SMALL GROUP EXCHANGE QUESTIONS

Exchange drafts with your group, and give comments on each other’s papers. Remember: opinion+evidence=argument. Everyone needs to have a clearly articulated, well-argued thesis statement in their essay, and this should be supported by evidence (reliable data from a variety of potential sources). Without evidence, opinion will not persuade; without opinion, evidence on a page accomplishes very little. Put together, the two are the basis for persuasion. You are aiming to persuade an audience of your peers to vote for a candidate for President of the United States, or to persuade them that the issue you are addressing is crucial to the health and well-being of our nation. Give specific, credible evidence to support your points, and cite your sources for this information. Hold your peers accountable for providing such evidence in their own papers, and offer suggestions as to where they might find credible evidence if it is lacking.

Ask yourself these questions of every draft you read, and jot down a sentence or two for each one, on the paper itself or on a separate sheet:

1) What is the claim or thesis for this paper? What grounds are established to support the claim or thesis?
2) What appear to be some underlying assumptions in this argument/thesis statement? Do any of these assumptions seem unfounded, or ask too much of the reader?
3) Comment on the essay's use of source materials. Do all the quotes work in the paper's best interests, for instance? Are there places where a quote would serve better than a paraphrase or vice versa?
4) Do you see any problems in the citation technique or MLA format? If so, where?
5) What do you see as the greatest strength of this draft?
6) Tell the writer what you feel needs the most attention while he / she is revising.