Parlay

‘Textbook’

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What do we expect from students who participate in Parlay live discussions?

This is the question we set out to answer when creating this resource.

Think of this as your Parlay “textbook”. It is a resource that will help you understand the values and develop the techniques that make for great discussions. We’ve done our best to keep it short and sweet. Good luck, have fun and stay curious!

Your friends at Parlay
Listen to understand.

When someone else is speaking, you are actively listening. You do your best to “put yourself in their shoes”. You think about how their ideas relate to your own knowledge and beliefs. You give them your full attention because you know and expect that they will do the same for you. You know that compassion never goes out of style.
You understand that the best discussions happen when everyone has the opportunity to contribute ideas. You want everyone to grow and improve together. As a result, you actively encourage your classmates to contribute, especially the ones who aren’t naturally talkative. You remember that we are all at different levels and have different strengths and weaknesses.
You know that the best ideas are supported by good evidence. You do your best to ensure that your facts and sources are credible and balanced. You actively seek out evidence that contradicts your beliefs because that is how you become wiser, and develop stronger arguments. You hold your classmates to the same standard, and insist that they also support their ideas with evidence.
You know that your perspective is unique, valuable, and always improving. You are committed to practicing sharing your ideas because that’s how you will continue to grow.

Try these for starters:

I think / believe __________ because __________.

One answer / solution might be __________.

My evidence / research suggests that __________.
You are not afraid to challenge the ideas or opinions of others. You do so with respect and gratitude for their contributions, and you always challenge the idea not the person.

Try these for starters:

I disagree with _________ because _________.

I understand your point about _________, but _________.

I have a concern about _________ because _________.
Ask thoughtful questions.

You know that all great discoveries start with great questions. You are curious to explore new ways of thinking. You ask your classmates for clarification when necessary.

Try these for starters:

- I would like clarification. What did you mean by ________?
- Have you considered ________ from the perspective of ________?
- What evidence can you present for / against ________?
You understand the importance of working together in the discussion. You try to connect ideas. You build on the points of others, and appreciate when they do the same for you.

Try these for starters:

I want to build on your point about __________ .

I see a connection between __________ and __________ .

__________ is interesting because __________ .
Seek Truth.

You know that life is not black and white, and that complex problems rarely have simple solutions. That’s why you know it is so important to strive for the truth, even though the perfect “truth” is often impossible to find. You consider many different perspectives while searching for the truth. You are willing to admit when your ideas or assumptions are faced with legitimate criticism, and expect the same honesty and humility from others.