

Using Objects and Images as Discussion Starters



Handout #1: Thinking Routines for Instructor Lectures

Beginning of the Unit/Module

- Word Cloud Guessing.** Before introducing a new concept to students, show them a word cloud on that topic, using an online generator (Tagxedo, or Wordsift) to paste a paragraph or longer of related text, and challenge students to guess what the topic was. (*Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8*)
- Provocative Picture.** Begin the lecture with a picture meant to provoke discussion or emotion (Option: a cartoon). (*Thinking Skills: 3, 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

- Pass the Pointer.** Place a complex, intricate, or detailed image on the screen and ask for volunteers to temporarily borrow the laser pointer to identify key features or ask questions about items they don't understand. (*Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 7, 8*)
- Picture Prompt.** Show students an image with no explanation, and ask them to identify/explain it, and justify their answers. Or ask students to write about it using terms from the lecture, or to name the processes and concepts shown. This also works well as group activity. Do not give the "answer" until students have explored all options first. (*Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7*)
- Word of the Day.** Select an important term, illustrate it with an image, and highlight it throughout the class session, working it into as many concepts as possible. Challenge students to do the same in their interactive activities. (*Thinking Skills: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8*)

End of Unit/Module

- Emoji Reflection.** Curate a gallery of emojis.
 - a) Open a new Google document
 - b) Click on "Insert"
 - c) Select "Icons"
 - d) From the available categories, choose the emojis to make up your gallery.

Provide students with a copy of the emoji gallery and an overarching question or prompt to which you would like students to respond. Students respond to that prompt by choosing a certain number of emojis that express their thoughts. For example, select three emojis that represent how the British government would react to the Declaration and three more emojis that represent how the Patriots would respond to the Declaration. Ask students to explain why they selected the emojis they used.

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