

ASSIGNMENT 1: ASKING INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

Assignment Purpose: To help you learn to ask productive questions while reading primary texts.

Assignment Details:

On the first class meeting of each week (the day a primary text reading is due), please bring to class a 3x5 notecard with your name and two *interpretive questions* about the assigned reading. I will collect these questions at the start of class and may use them in our discussion.

An interpretive question

- cannot be answered with “yes” or “no.”
- does not ask for summary or facts.
- *does* have more than one answer that can be supported with textual evidence.
- *does* spark debate.

Example of a yes/no question:

Is Hamlet sad about his father’s death?

Example of a factual question:

What does Hamlet do after he sees his father’s ghost?

Example of an interpretive question:

How might we understand Hamlet’s exclamation “O my prophetic soul!” after he hears the ghost’s tale of King Hamlet’s death?