NOMINATING QUESTIONS

Often when discussions moves from small to large group formats it is difficult to know which of the issues identified by the smaller groups should be focused on in the whole class conversation. The process of involving students in nominating questions gets students to start making judgments on issues of importance within a subject.

Small groups conduct their discussions. They are told that at the end of the discussion period they must list the main questions about the issue, topic or subject that arose during their conversation.

When small groups are called together for a whole class discussion they first list on the blackboard, or a flip chart, the questions that their group identified.

The whole class is then asked to review and think for a minute or so about all the questions that have been put on the board or flip charts.

The students are then given 2-3 minutes to vote for no more than two questions they would like to discuss further as a whole class. They do this by all getting up, moving to the blackboard or flip charts, and individually placing checks against the 2 of the questions (out of all those listed) that they would choose to pursue in the whole class discussion.

When everyone has had a chance to record their vote the top two or three questions chosen becomes the one the whole class focuses on.

Advantages – this gives you as the teacher a chance to see which elements of the topic are either of interest to students or are causing them problems. It is also usually seen as a publicly fair way to proceed with discussion. Finally, it adds a bit of kinetic variety since students have to get up out of their seats to record their vote!