

5 Ground Rules for Online Discussion

#1 RESPECT YOUR CLASSMATES

Not everyone in this classroom is going to have the same opinion as you. Remember the saying “If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all!” If you disagree with someone it is okay to say so in an appropriate way. This means that you simply say that you disagree and give good reasons why you disagree.

#2 USE PROPER LANGUAGE

If it is inappropriate for you to say out loud in class, you should not be saying it online either. Think before you write. Make sure that you are saying exactly what you want to say in the way you want to say it. It is hard to display emotion through a couple brief sentences. Also, do not type in all CAPS unless it is a heading.

#3 BE BRIEF & FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

There will be a lot of posts for your classmates to read so you want to get right to the point of what you are saying. However, don’t be so brief that your classmates don’t understand what you are saying. Make sure you fully read the question. Include just enough background or supporting information to answer the question(s) and responses of your classmates.

#4 BE PROFESSIONAL

Your writing will give some of your classmates their first impression of you. You want to display yourself as a person who is professional and knows what they are talking about. You want to make sure your spelling and grammar are perfect. Don’t use any of the emoticons, acronyms, or shortcuts that you are used to using when texting.

#5 YOU CAN’T TAKE IT BACK

Once you hit the “Send” or “Submit” button you can’t change what you have said. Make sure that it is exactly right before you push that button. Write your response and then do something else for a little bit. Come back, re-read what you have written. Make changes if necessary and then press the submit button.

