

DISCUSSION WARM-UP IDEAS

1. Think / Pair / Share – let students turn to the person next to them and discuss one key question you'd like to start with before bringing it to the whole group.
2. Share a short film clip related to the reading and begin your discussion with a question about it.
3. Pass out a related poem or essay and ask students to read it and write down one connection they could make between the new text and the reading. Begin the discussion with these connections.
4. Let students participate in a silent discussion. Have each student write a question at the top of their paper, then pass it to the left. The next student will read and respond for thirty seconds. Call for the next pass. And so on. When you begin the discussion, invite students to contribute their questions, and several classmates will already have reflected on them and be ready with opinions.
5. Ask every student to put two questions for discussion on the board. Give them a minute to read the questions. Then invite someone to begin by reading any question.
6. Invite students to freewrite for five minutes on a reading-related question. Begin the discussion with that question.
7. Ask student to create a sketchnotes version of the reading from the night before, using highlight text, symbols, sketches, notes, arrows, bubbles, etc. to represent their understanding. Have students share their sketchnotes in a gallery walk before beginning to discuss the reading.
8. Have every student choose a favorite quotation from the reading and write down a few sentences about why it stands out to them. Invite someone to share their work as you begin the discussion.
9. Have partners work together to choose three songs they would use for the movie version of the night's reading. Each song should be linked directly to a moment or theme from the text. Kick off the discussion with the soundtrack ideas.
10. Ask students to choose the most important paragraph from the reading. Begin the discussion with a debate over what is the most important moment in the text and why.
11. Ask small groups to nominate one character from the reading as the most heroic (or evil/generous/greedy/kind/selfless/caring/motivated/etc.) and defend their choice. Begin the discussion with a conversation about this trait and how it comes through in various characters.
12. Invite students to write a one sentence version of the reading. Have everyone put them on the board and give them a minute to read. Then throw out the first question.

