reaches conclusions or explores concepts through complex logic or evidence from secondary sources. These kinds of difficulties may motivate the questions and facilitate other inquiry-based approaches; the text may serve as a jumping-off point to explore relationships to other readings, concepts, studies, or real-world applications.

Students will then give thoughtful reflections on their discussion questions, acknowledging their concerns, opinions, and biases (a process necessary for good research, which will be utilized in formal activities in later modules). Questions generated from a lack of understanding should be followed by reflections that justify the lack, explore the reason for the deficiency, and make educated assumptions about what might fill that deficiency.