Strategies for Engaging Students in Critical Thinking
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Be cognizant of students' prior knowledge and varied abilities.
- Ask students to define complex terms as a class. Continue to remind them of working definition throughout the semester.
- Validate students' perspectives on new material.
- Draw on students' own experiences.

Help students identify the argument.
- Ask students "What's going on with the material?"
- Point out argumentative scaffolding and styles over concrete facts and details.
- Reinforce to students the importance of grounding their arguments in the literature.

Use multimedia tools to make abstract concepts visible.
- Use images, videos, and other multimedia sources as catalysts for discussion.

Have students work in groups
- Encourage quiet or shy students to share their opinions.
- Think carefully the composition of your groups.
- Circulate and check in with groups to monitor group dynamic and conversations.
- Pose questions to the groups that motivate depth of exploration.
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Strategies for Discussing Challenging Issues

Cultivate a safe environment for discussion.
- Prior to the discussion, talk about challenges and issues that may affect communication and participation.
- Assume the role of a "referee" and make sure that the conversation unfolds in as unthreatening a way as possible.
- Encourage students to listen to and learn from each other by using names and responding to each other's ideas.

Motivate debate.
- Elicit students' views, perspectives, and ideas.
- Try to remain neutral in regards to the range of reactions and issues that surface during the discussion.
- Instruct students to voice questions, concerns, and opinions in a professional manner.

Provide ample opportunities for students to respond anonymously.
- Ask students to respond to a question in writing. Collect the answers, shuffle them, and redistribute to the class. As a class, read through the responses and have students engage in conversation based on the issues raised.