

4 questions/suggestions to guide your peer work¹

1. Have you chosen an article/painting?

If yes, explain why you chose that article/painting – what appealed to you about it, or what didn't appeal about the other choice?

Which article/painting did your partner choose, and why did they choose it?

If no, discuss with your partner which one he/she chose, and why he/she chose it. Explain to your partner why you are having a hard time deciding—does he/she have suggestions?

What steps will you take to decide? How are you going to make the call?

2. Have you read either or both of the articles?

If you have, can you summarize either or both of them?

Can you lead your partner through what the article is arguing, step by step?

Does your partner agree with your summary?

What are the most important points about the article or articles for you?

Does your partner agree or does he/she have different important points?

What kinds of evidence does the article use? Can you find examples?

If you haven't read either article yet, can your partner summarize one or both of them for you? Can your partner identify what he/she thinks are the important points?

3. Have you looked at either or both of the paintings?

If you have, how would you describe the paintings from your own perspective?

What is going on in them? What is most significant about them from your point of view?

Is there anything in the painting that could relate to Pollock or Steinberg's arguments?

(If you haven't read the articles, ask your partner for tips.)

If so, what is it? How does it relate?

What elements of the painting can you use to show that relationship?

If you haven't, why don't you open up a laptop and do that right now?

¹ This was designed for a particularly challenging situation: peer work in a large first year Art History course. The students were supposed to integrate their reading of a research article with their analysis of a work of art, but they were all at varying stages of their work.

4. The Big Question

If you have read the article, identified what it is arguing, and also looked at the painting, try to give a one or two sentence answer to the question, “What do I think that the article is arguing and how do I think that the painting relates to that argument?”

For both parts of this question, work with your partner to make things as focused and specific as possible. Your partner doesn't have to agree with you, but they do have work with you to ensure that every point in your answer is clear, and that you have evidence from the article or the painting to back things up.