

# Using Objects and Images as Discussion Starters



## Handout #2: Thinking Routines for Individual Students

### Beginning of the Unit/Module

- It's OPTIC-al.** Have students write the word OPTIC vertically on the left-hand side of a blank sheet of paper as large as possible, as they would with an acrostic. Provide students with a photograph, artifact, art piece, or other visual that relates to the topic you're teaching. Have students:
  - List *Observations* they make about the visual next to O
  - List the details they notice (the visual's *Parts*) next to P
  - Assess—or create—the *Title* of the picture next to T
  - Determine the *Interrelationships*—how parts work with one another to convey the message next to I.
  - Come to a *Conclusion* about the visual to write next to C (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 4, 6)
- Pick a Pic.** Introduce a topic, vocabulary term, or selected text to individual or groups of students. Ask students to search the Internet for an appropriate picture that represents the concept. After a picture is chosen, students write a caption that describes the concept. Students upload the picture to a shared space—Discussion Board, Padlet, Google Docs, Google Photo Albums, Pic Collage, etc. where all students can view all pictures and discuss their rationale for the picture choice. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8)

### Thinking Skills

1. *Observe and Describe*
2. *Explain and Interpret*
3. *Reason*
4. *Make Connections*
5. *Perspectivism*
6. *Form Conclusions*
7. *Wonder and Question*
8. *Dive Beneath the Surface*

### During the Unit/Module

- Drawing for Understanding.** Students illustrate an abstract concept or idea. Comparing drawings around the room can clear up misconceptions. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Color, Symbol, Image (CSI).** Introduce students to a concept. Students jot down what they know about the concept. Independently or in small groups, students then select a color, create a symbol, and draw an image that represents the concept and have them justify their choices. Once their colors, symbols, and images are complete, students can share with the rest of the class. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)

### End of Unit/Module

- Gallery Walk.** Stations or displays are spread across the room, and students go around to each station individually or in groups, completing a task or responding to a prompt or display at each station. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8)
- Bumper Stickers.** Ask students to create a slogan-like bumper sticker in a graphic image to illustrate a particular concept from lecture. Variation: can be used to ask them to sum up the entire course, unit, or module in one sentence. (Thinking Skills: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Reference: Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Making thinking visible: How to promote engagement, understanding, and independence for all learners*. John Wiley & Sons.

These are just a few Thinking Routine examples. For more email [cetl@uidaho.edu](mailto:cetl@uidaho.edu)