Name 1 deeply personal fear you have about your graduate studies or postdoctoral fellowship..
Consider why this may have been the wrong approach.
Make some notes for yourself.
Learning Outcomes

• Describe how discussion enhances learning
• Confront and reflect on discussion barriers
• Practice discussion approaches
• Describe the benefits of discussion to student learning
• Describe strategies for
  • Setting a climate for discussion
  • Getting students to talk
• Design a discussion
Paper Toss

Write one 1 personal fear you have about leading discussions. (Don’t identify yourself)
Paper Toss

Q.: What are the benefits of the paper toss over simply asking the question?
  • Make note of your thoughts.
  • Turn to a partner and discuss your ideas.

“Lowering the Ego Threat” (Bruce Ziff)

Deanna’s Bonus: Save the papers and revisit them at the end of the semester. This is a great way to measure shifts in knowledge, attitudes, and skills and to track progress.
Scenario:
You are stranded on an island. If you had known this would be your fate, name 1 book, 1 food/drink item, and 1 luxury item you would have brought with you.
These items should be things you “can’t live without.”
In Groups of 4 (3 minutes)

- Introduce yourselves (briefly).
- As a group select your 3 items.
- (Your group must agree on your selections!)
- Choose a group representative to present your selections.

Scenario:
You are stranded on an island. If you had known this would be your fate, name 1 book, 1 food/drink item, and 1 luxury item you would have brought with you.

These items should be things you “can’t live without.”
Reflection: Write, Pair, Share
Write (1 minutes); Pair, Share (2 minutes)

Q: What is the underlying purpose of these activities?
Q: How could you use them for formative assessment purposes?

Formative assessments are low stakes (low/no grade value).
Used to help instructors identify students’ skills/knowledge, make teaching adjustments students identify areas for improvement
• Do you feel differently about answering this question now? Why?
• Would you feel differently if you had the opportunity talk in your small group??
• Make note of your thoughts

Name 1 personal fear you have about leading discussions.
ICEBREAKERS

• Initiate
  • Classroom community
  • Safe learning environment
• Set stage for active participation
• Provide opportunities for
  • Topic lead-ins
  • Formative assessment
  • Both
Active learning “involves students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing.”

~Boswell, Charles and James Eison (1991) Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom, 2
Student *Inattention* in Lectures?

Why Discussion?
Some THEORY

- Memory is affected by how deeply new info processed
- Learning elaborated by:
  - Thinking about relationships
  - Explaining
  - Summarizing
  - Questioning

Image: http://daniel-venezuela.blogspot.ca/2014/06/can-we-get-grand-unified-theory-of.html
BARRIERS
Avoidance Behaviours

• “I do have to lecture. What else can you do in these large classes?”
• “I can’t get the content covered if I don’t lecture.”
• “Students want me to lecture.”
• “Students don’t bother to learn anything.”
• “Students don’t have the critical thinking skills to participate.”

~Maryellen Weimer, “More Evidence that Active Learning Works,” Faculty Focus, 3 June 2015
Image: https://goo.gl/images/ak0dl5
BARRIERS

• Student
  • Fear
  • Discomfort
  • Quick to agree

• Instructor
  • Fear
  • Discomfort
  • Content tyranny

http://upgradedape.com/how-millions-have-removed-their-fears-in-one-sentence/stid
“Teachers may cover the content, but if that doesn’t promote learning, does it really matter that it’s been covered?”

~ Maryellen Weimer, “More Evidence that Active Learning Works,” The Teaching Professor Blog, Faculty Focus, 3 June 2015
Barriers | Students

- Fail to see the value
- Resist participation unless it’s “on the test”
- Accustomed to/prefer passive learning
Students may be looking for the “right” answers
Reflect on a time when a classroom discussion you were part of did not go as well as it could.

What were the underlying reasons for it not going well?
Understanding our learners and being effective in our role in supporting discussion

Expert vs. Novice Learners
The Expert learner. . .

• Poses useful questions
• Identifies relevant information, ignore irrelevant
• Recognizes context and select information to suit needs
• Organizes knowledge around key principle and concepts
• Self-regulates time and efforts
• Self-motivates
• Is flexible in thinking
Novice learners need to learn...

- **Metacognition**
  - Develop awareness of their own thinking and develop flexibility adapt

- **Self-regulation**
  - Learn to control own thinking and actions
One Minute Paper

What skills (other than content knowledge) can classroom discussion develop?

Image: http://www.thumbsupprogramme.co.uk/ask-a-question
Brainstorm

What skills (other than content knowledge) can classroom discussion develop?

- Formative assessment.
Is there value in this use of class time? What are students learning?
1. SET THE STAGE
2. BUILD TRUST
Classroom Community

Increases
- Engagement
- Motivation
- Collaboration
- Willingness to take risks

2. BUILD TRUST
3. DISCUSSION
FRIENDLY BEHAVIOURS
4. PLAN A STRATEGY
5. SHARE THE PLAN
6. FACILITATE, DON’T DOMINATE
7. SHARE THE AUTHORITY

https://goo.gl/images/VWLtU0
8. AVOID COMMON PITFALLS
Get Students TALKING

1. Common experience
   • Reading (scholarly, primary source)
   • Video clip/photograph
   • News story
   • Case study
   • Scenario

2. Groups given different materials

See handout for discussion structures.
Get Students TALKING

• Buzz groups
• Write, pair, share
• Brainstorming
• Begin with 1 minute paper
• Jigsaw
• Start with a poll
• Open discussion

See handout for discussion structures.

https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/small-groups-and-discussions/how-get-students-talk-class
Image: http://cliparts.co/cartoon-of-people-talking
Design Questions Thoughtfully

• Good questions:
  • **Cause** genuine & relevant inquiry into big ideas/core content
  • **Provoke** deep thought, lively discussion, more questions
  • **Require consideration** of alternatives, weigh evidence, support/justify ideas
  • **Stimulates** rethinking
  • **Spark** connections to prior learning/personal experiences

See handout for question types.

https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/small-groups-and-discussions/how-get-students-talk-class
Image: http://cliparts.co/cartoon-of-people-talking
• Information (5 w’s)
• Evaluative
• Critique
• Experiential
• Analysis /diagnostic /prediction
• Priority & sequence
• Compare & contrast
• Cause & effect
• Clarification
• Connective
• Summary
In Groups of 3 (10 minutes)

Begin to design a discussion on 1 of these topics:

• The high cost of post-secondary education
• Mental health and wellness on university campuses
In Groups of 3 (10 minutes)

Determine the:

• Purpose of the discussion
• Discussion method/structure
• Question types to be used
  • Question(s) to be discussed
• Anticipated Student Response/Questions)

See handout for ideas on question types and discussion structures
References:


Leading Better Discussions, Center for Teaching Excellence, Duquesne University, [http://www.duq.edu/about/centers-and-institutes/center-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-and-learning/leading-better-discussions](http://www.duq.edu/about/centers-and-institutes/center-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-and-learning/leading-better-discussions)


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What are your questions?