

2020 PRE-READING QUESTIONS HANDOUT – UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

An engaging and inclusive classroom discussion happens when students have engaged deeply with a text. Assigning critical pre-reading questions before class allows for critical reflection of complex and contentious topics. Consider assigning one question from each category to students; you may choose to ask students for specific examples from the text. The following questions are adapted from Brookfield & Preskill (2005), p. 56:

<p>EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUESTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the writing / reading / lyrics seem culturally biased? • To what extent are description and prescription confused in an irresponsible and inaccurate way? Can you provide specific examples? • To what extent are the central insights grounded in documented empirical evidence? • To what extent are the ideas presented an uncritical extension of the paradigm within which the author works? • What can you identify as the author’s context, and why is this important?
<p>EXPERIENTIAL QUESTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the metaphors used in the text compare to the metaphors you use to describe your own similar experiences? • How do comparisons / examples in the text relate or differ from your own experiences? • What experiences are omitted from the text that strike you as important? • If the text addresses experiences with which you are familiar, to what extent are these congruent with or contradicted by your own experiences?
<p>COMMUNICATIVE QUESTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the text use a form of specialized language that is unjustifiably distant from colloquial language? • To what extent is the text connected to practice / the real world / the present day? • What voices are heard in the text?
<p>POLITICAL QUESTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose interests are served by the publication of this text? • What contribution does the text make to the understanding and realization of democratic forms and processes? • To what extent does this text challenge or confirm existing ideologies, values, and structures?

Brookfield, S., Preskill, S. (2005). *Discussion as a way of teaching: tools and techniques for democratic classrooms* (2nd ed.). Jossey Bass.