

Discussion Sentence Starters

Opening statements/questions

- I think _____ because _____. What do others think?
- In the text the authors states _____. What do you think she means here?
- What did you think of the author's opinion on _____?

Agreeing

- I agree with the point that _____ because _____.
- I never thought about it that way. I would have to agree because _____.
- I agree with your analysis because I too _____.

Disagreeing

- I disagree with the point about _____ because _____.
- I would agree with _____, but I don't agree with his reasoning since _____.
- I disagree with the point about _____ because it overlooks the fact that _____.
- I have mixed feelings on the topic. On the one hand, I think _____, but on the other I believe _____.

Building

- I agree with your point about _____ and I would like to add that _____.
- I agree with _____, but I think we might want to also consider _____.
- If we changed _____, how would things be different?
- What if _____

Clarifying

- I'm sorry. I couldn't hear you. Could you restate your position?
- Could you restate your position more concisely please? I'm having trouble remembering everything you said.
- Could you clarify what you mean when you say _____?
- Could you tell me more about _____?
- I agree with _____ when he said _____ because in the text the author says _____.

Inviting

- We haven't heard from _____. What do you think?
- What are your views on _____?
- I'd like to hear from others. What does everyone else think?

Introduce a new point

- It seems as though we've exhausted this point. Perhaps we should move on. What does everyone think?
- I would like to introduce a new point.
- Excuse me, but I would like to add a point if I could. I believe that _____.

Tips

- Be polite and respectful at all times.
- Address the point, not the person—especially if you are going to disagree with them.
- Summarize the previous person's comments before state your own position or adding to theirs'.
- When possible, come with questions prepared—at least 3-5.
- Make sure everyone is involved. Invite others to join in.
- Make sure the point you're on has been discussed completely before moving on.
- If you're stuck:
- Summarize the main points so far to refresh everyone's memory.
- Say "Instead of focusing on a specific point, perhaps we should consider the bigger picture might be _____"
- Say "Seems we're stuck, perhaps we should move on. Does anyone care to introduce a new aspect of the topic?"