

Using Objects and Images as Discussion Starters



Handout #3: Thinking Routines for Student Groups

Beginning of the Unit/Module

- TIP Chart.** Create a class chart on poster paper (or digitally through Padlet or Google Sheets) with three columns: "Term," "Information," and "Picture." As students encounter new vocabulary throughout the unit, have them add each new word to the "Term" column. Invite the class to collaboratively create a concise definition and visual representation for each new word. Have a student write the agreed-upon definition and any other important details in the "Information" column. Have students draw the agreed-upon picture or symbol in the "Picture" column to help understand and remember the new vocabulary word.
- Tip of the Iceberg.** Explain the iceberg metaphor ([Click Here](#)) to students. Give each student an iceberg worksheet. Students identify aspects of the lesson that they've already learned and write these things above the water line on their worksheet. Students write about their knowledge that stands "at the water line," information they suspect about the subject based on previous learning. Students then write about their deeper knowledge below the water line. This is knowledge they did not have before and questions that they may have formed since the lesson. Provide a chance for students to share these observations either as a class or in small groups. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 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)
- Movie Application.** In groups, students discuss examples of movies that made use of a concept or event discussed in class, trying to identify at least one way the movie-makers got it right, and one way they got it wrong. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8)

End of Unit/Module

- Things You Know.** Give an envelope to every student. Inside are cut-up strips of paper with the topics/principles they should know about already. They divide into two piles: things they know well, and things they need help with. Then they debrief with nearby students on things any of them need help with. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)
- Human Tableau or Class Modeling.** Groups create living scenes (also of inanimate objects) which relate to the classroom concepts or discussions. (Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

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