**Agree/Disagree/I Have Something to Say Workshop**

(Note: you can stop this anywhere—Steps one and two make a great short writing prompts or tell students to have them ready to aid class discussion.)

Scholarly research can begin with arguing against or further proving someone else’s idea. The older a piece of literature is, the more scholars (before you) have studied and written about it. BUT, it is still possible for you to find a small niche where you can add to the ongoing conversation. This requires research. And active reading. And time.

You were to mark in the essays two comments you agreed with and two you disagreed with—pick the one that most interests you right now.

1. **Write the comment down at the top of piece of paper**.
2. Look at how the original statement was supported—what **proof** was presented?
3. Write **a two sentence statement about why** you agreed or disagreed with the statement.
4. **Brainstorm potential proof** you can offer in further support of your position:
	1. Facts (well…facts, undeniable, generally known to be true)
	2. Observations (what have you seen/noticed)
	3. Opinions (what do you think and/or what do experts think?)
	4. Statistics (playing with numbers)
	5. Examples (where have you seen this in literature/media)
	6. Experiences (your own personal experience)
	7. [NOTE: Most support falls into one of the categories above, no matter what you are writing]
5. Now **poll the class** (split into smaller groups) This is also a type of research—asking other scholars.
	* **Take turns reading the original statement aloud.**
	* Agree—thumbs up
	* Disagree—thumbs down
	* I have something to say—raise your hand
	* I have something to says speak first—if what they say changes the mind of agree/disagree, they can change their mind/vote.
	* Take notes & ask questions of your classmates—borrow their brains/ideas as potential support or to help refine your position.
	* For example: “…workers relied on the telling of tales to shorten the hours devoted to repetitive harvesting tasks” (Tatar 3, first edition textbook intro).
6. **Rephrase your position statement into a question**
	1. For example: I agree (disagree) that “…workers relied on the telling of tales to shorten the hours devoted to repetitive harvesting tasks” (Tatar 3, first edition intro).
	2. Becomes: Did/do the telling of tales really help with repetitive tasks over long hours?
	3. Where have we seen this, historically? (Cuban cigar factories in Ybor City hired “readers”)
	4. Where do we see it now? (Dvd players factory installed in minivans, screens on airplanes)
7. **Brainstorm:** Use a concept map to generate all the ideas you can about your research question. You can continue to add to your concept map as you learn more. Write down everything you know.
	1. Share your concept map with your discussion group to find other possibilities.
8. **Write at least five (5) research questions related to the one developed in step six** (vary the focus…exploration, definition, experiment, solution, etc.) **What do you want to know?**
	1. Choose a specific the time period, style, or type of story in focus to narrow the topic;
	2. Choose a larger time period, style, or type of story to broaden the topic;
	3. Consider synonyms (including Fable, Magical Stories, or Children’s Literature for Fairy Tales).
	4. For example: If storytelling helped with repetitive tasks over long hours, why aren’t we still using this? **OR** Is storytelling still being used to help with long hours, and if so, where? **OR** What has taken the place of storytelling to help with long hours/repetitive tasks in the modern era?
9. **Use the chart to rank your questions** in each category from most interesting to least interesting (or mark your top three in each category).
10. Share your questions and findings with your discussion group to get feedback and new possibilities.
11. Choose the one question you would pursue and work up.