

Harkness Discussion Grade Ranges

Adapted from Exeter Materials

A range is awarded to a student who:

- consistently arrives prepared to engage in the work of discussion
- Is well prepared with annotations, notes and questions
- is a class leader during the discussions, taking on much of the work
- others turn to for guidance with a response to a question or idea
- is capable of expressing him/herself clearly
- offers perceptive responses and good insightful questions
- is skilled at thinking on his/her feet and providing the textual evidence necessary to persuade others that opinions are valid
- tackles the tough questions as well as the easy
- frequently pushes the class into a given direction through a comment or question
- is attentive and respectful of others' opinions and questions

B range is awarded to a student who:

- consistently arrives to class prepared and often engages in the work of discussion
- Is prepared with annotations, notes and questions
- is a strong member of discussions
- can often be relied upon for meaningful contributions
- is capable of expressing him/herself clearly
- offers clear responses and good questions
- is attentive and respectful of others' opinions
- occasionally pushes the class into a new direction through a comment or question

C range is awarded to a student who:

- takes a more passive role in discussions
- not prepared with the reading or notes.
- prefers to listen and let others do the work of discussion
- is attentive
- is a less strong member of discussions; participates on occasion but often in a manner that is brief
- responds when addressed directly, but does not usually volunteer
- rarely provides evidence to persuade others that opinions are valid
- goes with gut instinct instead of offering evidence
- tackles more of the easy than the challenging questions
- Repeats remarks made by others with out adding their own insight
- Derails the conversation but refusing to let go off a point

D range is awarded to a student who:

- not prepared with the reading or notes.
- prefers to listen and let others do the work of discussion.
- participates on occasion but often in a manner that is brief
- has difficulty expressing him/herself clearly
- is not skilled in thinking on his/her feet; rarely provides the evidence necessary to persuade others that opinions are valid
- frequently only tackles the easier questions and challenges questions of others
- has lapses of attentiveness and does not always show respect of others' opinions
- can be a negative force in discussion either by not paying attention or by distracting others or by making comments meant to disrupt the flow of discussion and the commitment to the work of discussion
- Disruptive body language – (Head on table, laying on desk, turned away from discussion)