



Discussion Tips & Questions

Instructions

Read the following tips and use them to lead a classroom discussion.

- When asking questions, present each question clearly, making sure everyone can hear and that they understand the question. After posing the question, provide time for people to respond. If no one responds, ask someone directly or try rephrasing the question and providing helpful examples to spark a discussion.
- Ensure that participants answer questions in an orderly fashion. Ways to moderate this include asking participants to raise their hands when they have something to contribute, going around in a circle and giving every person an opportunity to respond, or using a “talking stick” so that the person holding the stick is the only one talking. After each person presents his or her views, allow extra time for participants to contribute additional thoughts or different opinions.
- Give a time limit for each question and answer. Make sure not to let any individual(s) dominate the conversation. If only a few people are participating, directly encourage the involvement of someone who has not yet contributed.
- Summarize or paraphrase participants’ responses. If you do not understand what someone is saying, ask them to explain it again.
- Stay focused. If the group discussion is not addressing the questions you are asking, restate the questions.
- Use a gentle but audible tone of voice and keep your body language open and inviting. Look at people when they speak to you and offer reassuring nods so they know you are listening.
- Remind participants that they should respectfully listen to the comments of others without interrupting. Explain that if they do not agree with a comment, they must wait for their turn to speak and that they should never attack the person who made the comment, but should instead explain why they disagree with the comment.
- Use comments to further the discussion by asking participants if they agree or disagree, and if they have anything else they would like to add.



Discussion Tips & Questions (con't)

Discussion Questions Instructions

Using the tips above, lead the class in a discussion of the following questions.

1. How did you find the types of **pollution** outlined in your survey?
2. Are pollutants always visible? If not, are there other ways to locate pollutants?
3. Were you able to find the source of the pollutants during your survey?
4. How do pollutants affect the health of the Potomac River watershed?
5. How do pollutants reach streams and rivers in the watershed?
6. What human activities contribute to water pollution?
7. Can one person make a difference in reducing pollution?
8. What specific actions can each of us take to reduce the pollutants we found at our survey site?
9. How can we encourage other citizens to reduce pollutants in our community?
10. What did you learn from surveying our study site?