

Questions for Engaging Discussions

Logic and Rhetoric Level Questions

1. Questions that Probe Implications or Consequences:	2. Questions about Questions:	3. Questions of Logic, Evidence, and Truth:	4. Questions that Probe Reasons and Causes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this is so, then what? • What are you implying by that? • When you say..., are you implying....? • But if that happened, what else would also happen as a result? Why? • What effect would that have? • Would that necessarily happen or only probably happen? • What is an alternative? • If this and this are the case, then what else must be true? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we find out? • How could someone settle this question? • Is the question clear? Do we understand it? • Is this question easy or hard to answer? Why? • Would...put the question differently? • Does this question ask us to evaluate something? • Do we all agree that this is the question? • To answer the question, what do we have to answer first? • I'm not sure I understand how you are interpreting the main question at issue? • Is this the same issue as...? • Can we break this question down at all? • How would ... put this issue? • What does this question assume? • Why is this question important? • Do we need facts to answer this? • How do you know what you think you know? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this information form reasonable patterns with other information? • Is this information true or valid? • Is that good evidence for believing that? • Is there reason to doubt that evidence? • By what reasoning did you come to that conclusion? • Why do you think that is true? • How can you prove, support, or explain your answer? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we want to know this? • What are your reasons for saying that? • Could you explain your reasons to us? • How do we make meaning of this? • Are those reasons adequate? • How does that apply to this case? • What difference does this make? • What do you think the cause is? • What would convince you otherwise? • What accounts for that? • How do you know?

5. Questions of Clarification:	6. Questions of Assumption:	7. Questions of Precision, Consistency, and Relevance:	8. Questions about Viewpoints or Perspectives:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you mean by ...? • What is your main point? • How does...relate to...? • Could you put that another way? • What do you think is the main issue here? • Is your basic point...or ...? • Let me see if I understand you: do you mean... or ...? • How does this relate to our discussion/problem/issue? • What do you think John meant by his remark? What did you take John to mean? • Jane, would you summarize in your own words what Richard has said?...Richard, is that what you meant? • Could you give me an example? • Would this be an example? • Could you explain that further? • Would you say more about that? • Why do you say that? • Will you please repeat that idea / question? • Will you please explain that again? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we taking for granted about this? • What are you assuming? • What is Karen assuming? • What could we assume instead? • You seem to be assuming ... do I understand you correctly? • All of your reasoning depends on the idea that Why have you based your reasoning on ...rather than...? • You seem to be assuming....How would you justify taking that for granted? • Is it always the case? Why do you think the assumption holds here? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this information sufficiently detailed? • What other information would be useful or needed? • What would be an example? • Is that good evidence for believing that? • Does this information contradict, confirm, or correct other information? • Is this information useful for our purposes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is our unique perspective and how does it compare to other perspectives? • You seem to be approaching the issue from ... perspective? Why have you chosen this rather than that perspective? • How would other groups of people respond? Why? What would influence them? • How could you make answer the objection that ...would make? • Can/did anyone see this another way? • What would someone who disagrees say? • What is an alternative? • How are Ken's and Roxanne's ideas alike? Different?

Other Conversational Tips...

Paraphrasing Other's Ideas	Acknowledging Ideas	Holding the Floor	Disagreeing	Individual / Group Reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, You think that... • So, you are saying that ... • In other words, you believe ... • In your opinion... • If I understand you correctly, you think ... • You mean to say that ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My idea is similar to / related to Sally's ... • I agree with John that ... • My idea builds on Jack's... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As I was saying... • If I could finish my thought... • What I was trying to say was... • Excuse me, I'd like to finish my idea first... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't agree with you because... • I found out from ... that ... • ...pointed out to me that ... • I agree with you to a certain extent, however... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I/We agreed/concluded/decided believe / think that • I/We thought of a different approach... • My/our ideas is/are similar to others, however...