

Twist: Post Images of Examples

Students are assigned to visit a particular location to look for examples that relate to course concepts. Students take photos of these examples and then share them along with explanations in discussion board posts.



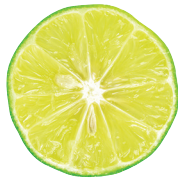
Tips

- Some students may have trouble uploading images; provide work-arounds.
- Remind students about privacy.



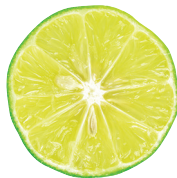
Twist: External Discussion and Reflection

Students discuss a particular viewpoint with a friend or colleague, then post a reflection about their experience.



Tips:

- Students might have a hard time finding someone to talk to.
- Students can have a discussion in person, over the phone, on video chat, etc.



Twist: Debate

Students research one perspective on a particular topic and then post an argument from that perspective to the discussion board.

Once everyone has posted from their various perspectives, students review all posts before writing a reflection about whether they agree with others or about what other information they might need before they can decide.



Tips:

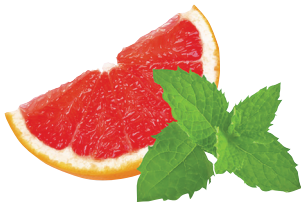
- Allow enough time for this type of discussion; one student's late post could affect the whole group.



Twist: Role Play

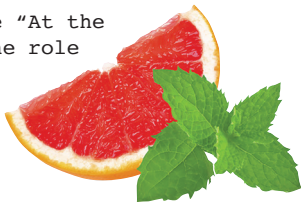
The student is assigned a role and does research based upon that role.

Then, after posting to the discussion board, the student reviews the other perspectives and write a reflection based upon the other viewpoints.



Tips:

- When grading, remember that students are playing a role and what they write may not be their own experience.
- Directions should include “At the top of your post, list the role you are representing.”
- Consider splitting the activity into two parts, where students switch roles in part two.



Twist: Fishbowl

Half of the class participates in the discussion (inside fishbowl). The other half observes the ongoing discussion while pausing to reflect on given questions (outside fishbowl).



Tips:

- Run through the exercise at least twice to allow students to participate inside and outside of the fishbowl.
- Remember that fishbowls are more work to grade because students are participating in two different ways.
- Better for larger classes (12+).



Twist: Group Problem-Solving

Students engage in a sequential group problem-solving exercise on the discussion board.

The instructor begins the thread and students build toward a solution by making improvements on previous posts.



Tips:

- Think about how you will handle students' mistakes.
- You may need start a new thread if the discussion becomes disorganized.
- Keep discussion forums visible after the due date so students can refer back to the problem.



Twist: "Bad" Design Critique

Ask students to create something that is intentionally "bad" so other students can find the problems and identify the reason(s) the posted design is incorrect.



Tips:

- Too much of one style of discussion can end up with non-participation. Think carefully about how you are using this type of discussion.
- The same assignment could be used for a “good” design.
- The back and forth nature of the discussion tool works well for this.



Twist: Hypothetical Situation

The student is given a hypothetical situation to analyze and/or evaluate. Then, the student responds based upon the information.



Tips:

- Be more directive and provide additional guidance on expected responses.
- This activity is best performed after completing readings on a topic.
- Have three or four situations. Then, split students into groups to discuss one hypothetical situation. Afterwards, regroup and share information with the class.

