

Creating and Sustaining Effective Online Discussions: Strategies to Foster Critical Thinking and Student Voice

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Center for Distributed Learning

Critical Thinking and Student Voice

- Critical Thinking
 - Making purposeful decisions and judgments based on the evaluation of sound evidence
 - “Cultivating students’ critical thinking skills is a major goal of American higher education” (Roth, 2010)
- Student Voice
 - Students all bring unique perspectives to the classroom, and should be afforded opportunities to shape their learning (Cook-Sather, 2006)

Agenda

- **Before** the discussion
 - Adjust settings
 - Create creative prompt
 - Word cloud
 - Photovoice
 - TED Ed
 - Design rubric
- **During** the discussion
 - Establish presence
 - Facilitate
- **After** the discussion
 - Debrief
 - Grade
 - Survey

Before: Adjust Settings

- Small groups (ideal group size is 8-11 members)
- Users must post before seeing replies (Canvas) – encourage initial ideas, first impressions, original thought

Attachment

Choose File

No file chosen

Options

- Allow threaded replies
- Users must post before seeing replies
- Enable podcast feed
- Graded
- Allow liking

Group Discussion

- This is a Group Discussion

Group Set

Discussion Groups ▼

Differentiated group assignments may yield unexpected results.

Before: Creative Prompts - Word Clouds

- ANT3610 – Language and Culture, UCF
 - Undergraduate; blended and online
- Discussion prompt
 - Two speeches written at different points in history, no names included
 - Speeches arranged in word clouds

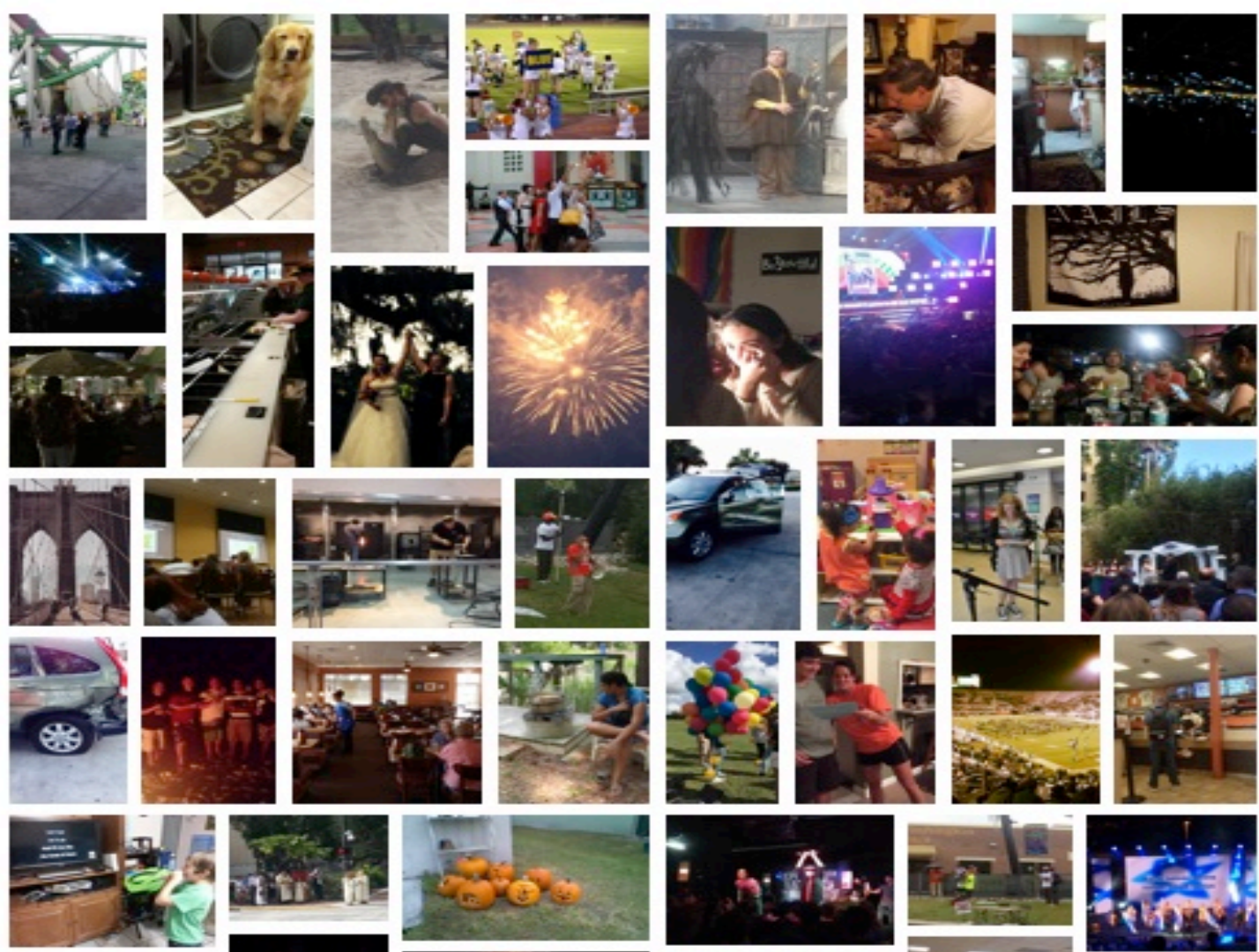


Word Cloud Discussion Prompt

- First post (due Wednesday)
 - Who wrote them? When? Why?
 - Compare the texts to each other.
- Second post (due Friday)
 - Go back to course content – how might this inform your analysis of the speeches?
- Third post (due Friday)
 - Pick someone in your group who has a different interpretation and respond to them.

Creative Prompts: Photovoice

- Research method in which participants express their points of view through photos that highlight certain themes
 - Using a cell phone or camera, take a photo of a “performance”.
 - For Tuesday: Post the photo. Do not interpret the image.
 - For Tuesday: Choose a peer’s image and attempt to interpret it, using the class content.
 - For Thursday: Return to your photo and reveal your original interpretation. Reflect on the peer interpretation.



Before: Design Rubrics

Assignment Rubric Details



Wordle Discussion □ □ □					
Criteria	Ratings				Pts
Thoughtfulness of reflecton	Student follows all directions, reflecting a thoughtful reflection about each world cloud. Response post relates discussion back to course materials and concepts learned in class. 20 pts	Student reflects on word clouds but does not compare them, or does not link the discussion back to course materials and concepts. 12 pts	Student posts but is off-topic or doesn't follow directions. 7 pts	Student does not post. 0 pts	20 pts
Protocols	Student follows all protocols, posts on time, and posts a reply post. 10 pts	Student posts initial post but no reply. 6 pts	Student does not post 0 pts		10 pts
Total Points: 30					

During: Establish Presence



Logan Johnson

Sep 28, 2015



All slaves that lived in America practiced some form of religion. As the video *The Ringshot & the Birth of African-American Religion* states, "society told African slaves that they were not human." As established in previous sections of this course slave owners often participated in a hypocritical form of Christianity. Often to justify their actions towards slaves. However, these slaves attained their own autonomous Christianity beliefs.

Common themes among the New Black Church is the relevance of chicken. With reference to *There's Nothing like Church Food*, chicken is often stereotyped in the African American Community. However, it has provided meals that were responsible for bringing black people together to practice religion. This "Gospel bird" also helped to raise money for the churches. "The sale of chicken dinners was a principle means whereby churches raised money to build their sanctuaries and schools as well as to generate income for a variety of activities."

Voodoo also had a commonplace in the development of the New Black Church. Originally the relationship between Voodoo and Christianity was non-existent. However, this soon became transparent; Christianity and voodoo both addressed African American needs. African spiritual beliefs became assimilated into western culture during the Atlantic Slave Trade. Africans utilized sacred charms to rid of evil spirits. This soon became immersed amongst slaves as they used this against their slave masters. However, after slavery ended Blacks still incorporated these elements of voodoo into their spiritual lives.



Oct 2, 2015



This is a wonderful start. Now I would like you to consider the impact of religion on the African American community. Once you address this issue please continue with the discussion with your peers.

During: Facilitation Strategies

- Prompt but moderate feedback encourages student participation (deNoyelles, Zydney, & Chen, 2014)
- Socratic questioning
 - Disciplined type of questioning that is intended to explore complex ideas in a logical way
 - Prompt students to:
 - Clarify thinking
 - Challenge assumptions
 - Provide evidence toward an argument
 - Consider the consequences of actions
 - Increases critical thinking (Yang, Newby, & Bill, 2005)

During: Facilitation – TED Ed

Allen Luke - Critical Literacy

LESSON CREATED BY **ROHAN JOWALLAH** USING **TED Ed**
VIDEO FROM **Jonathan Rajalingam** YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Let's Begin...

Overview Of Critical Literacy

Critical literacy has a rich history in education; its roots can be traced back to the work of Paulo Freire (Stribling, 2008: 34). According to Stribling (2008:4), Freire "stressed the importance of critically examining the world in which we live and work in order to name existing inequities and begin to transform oppressive structures through the power of words. Critical literacy has a rich history in education; its roots can be traced back to the work of Paulo Freire (Stribling, 2008: 34). According to Stribling (2008:4), Freire "stressed the importance of critically examining the world in which we live and work in order to name existing inequities and begin to transform oppressive structures through the power of words (spoken, read, and written)".

According to Allen Luke, what constitutes critical literacy?
Is it important to engage in critical literacy and why?
Should our curriculum advocate for critical literacy?
Explain the concept of reading the world?

Save My Answer



Watch

Think

Dig Deeper

Discuss

...And Finally

During: Facilitation – TED Ed

Allen Luke - Critical Literacy



522 Views

10 Questions Answered

Let's Begin...

Overview Of Critical Literacy

Critical literacy has a rich history in education; its roots can be traced back to the work of Paulo Freire (Stribling, 2008: 34). According to Stribling (2008:4), Freire "stressed the importance of critically examining the world in which we live and work in order to name existing inequities. Please view the video before moving on.

1 Guided Discussion

0 Open Discussions

« All Guided Discussions



Dr. Rohan Jowallah
Lesson Creator

Is critical literacy relevant in our society? Please support your response with examples.

10/08/2015

👍 +1

Respond



COMPLETED LESSON

Critical literacy is definitely relevant in today's society. We all must learn how to think for ourselves based on supportive evidence and be able to constructively criticize. For example this



10/21/2015



Watch

Think

Dig Deeper

Discuss

...And Finally

TED Ed Example

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YOUR LESSONS **DISCUSSIONS** **NOTIFICATIONS** **SETTINGS**

All Activity

Viewed 2

Started 0

Completed 0

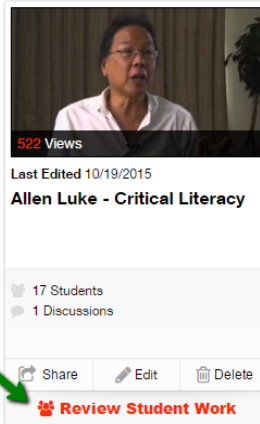
Drafts 0

Published 1

Sort By

+ Create a Lesson

Lesson Review



522 Views

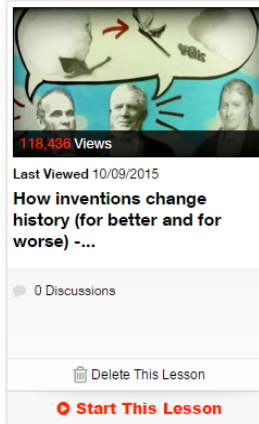
Last Edited 10/19/2015

Allen Luke - Critical Literacy

17 Students
1 Discussion

Share Edit Delete

Review Student Work



118,436 Views

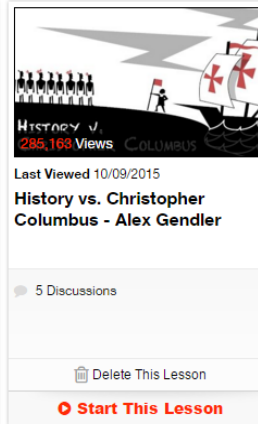
Last Viewed 10/09/2015

How inventions change history (for better and for worse) -...

0 Discussions

Delete This Lesson

Start This Lesson



285,163 Views

Last Viewed 10/09/2015

History vs. Christopher Columbus - Alex Gendler

5 Discussions

Delete This Lesson

Start This Lesson



Allen Luke - Critical Literacy

Created on October 08, 2015

Lesson Stats: 17 Students

Active Students

Sort By: [Name](#) ▾ [Last date of activity](#)

[Redacted] Last Activity: October 26, 2015 08:55					
Multiple Choice			Open Answer	Discussions	Student Responses
0 / 0 Completed	0 Correct First Attempt	0 Total Attempts	0 / 1 Completed	4 Replies	None Yet
[Redacted] Last Activity: October 25, 2015 18:06					
Multiple Choice			Open Answer	Discussions	Student Responses
0 / 0 Completed	0 Correct First Attempt	0 Total Attempts	1 / 1 Completed	1 Replies	Review »
[Redacted] Last Activity: October 25, 2015 06:17					
Multiple Choice			Open Answer	Discussions	Student Responses
0 / 0 Completed	0 Correct First Attempt	0 Total Attempts	0 / 1 Completed	0 Replies	None Yet

After: Grade and Debrief

- Use SpeedGrader to grade with feedback (Canvas).
- Debriefing is important!
 - If face-to-face or blended, debrief in class.

Assessment


Grade out of 30

[View Rubric](#)

Wordle Discussion

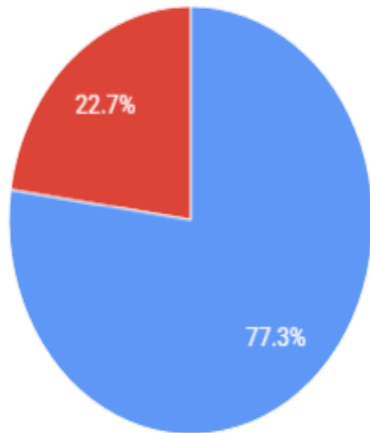
Criteria	Assessment
Thoughtfulness of reflection	<i>Student follows all directions, presents a thoughtful reflection about each world cloud or text. Response post relates discussion back to course materials and concepts learned in class.</i> 20/ 20 pts
Protocols	<i>Student follows all protocols, posts on time, and posts a reply post.</i> 10/ 10 pts
Total Points: 30 out of 30	

Assignment Comments

 Derrida! Bringing out the big guns. Great job! ✕
Very well written.

After: Feedback on TEDEd

I preferred the form of discussion used for our critical literacy discussion last week (TED)



Students' Feedback

"I liked the fact that we were walked through the discussion process through different modes."

"There should have been some follow up videos."

"I liked the idea of looking at the video and then commenting. It was nice to learn via a video."

"It is a new forum for discussion where a lot more was offered. It allowed for more interaction."

After: Using Surveys to Debrief

Quiz Instructions

This week, I attempted to use a new pedagogical device as a way of eliciting knowledge in a different way. I would appreciate some feedback about this discussion assignment: what worked, what didn't, and whether I should change it to make it more effective (or never use it again?). I thank you in advance for this valuable information.

Best,

Dr. Reyes-Foster



Question 1

0 pts

The assignment instructions were clear. I understood what I was supposed to do.

- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree

Next



After: Using Survey Responses to Enhance and Improve

- “The best part was that it made the class content more relatable and I had a bit more of a connection with the material.”
- “I’m not sure if it was supposed to be pictures taken by us, or if we were allowed to use screenshots/online pics...Maybe clarifying if we have to take the picture or just post a picture would be good.”

Question 1 1 pts

This assignment made me feel engaged with the course material.

Absolutely!

Sure, a little.

Not really.

Not at all!

Question 2 1 pts

This assignment made me think about the course concepts in a new way.

Yes, absolutely!

Yes, somewhat.

Meh, not really.

Ugh, not at all!

Conclusion

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Questions?
