## Instructor Interactions to Encourage Knowledge Construction and Critical Thinking

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<th>Instructor Interaction</th>
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| **Prompts**
  *provides clarification or directions to encourage students to begin a discussion*
 | - I have been monitoring the discussion and have not seen any posts, so I wanted to give you a little more information to get you started. Consider the following elements as you compose your discussion response this week (list elements). For example...
  - Consider the following scenario (to put the discussion in a context)...
  - Let me give you a more concrete example...
  - From my experience, an example to help you understand this concept is... |
| **Elaboration**
  *encourages learners to think more deeply about the issue and extend critical thinking skills*
 | - You have a great start on the discussion this week. Can you elaborate on your thoughts and ideas and consider the following in your response (list areas where learner has not responded fully to the discussion question)? |
| **Clarification**
  *helps learners to restate their ideas more clearly, think more deeply, and may bring learners back on topic*
 | - I appreciate your comments about...
  - Can you clarify your response, so we can clearly understand your thoughts and ideas?
  - Can you provide an illustration or example?
  - Can you state this in a different way?
  - I appreciate your comment; however, I am unclear how this relates to the discussion question. Can you provide more information to help us see the connection to the topic we are discussing this week? |
| **Weaving**
  *points out important contributions from a number of learners and provides a foundation for deeper understanding by showing connections between perspectives*
 | - I really appreciate the multiple perspectives on the issue we are discussing this week. John, Sue, and Nancy believe... While Paul, Jerry, and Carrie believe...
  - How do you reconcile the different views?
  - Is there compelling evidence to support one view over the other?
  - Are there other ways of viewing this issue that have not been considered?
  - For example, in my experience...
  - One aspect of the readings that has not been discussed is... What impact does this have?
  - *Off-topic weaving*  
    I really appreciate the points that have been on the issue including... It appears that some of the points do not related specifically to this topic such as..., so please be sure that you consider... as you discuss the topic to ensure that all of your comments help us develop a deeper understanding of the topic or issue. |
| **Perspectives**
  *encourages learners to take multiple perspectives and explore beyond their own viewpoint, thereby expanding their understanding*
 | - Consider the following alternative scenario... How would this influence your view of the issue?
  - According to... there is another side to this issue. They cite ... as evidence for their perspective. How does this information fit with your perspective on the issue?
  - Is there another way of looking at this perspective from a different lens?
  - What if you were faced with...? What would you do if ... occurred? How would you feel if...?
  - From my experience, I have found... |

| Inferences and assumptions | • Can you discuss the specific inferences and assumptions you are making from this perspective?  
 • For this to be true, then ... would also have to be true. Have you considered this?  
 • For this to be true, then you must believe that...  
 • What evidence do you have to support the inferences and assumptions you are making?  
 • What inferences and assumptions does the author make to lead to his conclusions? |
|---|---|
| Implications | • Can you discuss the implications of your line of reasoning on this issue?  
 • If this is true, how will this influence the present conditions? What will that mean for the future?  
 • If this is true, what action must be taken today? In the future?  
 • What groups will this line of reasoning affect? |
| Summaries | • I have really appreciated the depth of thinking that has taken place during this discussion. It appears that many of you believe ... while others feel that ...  
 • The examples that you have used to support your opinions have been excellent, and as a group you have followed the author’s line of reasoning and uncovered many of his [her] inferences and assumptions.  
 • You have done a great job of demonstrating your understanding of the implications of the different lines of reasoning from the multiple perspectives of the authors in the readings.  
 • Some of the gaps that still exist are...  
 • There was some confusion about...  
 • Some of the interpretations did not support...  
 • From my experience, I believe...  
 • I have used...  
 • From my experience, an example of this is... |