

Activity Title: Possible Ways of Responding to a Text

Contributor: Unknown

Estimated Time: 1 class period

Objectives/Goals: The goal of this exercise is to help students start thinking about writing strategies for the Interacting with Texts unit.

Description/Instructions:

- ***Agree/Disagree:*** What part of the essay's main point do you agree or disagree with? Why do you feel the author is right or wrong in her/his opinions? e.g., "Although the author makes strong points, I do not think the essay is entirely accurate and, in fact, disagree that X is true based on my personal experience."
- ***Reflection:*** What did this essay make me rethink or reconsider that I may not have thought about before? What impact did it have on my thinking about key ideas? e.g., "Before reading this essay I had assumed X, but now I see Y."
- ***Conversation:*** What might my experiences add to the argument? How might they revise or alter the author's ideas to be more accurate to what I know and think? "While I agree with X, it seems to me it's even more complicated than the author recognizes."
- ***Extension:*** Where else could the essay's argument go? Can it be applied to other examples? To other kinds of analysis? What "other parts of the world" did it make you think about? Find it relevant to? "The essay offers an intriguing look at X, but I wonder if what he/she says could apply equally to Y."
- ***Tempering the Position:*** Are there other aspects of this topic the author didn't consider? Ideas that readers would be wise to think about before being convinced by this author? Implications the author didn't consider? e.g., "Before you think this essay tells the whole story, it'd be wise to consider that this argument raises more questions than it answers."
- ***Rhetorical Analysis:*** How effective was the essay for its intended audience? What was its purpose? Did it work? Where did the essay succeed or fail most obviously? e.g., "Although I ultimately agree with what the author argues, I don't think he was successful in getting his point across to his intended audience. I would have been much more easily swayed if the essay had done X"
- ***Strength of Argument:*** Did the author support his argument? Where did he fail to develop his thinking? Where did she lapse in logic? Could the author's own argument be turned against him/her? e.g., "My agreement or disagreement aside, it's important to see if the author can actually objectively support his/her views. Since he/she does not, the argument is both flawed and should not influence others to change their opinions."