

Discussion Wall

Time: 60-90 minutes to develop the practice.

(Then repeat for 15-20 minutes at the start of all gatherings that follow.)

What it can do: This activity allows people in a group to slow down and make an analog version of the digital experience of sharing images, quotations, and readings. Returning to these materials again and again at each gathering can be a good way to move the group, as a collective body, into itself.

Set up: This activity is best with a large wall or floor space, but can be done on a table using print outs / binders as well. If you have access to a wall where work can remain up, that is ideal.

How it works:

1. Ask everyone to print out / bring in 5-10 readings, photographs, quotations, or objects that are significant to their current project. These might be the items that they return to, again and again, or that are currently up on the wall in their home or studio space.
2. Give each person a blank piece of paper where they can write their name and their research topic(s) or project title.
3. Ask each person to find an area on the wall or floor to place that piece of paper, so that each person has roughly equal space.
4. Give each person 10 minutes to lay out their readings, photographs, quotations, or objects in relationship to their piece of paper, in their section of the wall or floor.
5. Ask everyone to move around and look at the Discussion Wall as it is emerging.
6. Option 1: In pairs, visit an area of the Wall that is not yours. Take 10 minutes to read / look at items and use sticky notes or paper to make comments on the items in that person's area. Rotate until everyone's area has been visited by someone, or until time is up. This option allows for breadth of conversation.
7. Option 2: Pair people up to talk about their area of the wall, and to get to notice overlaps. This option allows for depth of conversation.
8. As a group, use string or markers to notice overlapping interests or points of intersection, and to draw these physically in the space to connect the items.
9. Make a commitment to continue to suggest readings / photographs by posting items on their wall in the coming weeks. Determine how you will return to this activity each week (informal dialog, scheduled presentations from research pairs, required "posts," etc.)
10. Optional: Close by talking about how to make a virtual version of this wall (a private FB group), and/or about how to continue this practice of sharing readings, photographs, and objects in class.

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