Class Participation: Making Contributions that Count- Adapted from
http://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/library/for-students/class-participation-contr/

Participating in class doesn't come easily to everyone. Some students feel comfortable speaking up in class, asserting their ideas and opinions, and taking center stage. Other students find it harder to hold the floor. But if the aim of class discussion is to learn from others and allow them to learn from you, lots of contributions count, including questioning, listening, and responding. Your discussion leader values these contributions, too.

- **Make a comment to <u>link</u> two people's contributions and/or to summarize a recurring theme.**
  - E.g. "It's interesting that Mahnaz and Lea both seem to…."
  - E.g. "I'm noticing that our class discussion seems to be focusing on …. Which is interesting because…"

- **<u>Explain</u> that you found another person's ideas <u>interesting</u> or useful, and describe why.**
  - **E.**g. "I agree with Yiling's point about… because in my experience…" (or "because I think that…")

- **<u>Paraphrase</u> and/or <u>build</u> on what someone else has said**. Be explicit about the way you are extending the other person's thought.
  - **E.**g. "Building off what Savant was saying, I think…"

- **Encourage someone to <u>clarify</u> or <u>elaborate</u> on a comment**.
  - E.g. "Yang, I think you make an interesting point, and I'd love to know what you or others in the class think about… "
  - E.g. "I see that…but I'm not sure about… I'd love if someone wanted to comment on…"

- **Find a way to express appreciation for the insights you have gained from the discussion or a connection you've made to your prior learning or life experience.**
  - E.g. "It's helpful to hear what you all have to say about this, because…."
  - E.g. "I keep coming back to my own experience as…" or "I'm remembering one of our previous readings/discussions about…."

- **Disagree with someone in a respectful and constructive way.** You might reflect the comment back to the speaker to indicate that you have listened well. If possible, point out what is interesting or compelling in someone's comment before explaining why and how you disagree.
  - **E.**g. "I think Tabasum is bringing up an important point. And at the same time…"
  - E.g. "I'm interested in what Shabana mentioned, because my response/understanding was a little different…."

OTHER IDEAS??? ☺

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Class Presentation Tips

Before the presentation:

- Do your research. Having something to say is the most important thing.
    - Consider facts as well as interpretation/analysis
    - Keep in mind the question

- Prepare your notes
    - 16 point font or higher
    - Key words, phrases, starting points (don't write everything down)
    - Organized but not too structured

- Practice! Practice!! Practice!!!
    - Aim to be under the time limit
    - Practice standing up—maybe in front of a mirror?

Beginning your presentation

- Take a slow, deep breath or two (makes you feel calmer and look more relaxed)

- Make points of eye contact with the audience

- Introduce yourself (if needed) and your topic. Consider:

    - Why is this topic important?
    - What subtopics are you going to cover in your presentation? (overview)

- Act confident—no apologies, rolling eyes, or other self-deprecation

During your presentation

- Don't simply read your notes or PowerPoint slides. Talk TO the audience

- Make eye contact: Look up from notes, then back down if needed

- Speak more slowly than your normal rate of speech

    - Breathe, take drinks of water, etc.
    - Don't worry if you lose your place in your notes—just calmly find your place and move on.

- Repeat main points multiple times

- Don't be afraid to speak spontaneously

At the end

- Thank the audience

- Have 1 or 2 questions for them??