

Leading seminars/ discussions review

Work in groups of three or four. Choose one of the questions below and ask your partners to discuss it, giving any other instructions that you like. Try to make sure it is a good discussion, but **leave all the actual discussion mostly or totally up to the other people in your group**. Try to make sure they all contribute and come to some kind of conclusion which can be reported back to the whole class later, and **keep the discussion as close to exactly five minutes as possible**, timing the discussion.

Successful student discussion in class
Unsuccessful student discussion in class
The best structures for a class with student discussion
How to make sure all students contribute to a class
The best follow up to a discussion-based class
How to judge if a discussion-based class has been successful or not
Preparing for/ Planning a discussion-based class
Controlling student discussion
How to deal with Japanese students in discussion-based classes
How to deal with foreign students in discussion-based classes
Giving students the language that they need to discuss in class in English
How students should prepare for discussion-based classes
Using case studies in class
Putting students in charge of classroom discussion
Classroom discussion with students with low language levels
Classroom discussions with students with mixed language levels
Giving feedback after discussions/ seminars

Ask the whole class about any topics above which you are particularly interested in.

How well did you all control the discussions when it was your turn? How could you have done so better?

What things does someone controlling a discussion need to do (before, during and after the discussion)? What language can they use to do those things?

Put the language that you are given into categories by finding phrases which have basically the same function, like the things you just spoke about, then match those cards to these categories:

Getting everyone's attention/ Starting
Social expressions at the beginning of the seminar/ discussion
Giving the topic of the discussion
Providing background on the topic
Giving instructions/ Explaining the organisation of the discussion/ agenda
General instructions/ Overall instructions
First
Second/ Next
Finally
Explaining the aim of the discussion/ Giving the reason(s) for the discussion
Really getting started
Interrupting and keeping students on topic
Interrupting and getting students to contribute
Moving the discussion on/ Hurrying students up
Starting other parts of the session
Bringing the discussion together/ Discussing as a whole class
Summarising/ Drawing a conclusion from the discussion
Giving and leading feedback on the discussions
Talking about future actions
Ending

Cards to cut up

Right. It's nine o'clock (already), so...
Well, there are (still) two or three people missing but...
Welcome to...
You all look (very) keen and ready to...
As you (already) know, what we are going to talk about (today) is...
The topic of today's session is...
According to...
Many countries/ governments...
Today's task is to...
Please make sure that you...
I plan to begin today's session with...
First (of all), I'll set out...
Secondly, I'm going to get you to...
And then I'll ask each group to...
After all that, we'll...
We'll finish with...
The reason (why) I want to discuss this is to...
Through this discussion I hope you can...
So, as I explained, let's begin by...

(name), maybe we can start off by...
<i>Sorry for interrupting, but...</i>
Can I stop you there and...
Before you go on, can we hear...
Excuse the interruption, but I don't think we've...
Quickly finish that stage and then...
Just one minute...
Moving onto...
We seem to have finished that stage, so...
Can you report back on...
Let's go round (group by group) and...
So, to sum up what people have...
The consensus...
You should have...
I was impressed by...
We'll carry on this discussion...
Please write a summary of your position and...
We (seem to) have run out of time so...
Thanks for...

Suggested matches with space for brainstorming

Check your answers to the task above below then brainstorm more phrases with the same functions into the spaces given.

Getting everyone's attention/ Starting
Right. It's nine o'clock (already), so...
Well, there are (still) two or three people missing but...
Social expressions at the beginning of the seminar/ discussion
Welcome to...
You all look (very) keen and ready to...
Giving the topic of the discussion
As you (already) know, what we are going to talk about (today) is...
The topic of today's session is...
Providing background on the topic
According to...
Many countries/ governments...

Giving instructions/ Explaining the organisation of the discussion/ agenda
General instructions/ Overall instructions
Today's task is to...
Please make sure that you...
First
I plan to begin today's session with...
First (of all), I'll set out...
Second/ Next
Secondly, I'm going to get you to...
And then I'll ask each group to...
Finally
After all that, we'll...
We'll finish with...
Explaining the aim of the discussion/ Giving the reason(s) for the discussion
The reason (why) I want to discuss this is to...
Through this discussion I hope you can...

Really getting started
So, as I explained, let's begin by...
(name) , maybe we can start off by...
Interrupting and keeping students on topic
<i>Sorry for interrupting, but...</i>
Can I stop you there and...
Interrupting and getting students to contribute
Before you go on, can we hear...
Excuse the interruption, but I don't think we've...
Moving the discussion on/ Hurrying students up
Quickly finish that stage and then...
Just one minute...
Starting other parts of the session
Moving onto...
We seem to have finished that stage, so...

Bringing the discussion together/ Discussing as a whole class
Can you report back on...
Let's go round (group by group) and...
Summarising/ Drawing a conclusion from the discussion
So, to sum up what people have...
The consensus...
Giving and leading feedback on the discussions
You should have...
I was impressed by...
Talking about future actions
We'll carry on this discussion...
Please write a summary of your position and...
Ending
We (seem to) have run out of time so...
Thanks for...

Suggested answers without sentence continuations

Compare your extra phrases to those below.

Getting everyone's attention/ Starting
Right. It's nine o'clock (already), so...
Well, there are (still) two or three people missing but...
Okay, (I think) everybody's here, so...
Social expressions at the beginning of the seminar/ discussion
Welcome to...
You all look (very) keen and ready to...
Thanks for coming to...
I'm glad to see everyone came back after...
Giving the topic of the discussion
As you (already) know, what we are going to talk about (today) is...
The topic of today's session is...
What I'd like to discuss (today) is...
Today's subject is...
Providing background on the topic
According to...
Many countries/ governments...
Almost all...
As you are (all) (no doubt) aware,...
As you (probably) know,...
Hopefully you have (all) read...
I hope you remember that...
I was taught (when I was at school) that...
In modern...
In our globalised...
It has been suggested by...
Last week we...
Many (older/ younger) people...
Many experts (in this field)...
Perhaps a majority of...
There are several (different)...
Recently, there has been a lot of...
You may have...
Giving instructions/ Explaining the organisation of the discussion/ agenda
General instructions/ Overall instructions
Today's task is to...
Please make sure that you...
I'd like you to...
Don't worry about...
You have five minutes to...

First
I plan to begin today's session with...
First (of all), I'll set out...
Before the discussion, you have five minutes to...
We'll start off with...
For the first ten minutes...
In order to do this, you need to split into...
Second/ Next
Secondly, I'm going to get you to...
And then I'll ask each group to...
After that, I'll...
Then, we'll...
Finally
After all that, we'll...
We'll finish with...
Last (of all),...
The last stage will be...
If we have time, we'll (also)...
Explaining the aim of the discussion/ Giving the reason(s) for the discussion
The reason (why) I want to discuss this is to...
Through this discussion I hope you can...
By the end of today's session, we should have...
Really getting started
So, as I explained, let's begin by...
(name), maybe we can start off by...
(name), would you like to...
So, please get into...
So, please listen carefully and...
Interrupting and keeping students on topic
Sorry for interrupting, but...
Can I stop you there and...
Sorry for not letting you finish, but...
Could I interrupt you (for just a moment)? I'm afraid...
I'll let you finish (in a minute), but...
Interrupting and getting students to contribute
Before you go on, can we hear...
Excuse the interruption, but I don't think we've...
Before you continue, does anyone else...
Thanks for your contribution, but...
Moving the discussion on/ Hurrying students up
Quickly finish that stage and then...
Just one minute...
Let's not get stuck on...

Starting other parts of the session
Moving onto...
We seem to have finished that stage, so...
Turning to...
If no one has anything (else) to add at this stage,...
It's (about) time to...
We're running out of time, so...
In the final ten minutes, let's...
Hopefully you've (all) finished...
By now you should have...
Bringing the discussion together/ Discussing as a whole class
Can you report back on...
Let's go round (group by group) and...
What did you...?
Summarising/ Drawing a conclusion from the discussion
So, to sum up what people have...
The consensus...
People's views are (quite) different but...
To summarise...
Giving and leading feedback on the discussions
You should have...
I was impressed by...
You were supposed to...
Next time, I would suggest...
Next week, really try to...
Talking about future actions
We'll carry on this discussion...
Please write a summary of your position and...
Please use what you have learnt today when...
I'll send individual written feedback...
Your marks will be posted...
Ending
We (seem to) have run out of time so...
Thanks for...
See you...

Choose the most useful phrases above for starting your own discussion-based lessons/ seminars.

Starting with those, brainstorm endings for the phrases above.

Compare your ideas with the ideas below. Many more ideas are possible.

Starting – Full suggested answers with sentence continuations

Getting everyone's attention/ Starting
Right. It's nine o'clock (already), so... <i>let's get started, shall we?</i>
Well, there are (still) two or three people missing but... <i>I think we should begin...</i>
Okay, (I think) everybody's here, so... <i>shall we make a start?</i>
Social expressions at the beginning of the seminar/ discussion
Welcome to... <i>the first in a series of.../ the (new) course on/ our (new) English language...</i>
You all look (very) keen and ready to... <i>get started./ get your teeth into this debate./ come to terms with this (rather) tricky point.</i>
Thanks for coming to... <i>this special English language seminar./ this (one-off) debate on...</i> I'm glad to see everyone came back after... <i>that heavy discussion last week!/ the break!</i>
Giving the topic of the discussion
As you know, what we are going to talk about is... <i>the alternative explanations of why...</i>
The topic of today's session is... <i>the hypothesis that...</i>
What I'd like to discuss (today) is... <i>the influence on (modern) life of...</i> Today's subject is... <i>what can be done about...</i>
Providing background on the topic
According to... <i>(a majority of the) experts in this area,.../ the (well-known) proverb,.../ 16th century thinkers,.../ (name)'s theory of...</i>
Many countries/ governments... <i>have a policy of.../ have decided to.../ are forced to...</i>
Almost all... <i>the (leading) researchers in this field.../ (older) voters.../ (new) graduates...</i> As you are (all) aware,... <i>the (Japanese) government.../ (foreign) news outlets...</i> As you (probably) know,... <i>this university.../ the author (name)...</i> Hopefully you have (all) read... <i>the (background) reading that I gave you last week./ the next chapter in the book.</i> I hope you remember that... <i>we agreed on.../ we came to the conclusion.../ we read that...</i> I was taught that... <i>women should.../ it was the role of the husband to.../ capitalism is...</i> In modern... <i>life,.../ society,...</i> In our globalised... <i>world,.../ economy,...</i> It has been suggested by... <i>(name).../ several authors.../ a (leading) researcher...</i> Last week we... <i>studied.../ talked about.../ came to the (provisional) conclusion on...</i> Many (older/ younger) people... <i>are of the (fixed) opinion that.../ have to deal with the (critical) issue of...</i> Many experts (in this field)... <i>claim that.../ state that.../ agree that...</i> Perhaps a majority of... <i>people (in the world).../ (developing) countries...</i> There are several (different)... <i>views on.../ ways of analysing.../ approaches to.../ (theoretical) solutions to...</i> Recently, there has been a lot of... <i>controversy about.../ debate about.../ news coverage of.../ (online) discussion about.../ Twitter storms about...</i> You may have... <i>seen (in the news) that.../ heard.../ realised that.../ been wondering...</i>
Giving instructions/ Explaining the organisation of the discussion/ Explaining the agenda
General instructions/ Overall instructions
Today's task is to... <i>debate.../ come up with.../ start thinking about...</i>
Please make sure that you... <i>all contribute (equally) to the discussion./ look at both sides (of the argument)./ use the theories (we discussed) to analyse the situations.</i>

<p>I'd like you to..... <i>brainstorm.../ decide on.../ think of (good) reasons for.../ rank...</i> Don't worry about... <i>your lack of knowledge of the topic.</i> You have five minutes to... <i>come to (some kind of) an agreement.</i></p>
First
<p>I plan to begin today's session with... <i>a video on.../ an overview of.../ an introduction to...</i> First (of all), I'll set out... <i>the situation./ the (two) sides of the debate./ the (most important) differences between the (two) sides on this issue.</i> Before the discussion, you have 5 minutes to... <i>brainstorm ideas./ plan what you're going to say.</i> We'll start off with... <i>a presentation by.../ a recap of...</i> For the first ten minutes... <i>I'll let you prepare for the (later) discussion by...</i> In order to do this, you need to split into... <i>pairs./ groups (of three or four people)/ two teams/ people who think... and people who...</i></p>
Second/ Next
<p>Secondly, I'm going to get you to... <i>discuss it (in groups)/ try to work your way towards agreement./ work on your own ideas.</i> And then I'll ask each group to... <i>explain their positions./ give a (short) presentation./ nominate one person (to speak for them).</i> After that, I'll... <i>open the discussion up (to everyone)/ give you a chance to...</i> Then, we'll... <i>move onto.../ turn our attention to...</i></p>
Finally
<p>After all that, we'll... <i>bring the discussion together.</i> We'll finish with... <i>presentations by each group.</i> Last (of all),... <i>I'll summarise (the discussion) and make my own contribution.</i> The last stage will be... <i>a whole class discussion.</i> If we have time, we'll (also)... <i>have a vote on the issue.</i></p>
Explaining the aim of the discussion/ Giving the reason(s) for the discussion
<p>The reason (why) I want to discuss this is to... <i>increase your understanding of.../ check how well you understood...</i> Through this discussion I hope you can... <i>appreciate the usefulness of/ gain an ability to...</i> By the end of today's session, we should have... <i>come to (some kind of) a consensus on.../ understood the difference between...</i></p>
Really getting started
<p>So, as I explained, let's begin by... <i>discussing this in groups./ brainstorming our ideas./ getting (some) ideas together so that we can...</i> (name) , maybe we can start off by... <i>hearing your views./ hearing your presentation./ listening to your summary of last week's assignment.</i> (name), would you like to... <i>kick off./ get the ball rolling./ start the discussion./ give your views on this first?</i> So, please get into... <i>groups of three./ the same groups as last week./ two teams.</i> So, please listen carefully and... <i>be ready to ask (relevant) questions when.../ make notes so that you can...</i></p>
Interrupting and keeping students on topic
<p>Sorry for interrupting, but... <i>(I think) you're answering a slightly different question.</i> Can I stop you there and... <i>bring you back to the topic (at hand).</i></p>

Sorry for not letting you finish, but... <i>to get back on track...</i> Could I interrupt you (for just a moment)? I'm afraid... <i>you seem to be getting off the point.</i> I'll let you finish (in a minute), but... <i>the original topic is...</i>
Interrupting and getting students to contribute
Before you go on, can we hear... <i>what (name) has to say about this?</i>
Excuse the interruption, but I don't think we've... <i>heard from (name) yet./ heard from anyone who has the opposite (point of) view.</i>
Before you continue, does anyone else... <i>have (any) opinions on this?/ want to comment on this?/ want to add anything?</i>
Thanks for your contribution, but... <i>shall we see what (name) thinks?/ I think this is a good time to hear from someone with the opposite point of view.</i>
Moving the discussion on/ Hurrying students up
Quickly finish that stage and then... <i>get ready for the whole class discussion./ get your (best) ideas down on paper./ prepare what you want your representative to say.</i>
Just one minute... <i>left./ before you need to.../ before we move onto....</i>
Let's not get stuck on... <i>that point./ defining (our) terms./ the details (of the debate).</i>
Starting other parts of the session
Moving onto... <i>the summing up./ my contribution to the debate.</i>
We seem to have finished that stage, so... <i>let's progress to...</i>
Turning to... <i>the next stage./ the whole class stage.</i>
If no one has anything (else) to add at this stage,... <i>we'll turn our attention to...</i>
It's (about) time to... <i>start coming to a conclusion.</i>
We're running out of time, so... <i>let's move our chairs and tables back to.../ all face...</i>
In the final ten minutes, let's... <i>reflect on what we have learnt./ feedback on the discussion (process) we went through.</i>
Hopefully you've (all) finished... <i>your (initial) brainstorm./ coming up with (five) ideas.</i>
By now you should have... <i>completed your mind maps.</i>
Bringing the discussion together/ Discussing as a whole class
Can you report back on... <i>what you decided?/ the (different) points of view in your group?</i>
Let's go round (group by group) and... <i>hear what they can add to the discussion.</i>
What did you... <i>choose?/ decide?</i>
Summarising/ Drawing a conclusion from the discussion
So, to sum up what people have... <i>said,.../ suggested,.../ presented,...</i>
The consensus... <i>seems to be.../ is clearly.../ isn't (completely) clear but...</i>
People's views are (quite) different but... <i>(I think) it's fair to say that.../ the majority opinion seems to be...</i>
To summarise... <i>what (all) the (different) groups said,...</i>
Giving and leading feedback on the discussions
You should have... <i>considered more ideas before coming to a conclusion.</i>
I was impressed by... <i>the level of English (that) you used./ how well you expressed yourselves.</i>

You were supposed to... *come to an agreement./ look at both sides before you came to a conclusion.*

Next time, I would suggest... *the leader of each group being more active.*

Next week, really try to... *use the vocabulary (that) we studied./ learn the pronunciation of the words (in the text) so that you can (actually) talk about it.*

Talking about future actions

We'll carry on this discussion... *next week./ in the next class./ when we (next) have the chance.*

Please write a summary of your position and... *email it (to me) by Friday./ hand it in (to me) next week./ use that to compare ideas (with another student) next week.*

Please use what you have learnt today when... *you write your essays (on the topic)./ it is your turn (to give a presentation).*

I'll send individual written feedback... *before the next class./ as soon as I can.*

Your marks will be posted... *on the intranet./ on the noticeboard (outside my office).*

Ending

We (seem to) have run out of time so... *we'll call it a day./ we'll (have to) leave the discussion there.*

Thanks for... *(all) your contributions./ (all) your hard work./ making (such) an effort to speak in English./ preparing so well.*

See you... *the same time next week./ next week./ the day after tomorrow./ the next time (that) we run one of these classes./ around.*

Leading a seminar/ discussion second practice

Start a discussion with phrases like those above, also helping during discussion and ending the session. Without looking below for now, try to remember or think of full sentences that someone leading the class/ seminar can say during class discussions. Then look at the sentence stems above to help, but expand them into full sentences. Finally compare with the phrases below.

Suggested topics for group discussions

As long as the people who you are leading are capable of such a discussion (e.g. are from the same field as you), you should lead a discussion which is like one you really have experienced or are really likely to lead. Alternatively, you could ask the people participating what kind of discussion might be realistic for them. If you can't think of anything suitable, use one of the suggestions below. The parts in bold can be used to make other questions.

The best self-study to improve listening skills.

Top five ways to learn academic vocabulary.

The best solution(s) to problems with fluency.

The best approach to cultural differences in communication.

How to cope with cultural differences in the use of gestures.

The main reasons for/ causes of...

Whether... is generally a good thing.

How... should change.

*Which of these things might you **ask students to do** in class?*

- Ask questions during other people's presentations
- Brainstorm ideas/ useful language in groups
- Change groups during the class
- Choose from a worksheet with possible opinions/ useful phrases
- Come to an agreement/ Come to a consensus
- Contribute even if they don't really have anything to say
- Debate after preparation – Debate with no preparation
- Decide how they will come up with ideas/ Decide how they will organise their own group discussion
- Do roleplay debates/ discussions
- Find information in support of their positions
- Form themselves into groups
- Give each other feedback on their performances
- Give group presentations
- Hold debates within groups
- Interrupt when they want to speak
- Lead other people's discussions/ Lead a whole class
- Listen to something/ Watch something
- Manage their own time in class
- Nominate someone from each group to speak
- Present based on what their group said/ Present based on what their group decided
- Present information for the other people in the class to debate about
- Raise their hands to show their opinions/ show their knowledge (or lack of knowledge)
- Read different texts from each other and bring what they have learnt together
- Read silently in class
- Read something and freely discuss in it groups
- Read something in class and discuss it with tasks given to them
- Reflect on their own performances/ Reflect on what they have learnt
- Speak about topics they don't know much about/ Speak before being given information on the topic
- Speak from notes – Speak without notes
- Speak in front of the class when told to
- Split into two/ several teams
- Study language which they could use during classroom discussions
- Support the opinion that they have been given
- Take notes on what people in their group say/ decide
- Take part in a pyramid debate (trying to agree in larger and larger groups)
- Take part in whole class debates/ formal debates
- Take the opposite side of the debate to their own views
- Volunteer to speak out in front of the class
- Vote (e.g. initial and final vote)
- Work in groups to prepare what they will say in a whole class discussion
- Work in the same groups as previous lessons – Work in different groups to previous lesson(s)

Leading a seminar/ discussion third practice – roleplays

Set up and lead another discussion, this time trying especially hard to do the thing on the card below that you choose. When you finish, your partners will try to guess what your card said and then discuss how much of a good or bad thing that could be and if the level you did it was the right one.

Give a very long introduction
Give complicated instructions.
Let the participants choose most things for themselves (how to organise their discussion, who will have each role, etc).
Check and double check that the participants understand what you say (instructions etc).
Interrupt a lot.
Try very hard to get everyone making an equal contribution.
Give a very long ending.
Give a very short introduction.
Add more instructions when the discussion had already started.

Try to remember or think of as many phrases as you can for ending seminars/ discussions.

Use the sentence stems above to help you, but expand them.

Compare your ideas with those below.

Giving positive and negative feedback after seminars/ discussions

Would the feedback of each whole sentence or two given below be positive or negative? Write + for positive and – for negative next to each of the sections below. If you aren't sure about one sentence, check the one in the same section as it, which it will match.

Did you take... into **account**?
I'm **afraid**...

You don't **appear** to have...
You were **asked** to work on...

... wasn't (too) **bad** at all.
... was (much/ quite a lot) **better** than last time.

Before the next class...
If anything,... was **better** last week.

... compared well to those of your **classmates**.
Considering the **difficulty** of the task,...

Did you **consider**...?
I was **disappointed** to see that...

I can see (that) you (had) put (a lot of) **effort** into...
... was (almost) **flawless**.

Please make an **effort** to...
You didn't put enough **effort** into...

If you think back to your **feedback** after the last session...
It was **fine** in terms of...

There wasn't (really) **enough**...
I had **expected**...
... wasn't (really) what I (had) **expected**.

You should (probably) **focus** on improving...
Don't **forget** to...

... wasn't (too/ very) **good**.
If you had...

... was really/ quite **good**.
... was (utterly) **impeccable**.

I wasn't (so/ very) **impressed** by...
... hadn't (really) **improved** much.
You really need to **improve**...

You'd really **improved**...
I was (very) **impressed** by...
As I **instructed**, you...

Your **instructions** were...
Despite my (clear) **instructions** to...,...

There was a (clear) **lack** of...
You could **learn** a lot from...

Despite some **language** problems,...
You obviously **learnt** a lot from...
Although there is still a **need** for some.....

.... still **need(s)** to be (quite a lot) improved.

There was no **need** to...

Next time...

Next week...

Make a **note** to...

I hope you won't take **offence** if I say...

... (really) **paid** off.

I was very **pleased** with...

You had (some/ quite a few/ quite a lot of) **problems** with...

You might **remember** that...

You had no **problems** with...

I hope I can expect more of the **same** next week.

I was glad to **see** that you...

I was happy to **see** that you...

You (really) **should** have...

... wasn't very **strong**.

You **showed** good evidence of...

... (really) **stood** out.

You **struggled** a bit with... Nevertheless,...

... was (absolutely) **superb**.

Due to your (**thorough**) preparation,...

If you had prepared more **thoroughly**...

Have you **thought** about...?

Although last week I **told** you,...

You were **told** to...

Despite what I **told** you last week,...

There was **too** much...

Please **try** to...

The most **useful** feedback I can give you is...

Don't take this the wrong **way**, but...

You did really **well** with...

Well done for...

You still need to **work** on... Nonetheless,...

... (still) needs some **work**.

It **would** have been (much) better with...

If I were you, I **would**...

I **would** (strongly) recommend...

I **would** suggest...

... wasn't **sufficiently**...

You were **supposed** to...

Please make **sure** you...

Try to remember or think of phrases using as many of these key words as you can. Some can be used with more than phrase, including sometimes both positive and negative sentences. You shouldn't need to change the key words, but you can if you like. Phrases which weren't on the worksheets above are fine as long as they are suitable for giving feedback.

account
appear
bad
better
consider
disappointed
enough
feedback
flawless
forget
if
impressed
improved
instructions
learn
need
note
paid
problems
same
should
stood
struggled
superb
sure
thoroughly
told
try
way
work

afraid
asked
before
classmates
difficulty
effort
expected
fine
focus
good
impeccable
improve
instructed
lack
learnt
next
offence
pleased
remember
see
showed
strong
sufficiently
supposed
thorough
thought
too
useful
well
would

Check with the worksheets above, asking your teacher about any other sentences you came up with.

Test each other in pairs:

- Read out phrases with the key words missing and see if your partner can guess what they are, giving them hints if they get stuck
- Read out key words and help your partner come up with the feedback phrases, giving them hints if needed.

Choose some phrases which you would like to use in feedback.

Write continuations of some of the sentences.

What kinds of things would you want to give feedback on?

Choose some things from this list:

- Accuracy
- Being easy to understand
- Complex ideas
- Cooperating/ Working well together
- Coping with higher level students
- Cultural differences
- Fluency
- Giving other people a chance to speak
- Giving way too quickly
- Helping weaker students
- Improvements since last time
- Interrupting
- Politeness
- Preparation before the session
- Pronunciation
- Silence
- Subject knowledge
- Support for arguments
- Use of high-level/ ambitious language
- Vocabulary knowledge

What questions could you ask to make them reflect on their performance, learning, areas to improve on and priorities?

Leading a seminar/ discussion fourth practice – problem roleplays

Choose one of the cards below and do that thing as much as possible while you take part in the discussion that one of your classmates sets up. They will interrupt and give instructions on how to improve the discussion if they think they spot something that you are doing wrong, then stop the discussion whenever they think they know what is written on your card and that of your partner or partners. After they give feedback on the discussion using positive and negative phrases, tell them if they guessed the thing which was written on your card.

Dominate the discussion (= talk all the other time and stop other people speaking)
Reject all interruption.
Keep all your contributions really short.
Don't contribute (= try to avoid speaking)
Don't follow the instructions
Go off topic
Strongly attack other people's arguments
Get stuck on one point (= don't progress through the discussion)
Rush really quickly through the discussion
Claim that you can't answer any of the questions, e.g. that you have no views on the topic
Claim not to understand what the other people in your class are saying

Agree with everything anyone says, without adding anything to their arguments
Speak really quietly
Do everything wrong.
Keep asking the discussion leader to speak (asking for confirmation that what you said is correct, asking for their opinions, etc)
Only make eye contact with the discussion leader.
Ignore what other people say and just continue with your own argument (without answering their counterarguments)
Make your arguments too strongly (“Any idiot can see that...?” etc)
Take a position completely on the fence and refuse to decide one way or the other.
Dismiss arguments without saying why.

Feedback after group discussions

Ask each other the questions below, discussing them if you have different opinions or experiences.

How well did you contribute to the discussions?

Did how well you communicated improve over the length of the class/ classes you took part in? Why do you feel that way?

What will you try to do differently the next time you have the opportunity to take part in such discussions?

What were the most useful things you studied today?

What did you learn from people who you discussed the topics with?

What do you still need to find out about the topics that you spoke about?

What is most difficult about taking part in these kinds of discussions for you? How can you overcome those difficulties?

What can you do outside class to help you improve your knowledge of the topics that you spoke about?

What can you do outside class to help improve your ability to take part in group and whole class discussions in English?

How useful are the questions above for getting students to reflect on their performance and learning? Are there any which you wouldn't use?

Can you think of any other useful questions or other ways to get students to reflect on and improve on their discussion skills?