Questions for NonFiction

1) Could the writer mean something different here?

2) How could you summarize this selection in 6 words or less?

3) If this entire passage could be represented in a single image… Can you sketch that image?

4) What would be an exception for when this argument/claim/point of view wouldn't be true?

5) Could you create a similar idea/argument/piece of information but using better examples?

6) What would it take to make this more relevant for us?

7) Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)

8) Does this way of thinking / type of information always work?

9) Where else might you find something like this? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)

10) Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing?

Questions for Fiction

1) Could the character mean something different here?

2) Who else is going to be impacted by this new development in the plot?

3) Imagine this entire section as a single image… Can you sketch that image?

4) Read this part of the dialogue aloud in different ways. How does the tone of your voice

change what the meaning could be? How do you think the character sounds in this part?

5) Based on what you know of the characters, what would happen if _____ said _____?

6) What would it take to make this more believable or relatable for us as readers?

7) Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (conflict, genre, theme, time period, etc.)

8) Does this way of thinking always work? What will likely happen later in the plot if it's wrong?

9) Imagine a song playing as this event is happening (or as this character enters the scene).

What song? Which lyrics? How would that song emphasize the events in the story?

10) Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing (or which parts would you like to know more about that the author didn't explain)?

Questions for Poetry

1) What image or picture comes to mind as you read this poem? How does the poet create that image?

2) Which words or phrases seem most important? Why do you think the poet chose them?

3) What type(s) of figurative language do you notice (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.)? How do they affect meaning?

4) If this poem were a song, what mood or tone would the music have?

5) How does the structure (line breaks, stanzas, repetition, rhyme, etc.) shape the way you read and understand the poem?

6) Which lines do you connect with most? What makes them powerful or memorable?

7) How would the meaning of the poem change if the figurative language was taken out?

8) What emotions does this poem bring out in you as a reader? How does the poet achieve that?

9) How does the speaker's point of view or perspective affect the meaning of the poem?

10) Which figurative language technique here could you "steal" as a writer and use in your own writing?

10 Discussion Response Stems for Middle School

1. **"I agree with what you said because _____. Another example from the text is _____."**
   (validating and extending)

2. **"I see it differently. I think _____ because the text shows _____."**
   (disagreeing respectfully with evidence)

3. **"Can you explain what you meant when you said _____? I wasn't sure I understood."**
   (asking for clarification)

4. **"That's interesting! It makes me wonder _____."**
   (connecting to curiosity)

5. **"I like your point, but what if we looked at it this way: _____."**
   (challenging politely)

6. **"Building on what you said, I noticed _____ in the text."**
   (extending the conversation)

7. **"I'm not sure I agree, because _____. But I can see why you might think _____."**
   (balanced disagreement)

8. **"This reminds me of _____, which makes me think _____."**
   (making connections)

9. **"One question I still have is _____. What do you all think?"**
   (turning to inquiry)

10. **"If I combine your idea with mine, maybe we could say _____."**
    (synthesizing ideas)

Nonfiction Discussion Task Cards

Could the writer mean something different here?	Could you create a similar idea/argument/piece of information but using better examples?
How could you summarize this selection in 6 words or less?	What would it take to make this more relevant for us?
If this entire passage could be represented in a single image… Can you sketch that image?	Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)
What would be an exception for when this argument/claim/point of view wouldn't be true?	Does this way of thinking / type of information always work?

Where else might you find something like this? (structure, genre, theme, main idea, etc.)	
Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing?	

Fiction Discussion Task Cards

Could the character mean something different here?	Based on what you know of the characters, what would happen if _____ said _____?
Who else is going to be impacted by this new development in the plot?	What would it take to make this more believable or relatable for us as readers?
Imagine this entire section as a single image… Can you sketch that image?	Have we ever read anything similar to this before? (conflict, genre, theme, time period, etc.)
Read this part of the dialogue aloud in different ways. How does the tone of your voice change what the meaning could be? How do you think the character sounds in this part?	Does this way of thinking always work? What will likely happen later in the plot if it's wrong?

Imagine a song playing as this event is happening (or as this character enters the scene). What song? Which lyrics? How would that song emphasize the events in the story?	

Which parts make sense to you, and which parts seem confusing (or which parts would you like to know more about that the author didn't explain)?	

Poetry & Figurative Language Discussion Task Cards

What image or picture comes to mind as you read this poem? How does the poet create that image?	How does the structure (line breaks, stanzas, repetition, rhyme, etc.) shape the way you read and understand the poem?
Which words or phrases seem most important? Why do you think the poet chose them?	Which lines do you connect with most? What makes them powerful or memorable?
What type(s) of figurative language do you notice (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.)? How do they affect meaning?	How would the meaning of the poem change if the figurative language was taken out?
If this poem were a song, what mood or tone would the music have?	What emotions does this poem bring out in you as a reader? How does the poet achieve that?

How does the speaker's point of view or perspective affect the meaning of the poem?	
Which figurative language technique here could you "steal" as a writer and use in your own writing?	

DISCUSSION RESPONSE STEMS TASK CARDS

I AGREE WITH WHAT YOU SAID BECAUSE _____. ANOTHER EXAMPLE FROM THE TEXT IS _____.	**I LIKE YOUR POINT, BUT WHAT IF WE LOOKED AT IT THIS WAY: _____.**
I SEE IT DIFFERENTLY. I THINK _____ BECAUSE THE TEXT SHOWS _____.	**BUILDING ON WHAT YOU SAID, I NOTICED _____ IN THE TEXT.**
CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT YOU MEANT WHEN YOU SAID _____? I WASN'T SURE I UNDERSTOOD.	**I'M NOT SURE I AGREE, BECAUSE _____. BUT I CAN SEE WHY YOU MIGHT THINK _____.**
THAT'S INTERESTING! IT MAKES ME WONDER _____.	**THIS REMINDS ME OF _____, WHICH MAKES ME THINK _____.**

ONE QUESTION I STILL HAVE IS _____. WHAT DO YOU ALL THINK?	
IF I COMBINE YOUR IDEA WITH MINE, MAYBE WE COULD SAY _____.	

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┌─────────────────────┐
│   HOW               │
│   WE                │
│   FREE-WRITE        │
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1) If it's a QUOTE, start by copying it.
    If it's an IMAGE, start by listing and describing exactly what you see. If it's a topic, start by explaining it.

2) Then begin writing about *what you think* about it. No, really. If you like it or not, it's ok to say so. Just explain *why*.

Psst.
Stop gripping your pen or pencil so hard.
Seriously.
Relax while you write.

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3) Are you getting stuck? Start with these ideas:
* What does the quote or image remind you of?
* If it's a topic, then what do you think about it as compared to what others think about it?

* How would you change the image, the quote, or the topic to make it better, or funnier, or more realistic?

* How could you use your imagination to expand the idea? What would make the quote, image, or topic more interesting?
* What else would you like to know about it?

* Does it remind you of anything? Like a movie, book, or a game or something?

4) Stuck again? Ok. Look at the last word you wrote. Start copying that word over and over and over again until a new thought enters your mind that you can write about.