Information Literacy Critical Thinking Questions

Questions for discussion about Authority is Constructed and Contextual

- Why and when should you trust an information source?
- Who created this information? What is their level of credibility?
- Is the author an expert? Does the author need to be an expert in this context?
- Is the information biased? Is it opinion or fact?
- When searching for information online, how do you decide whether the information you find is good or bad?

Questions for discussion about Information Creation as a Process

- Where is the first place you go when you have a research question? What kinds of problems do you run into? Why?
- Is everything available on the Web for free (books, articles, information)? Why not? What's missing?
- How do you figure out what kind of information you are looking for?
- How many different sources of information can you think of? How do you know when an information source is the best choice for your information need?
- How can information be packaged and distributed?
- Is some information created for specific populations? How does that change its packaging and distribution? (Consider social media, blogs, newspapers, magazines, books, academic journals)
- Do you have a bias for or against certain types of information?

Questions for discussion about Information has Value

- How do you cite information sources? Why is it important to cite sources? Why do citations follow a particular format? Does it matter?
- How do you avoid plagiarism? Do you have any questions about plagiarism? What is the difference between plagiarism and paraphrasing, summarizing, or citing?
- In what ways can information be bound by a license or copyright? When are you allowed to reuse information?
- How do you properly use graphics or videos you find on the web? How do you know if graphics or videos are licensed for reuse?
- What is public domain? What is the creative commons?

Questions for discussion about Research as Inquiry

- How do you broaden or narrow a research topic?
- Have you ever struggled to find information on a topic and decided that there is nothing on your topic and you have to find a new topic? What other strategies could you use?
- If a topic you are researching is part of a debate, how do you research multiple viewpoints?
- What can you do if you hit a dead end when researching a topic?

Questions for discussion about Scholarship as a Conversation

- Is there more than one perspective on a given topic?
- Who is contributing to the conversation? Are some voices louder than others? Why?
- Does information on a given topic change over time? Why might it be important to seek out the most up-to-date information on a given topic?
- How do you or could you contribute to the conversation on a given topic?
Questions for discussion about Searching as Strategic Exploration

- Describe an experience in which you were not able to find the information you needed? How did you feel? How much time did you spend looking for that information? What could you do differently?
- Have you ever experienced the feeling of information overload? When and why? What steps could you take to avoid information overload when researching a question or topic?
- How do you turn a research question into a successful search for information?
- When do you feel most confident and successful in finding the information you need?
- How would you describe your research process? Describe the steps you take when your research is most successful.