



Rules of Engagement for Student Centered Discussions

(this can be briefed and handed out to students before discussion starts)

1. **Be Courteous:** Provide the person speaking with your full attention and respect. Check to make sure speaker has completed ideas before you begin to speak. Allow everyone a voice in discussion.
2. **Participate Responsibly:** Communication, interaction and discussion will be successful when everyone works together. Everyone involved should be learning from the experience.
3. **Actively Read and Question the Text:** Underline, circle, highlight sections that are surprising, confusing, exciting or find agreement/disagreement with. Make notes from your insights to develop thought provoking questions.
4. **Build on What Others Say:** Refer to past speakers by name in relating your ideas, questions or thoughts that can build on their thoughts.
5. **Be Credible: Back up your Statements:** Evidence for your ideas and opinions may come directly from the text, subject, topic or from your own personal experience if it is relevant to the material.
6. **Stick to the Subject:** Keep on task. Use examples from personal experiences to illustrate a point and be ready to explain how the example adds to discussion.
7. **Question Opinions of Others:** Ideas can be analyzed or questioned-but never the person who said them. Learn to provide and accept feedback. In discussions, everyone's opinions are open to questioning-even the author's.
8. **Listen Actively:** Listen with both ears and eyes. Remain engaged throughout. Avoid comparing, judging, or being right.
9. **Speak Clearly and Loudly:** Pronounce words clearly, carefully and loudly so others will hear, understand and be able to respond.
10. **Strive for Understanding:** Stay engaged and ask questions. If you don't understand text or discussion ask others to clarify, justify, restate or elaborate ideas for you..."Can you give me an example of what you mean?"