

Annual Science Education Open House

Facilitating Effective Discussions Workshop

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Learning Objective

- By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:
 - ✓ Plan and implement effective strategies to ensure an inclusive and engaging discussion in any classroom setting

Outline

- Introductions
- Why use Discussion?
- Developing Meaningful Questions
- Facilitating Discussions in Class
- Challenges...and Solutions

Introductions

What is the Purpose of Discussion in Higher Education?

- Establishing subject matter relevance motivates student learning (Kember, Ho, & Hong, 2008)
- Peer discussion improves student learning (Smith et al., 2009)

Why use Discussion?

It is touted as one of the most effective and widely used teaching strategies in higher education.

Dallimore et al., 2004

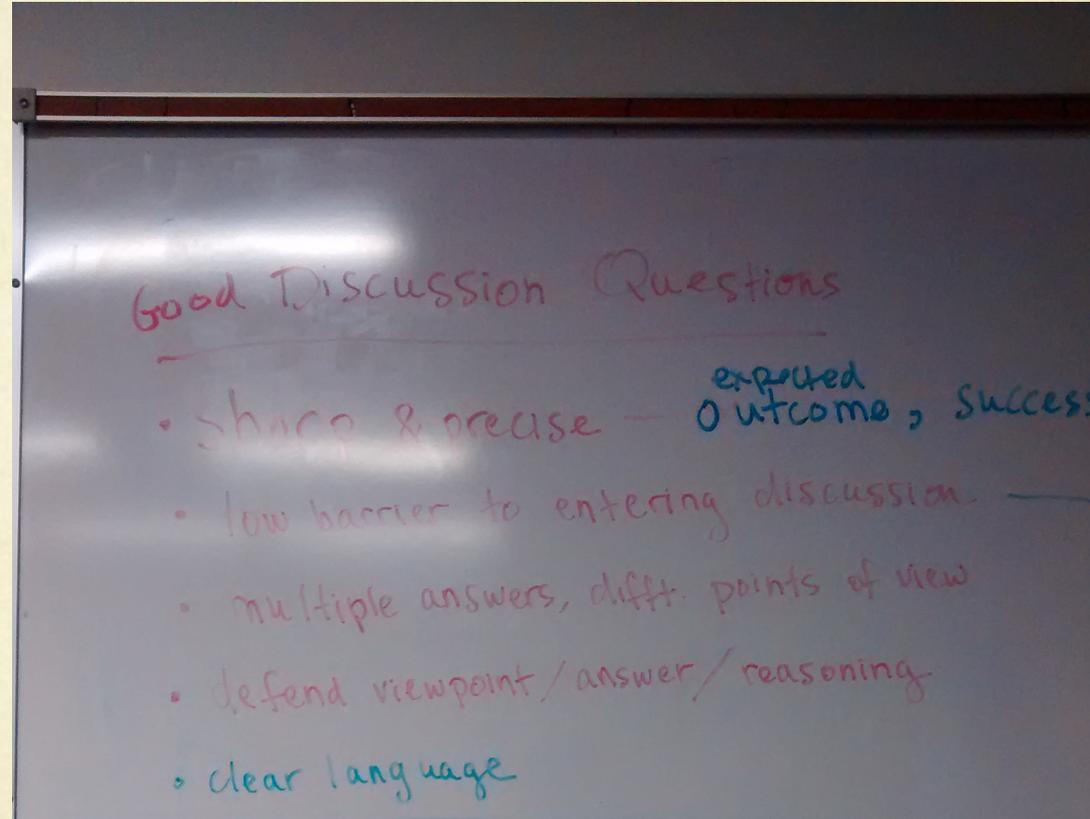
Q: What are/would be the goal(s) of discussion in YOUR class?
(small group discussion w/ flipcharts)

- Effective discussions can:
 - ✓ Increase the learner's understanding of the subject matter
 - ✓ Promote the development of effective communication, active listening, and presentation skills
 - ✓ Encourage an appreciation for diverse points of view

Generating Questions

Q: What makes a good question for discussion?

(pair-share)





Facilitating Discussion

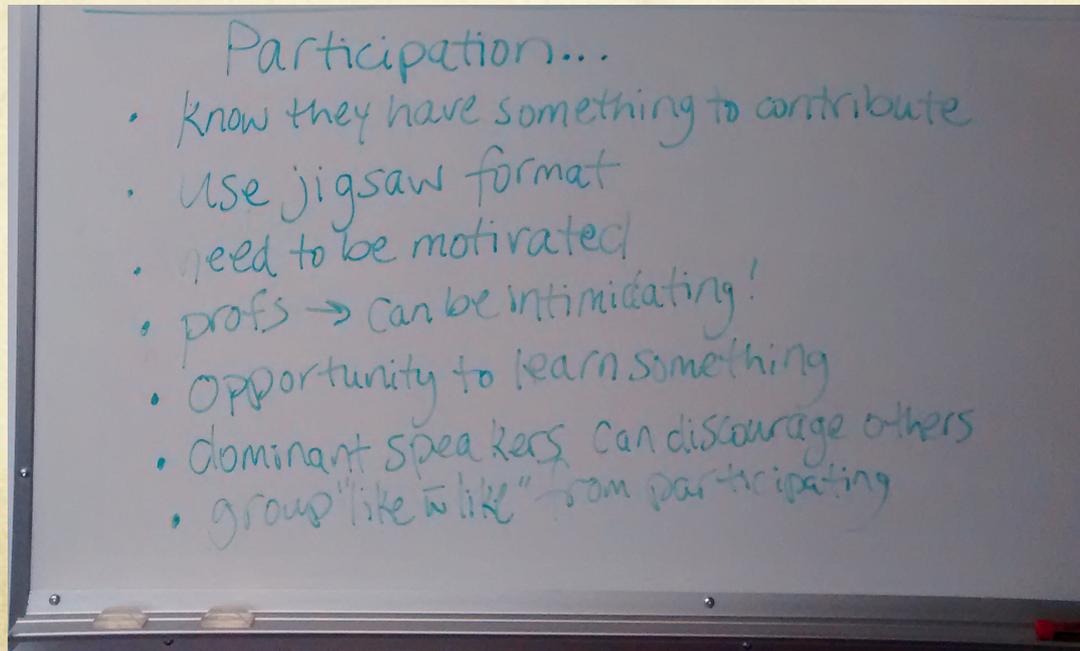
What are some strategies that you've used or have seen us use here?

Strategies

- Think-pair-share
 - Distribution of answers determines pairs
 - observe facilitation styles
 - layer questions to build momentum
 - make it interesting
 - give students Qs beforehand
 - assign moderator/recorder role to quieter students
 - remove yourself → students should talk to each other
 - Set up as a class practice
 - assign students to groups → collective responsibility
 - open-ended Qs

- Consider your own participation in class discussions as a student:
 - When were you most likely to participate?
 - When were you least likely to participate?
 - What are the characteristics of an effective discussion?

(think-pair-share)



Challenges

- What are some of the challenges you envision or have experienced with leading discussions?
- What are some potential solutions?

(small group discussion w/ flipcharts)

Summary

- General purpose of discussion
- Generating questions
- Facilitating discussion
- Anticipated challenges and potential solutions

References

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