

2021 ENG 4U – Identity (*Into the Wild*)

How Will Harkness Discussions Work In Our Course?

What is Harkness?

Lakefield College teachers and students are committed to an ideal of active, participatory, student-centered learning which values teaching students not just a given course's content, but also the skills required to become their own and each other's teachers. Learning at LCS is a cooperative enterprise in which the students and teacher work together as partners. A place at the Harkness table requires students to exercise a high degree of self-discipline and to engage eagerly and energetically with their peers.

How will Harkness work in our class?

We will be having evaluated Harkness discussions throughout the unit. These discussions will focus on our package of collected non-fiction readings. These evaluated discussions will likely run for about 40 minutes. We will have ten minutes of reflection time after, including a chance for participants to complete a Google Forms self-reflection. Students who have not completed the lead up work will observe the table discussion and will have the responsibility of tracking the exercise and providing feedback.

How is Harkness evaluated?

- 1) Each student will be evaluated on their HARKNESS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS that are to be completed by 10pm the night before the discussion. (You will post the questions to the Google Classroom the night before your Harkness table discussion by 10pm; you will hand in your questions AND answers to Mr. McGowan in class the following day. Please see below for more information on generating those questions. (24 marks))
- 2) Each student will be evaluated on their HARKNESS DISCUSSION PERFORMANCE – based on the student's average score in multiple discussions. (40 marks)

TASK LIST:

- 1) CREATE THREE (3) QUESTIONS BASED ON THE READINGS;
- 2) POST ONLY THE QUESTIONS ON OUR GOOGLE CLASSROOM THE NIGHT BEFORE THE DISCUSSION BY 10PM;
- 3) PRINT THE QUESTIONS AND THE ANSWERS AND HAND IN VIA HARD COPY TO MR. MCGOWAN ON THE DAY OF THE DISCUSSION. (Evaluated-rubric attached);
- 4) Participate in the actual discussion. (Evaluated – rubric attached).

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HARKNESS DISCUSSION

Student Name: _____

Knowledge /10 Inquiry /10 Communication /10 Application /10

Criteria / Skills	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four
Knowledge (10 marks) <i>Student gives textual references as support for their positions</i>	Student does not give any textual support for their position.	Student gives a few textual pieces of evidence, but they are not significant.	Student uses solid evidence from the text to support their position.	Student is highly effective at using textual evidence to support their positions.
Inquiry/Thinking (10 marks) <i>Student gives evidence of listening to others in the group (both verbal and non-verbal)</i>	Student does not listen to others. Non-verbal skills suggest being closed off or disinterested.	Student listens to others but has difficulty acknowledging what they are communicating. Some non-verbal skills are positive.	Student shows evidence of listening to others. Positive non-verbal skills.	Student proves to be an excellent listener who provides feedback and support to peers. Excellent non-verbal skills. Engaged body language is apparent; eye contact consistent.
Communication (10marks) <i>Student's language is formal and academic</i>	Student's language is informal and not academic. Slang and informality consistently present.	Student's language is formal and academic, but still needs improvement. Some lapses into slang or informality.	Student's language is consistently formal and academic, "filler words" not present.	Student's language is sophisticated; clarity and accuracy are apparent in the student's comments.
Application (10 marks) <i>Student makes an effort to build on the ideas of others</i>	Student does not build on the ideas of others. All contributions are in isolation from fellow table participants.	Student makes an effort to build on the ideas of others but they are inconsistent, and/or unsuccessful in linking ideas.	Student makes a clear, consistent, and logical effort to build on the ideas of others, showing clear links to fellow table participants' remarks.	Student is highly successful at building on the ideas of others, using clear and effective strategies to link meaningfully to the remarks of other participants at the table.

Prepared QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS for Harkness Discussion

Student Name: _____

<u>Criteria / Skills</u>	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four
Understanding of the text (Knowledge) ____/6	Understanding of the text is not apparent. Qs & As are far too general and non-specific.	Understanding of the text is broad, non-specific and/ or inaccurate at times in Qs & As.	Understanding of the text is adequate; Qs & As demonstrate knowledge of concepts, themes & events in sources.	Understanding of the text is complete and thorough; Qs & As are highly developed and meaningful.
Evidence (Inquiry) ____/6	Student provides very little support for their response from the text in their Qs & As.	Student provides some support for their responses, but greater detail in references would improve the Qs & As.	Student provides support from the text and 'wider world' experiences in their Qs & As.	Student provides excellent support in their Qs & As with evidence from the text and 'wider world' experiences.
Communication ____/6	The information is communicated poorly. Greater care needs to be taken in order to communicate with clarity and accuracy.	The communication is understood but has numerous errors and a lack of complexity. Errors impede the effectiveness of the writing.	The information is communicated adequately. More effort to add complexity and to avoid simple errors could be made.	The information is communicated with a high degree of sophistication; student demonstrates an ability to manipulate language to achieve desired effect.
Types of Questions and Answers (Application) ____/6	A lack of variety in the questions and answers. Fewer than THREE were submitted.	A lack of variety in the questions and answers were submitted. Some may be knowledge based only.	A variety of questions and answers were submitted. Some (not all) are well-developed.	A variety of questions and answers were provided. All were sophisticated and thought provoking.

Evaluation of Questions and Answers BEFORE Harkness Discussion

INFERENTIAL QUESTIONS

Develop inferential questions (i.e. ones that will test others' comprehension of the text). These questions should be why-type questions, which can be answered from reading the text and THINKING about it! These are overview-type questions that require students to read-between-the-lines. The answers may not be literally written down on the page, but rather require the reader to think about it and come up with their answer and substantiate their answer with a quote or reference to a specific event. You should be looking for themes, concepts, motivations, and interpretations.

APPLIED QUESTIONS

Applied-type questions (i.e. ones that test others' interpretations of the important concepts in the text). **Applied questions apply the text to the larger world of knowledge and human experience. These are questions that take the themes and symbols of the text and expand them beyond the text itself.** What happens here is that you are applying the ideas of the author to concepts that go beyond what the text itself actually deals with. These are the kinds of questions that would require people to really think about their responses and rely on their personal experiences and knowledge. Applied questions cannot be answered with simple yes/no responses. Ask questions that will probe and explore. These questions will be the heart of your discussion.

Please remember you need THREE questions and answers. They should be a variety of either inferential or applied questions. Grammar and communication count. **It's ok to write more than three questions and answers.**

Level Four:

The writer thoroughly contextualizes the question (background information) and directs reader toward a very specific response. The question demonstrates a complete and proficient understanding of the text. The question appears beneath a clearly labelled title (ie. Inferential, Applied). Grammatical and mechanical errors do not detract from the meaning of the question. A response is given that has excellent depth with support. It is clear the author has an excellent understanding of the piece.

Level Three:

The writer contextualizes the question but further detail, length, and rigor would have helped guide the reader to a more specific response. The writer asks for an explanation and support for the reader's opinion. The question demonstrates a proficient understanding of the play. The question appears beneath a clearly labelled title (ie. Inferential, Applied). There are minor grammatical and mechanical errors, but the meaning of the question is still clear. The response has good depth but more could be provided. It is clear that they have read the piece.

Level One - Two:

The writer has not contextualized the question adequately. The question is too broad and general and therefore the response will be too broad and general. The question demonstrates an incomplete understanding of the piece. Question may require a simple yes/no response. The question may not appear beneath a clearly labelled title (i.e. Inferential, Applied). The grammatical and mechanical errors are distracting and cause meaning of question to be unclear. The author's response does not adequately display their knowledge of the text.

Harkness Discussions: Table Expectations

*adapted from "Some Thoughts About the Harkness Table" by Ralph Sneed
and Cindy Adams*

- **Listen carefully.**
- **Don't address everything to the instructor.** Make eye contact with the person whose points you are addressing. Look *around* the table; let people know that they're included. Use names to focus interaction.

- **Stick close to the text in discussion.** Keep the text open. When appropriate, be prepared to cite specifics in the language of the text to support, challenge or question. The discussion is not a test of memory.
- **Collaborate, don't compete. It is not a debate, but a discussion.** Discussion is collaborative: multiple sides work toward shared understanding. Debate is oppositional: opposing sides try to prove each other wrong.
- **Don't raise hands; take turns speaking.** It is OK to "pass" occasionally if asked directly to contribute.
- **Affirm comments made by other students.** Encourage others to clarify or expand ideas that might be foggy. Ask for more information or further explanation. Don't hesitate to summarize. Discuss ideas rather than one another's opinions.
- **Challenge *politely* if you disagree.** Let any student finish phrasing a question or developing an idea before you jump in. Clarify a difference of opinion first.
- **Be sure that the class is content with the exploration of one topic before heading off into new territory.** In moments of silence, determine whether the group is wrestling with an idea or passage, or whether to pursue a new line of inquiry. Ask each other: Can we summarize the discussion so far? Did we take it as far as it could go? Are we content?
- **You are responsible for the success of the discussion.** Prepare and participate thoughtfully. Don't BS if you don't know; admit it and move on.

FINALLY:

If you're not a reluctant participant, and suspect that you might have a dominant presence at the table, police your own frequency of involvement. Don't answer every question; don't jump in at every opportunity. Pull your weight, but not everybody else's.

Building Great Questions for Harkness Discussions – A Checklist

1. Have you decided if your question will be **inferential** (asking people to understand the text/texts), or **applied** (ideas from the text, but expanding to the window to the wider world of personal experiences)?

2. You need to select a piece of text (from the primary source, or a secondary source) that **CONTEXTUALIZES** and identifies the starting point of the question. What source (and page number) will this this piece of text come from. Please be specific:

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3. Now, build a **BRIDGING** sentence (or sentences) that take the question from the piece of text toward what you will be asking. This sentence (or sentences) should provide some **FRAMING** of how you see that quote/piece of text fitting into the broader question you are asking. Please write your sentence (or sentences) in the space below.

4. The final part of your question should be asking the reader to **IDENTIFY/EVALUATE/ASSESS** an event (or sequence of events), a theme, a character's motivation, a pattern that presents itself in the text (or the wider world) and **EXPLAIN** their insights on what is being asked. What is the question? Please identify below.

5. Just as a final reminder, A) the person responding to the question should not be able to resolve your question with a simple yes or no answer. They are being asked to reflect and provide insight; B) when answering your own questions, textual citations will be required to earn a high-level standing.

REMEMBER THE S.T.E.M. MODEL:

SPECIFIC – TEXT BASED - EVALUATIVE - MEANINGFUL