



# Center for Teaching and Learning

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# Tips for Engaging Students in Class Discussions

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# Let's Discuss Lists



# 3 Views of Lists

- o “We will acknowledge up front that our contemporary fetish for making lists can, potentially, denigrate and trivialize those very things we choose to list.” – Dr. Robert Greenberg
- o “The list doesn’t destroy culture; it creates it. Wherever you look in cultural history, you will find lists. In fact, there is a dizzying array: lists of saints, armies and medicinal plants, or of treasures and book titles. Think of the nature collections of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.” – Umberto Eco
- o “It’s a matter of how you use them. They can give you control in a certain way, but you don’t want them to be the only thing you do to gain control.” – Dr. Cynthia Green

# How do I love lists? Let me count the ways....

- o Lists are concrete
  - o They transform abstract, oral discussions into visual, tangible, written form
- o Lists help order and focus a discussion
- o Lists help students more easily process and recall information precisely because they provide order and concreteness

# More to Love about Lists

- o Lists lend themselves to collaboration
  - o Have students collectively generate the list rather than providing it for them.
- o Lists can be creative
  - o They are acts of creation that can foster creative thinking
- o Collaborative lists can create insights
  - o Into the students' thoughts and thought-process
  - o Into the broader culture from which students draw ideas

# Typical Student List of Founders

- o George Washington
- o John Adams
- o Thomas Jefferson
- o James Madison
- o Benjamin Franklin
- o Samuel Adams

Lists are familiar and entertaining!







# Next CTL EVENT

## Tips for Engaging Students in Online Discussions

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

Professors Lynn Bowes-Sperry and  
Stacie Chapell

Reception 3:30 p.m.

Presentation 4:00 p.m.

Bears Dean