The 4 Cs

A routine for structuring a text-based discussion.

Connections
What connections do you draw between the text and your own life or your other learning?

Challenge
What ideas, positions, or assumptions do you want to challenge or argue with in the text?

Concepts
What key concepts or ideas do you think are important and worth holding on to from the text?

Changes
What changes in attitudes, thinking, or action are suggested by the text, either for you or others?

PURPOSE

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?
The routine provides learners with a structure for a text-based discussion built around making connections, asking questions, identifying key ideas, and considering application.

APPLICATION

When and where can I use it?
After reading a text, or even several different but related texts, small groups can use this routine to discuss the text and explore the application of ideas. The individual questions for each of the Cs may be adjusted to fit the needs of the group and the text being read. Sometimes you may want to focus on a just 2 or 3 Cs rather than all 4.

LAUNCH

What are some tips for starting and using this routine?
This routine works best with small groups. Before beginning discussion, give group members time to identify passages from the text that correspond to each of the Cs. These should be underlined or in some way identified so that they can later be shared with the group. In the group, discussion begins by one person sharing a connection that he or she made, reading the text passage and explaining the connection. Members of the group may add their comments on the offered passage. The next member of the group then shares his or her passage and the discussion continues in the matter until each member has shared a "connection." The group then moves on to the next "C," always making sure that the chosen text passage is first shared and then discussed. You may have groups record the text passages to document the discussions.

This thinking routine was developed as part of the Cultures of Thinking project at Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Explore the full PZ Thinking Routine Toolbox at *pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines*.