Discussion board

A discussion board contains one or more forums. A forum is an area where users discuss a topic or a group of related topics. Typically, within each forum, users can access multiple threads. A thread includes the initial post and any subsequent replies.

The discussion board is commonly accessed from the site menu, although you can provide a link to it elsewhere, such as in a content area.

Just as it is critical that you plan and structure your unit content, you need to provide structure for online discussions as well. Forums allow you to group related discussions and help your students stay on task. You must first create one or more forums before users can start message threads.

The Learning Site’s discussion board contains one default forum – General Discussion Forum. If desired, you can edit the name, description, availability and settings for this forum to meet your needs. To do this hover your mouse over the forum’s name on the Discussion Board page, select the downwards arrow and choose Edit. You can also add additional forums of your choosing by selecting the Create Forum button at the top of the page.
Adding a forum to the discussion board

When the Create Forum button is selected, the Create Forum page opens. Here you will need to give the forum a name and description, specify its availability to students (specifying a time period for the forum to appear) and configure its settings. The common settings that you may consider include:

- Viewing Threads/Replies: You can change the forum so that a student must create a thread prior to accessing other threads in the forum.
- Grade: You may make student participation in a forum or thread assessable. Enabling a grade will automatically change some settings accordingly.
- Subscribe: Allowing members to subscribe to the forum (or its threads) will send them an email notification whenever any forum thread (or subscribed thread) has a new post or reply.
- Create and Edit: Consider whether you want authors to be able to post anonymously, delete or edit their own posts, create new threads, allow attachments to posts or whether posts must be moderated before being published.
- Additional Options: Allowing members to tag or rate each other’s posts.
The following image shows the main **Discussion Board** page and a list of the forums and their descriptions. Columns also appear for total posts, unread posts, and total participants for each forum. Click a forum title to enter the forum and read the posts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Posts</th>
<th>Unread Posts</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Discussion Forum</td>
<td>Please use this forum for general discussions about the unit.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce Yourself</td>
<td>Please use this forum to introduce yourself to the rest of the class. It</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>would be great to get to know a little bit about each other - where you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>are from and why you choose to study this course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1 Discussion</td>
<td>This forum is for discussion of Assessment 1.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can use the discussion board tool in a variety of ways. For example, you can choose to control the discussion forum by choosing the forum settings that allow you to create all of the threads yourself, moderate the posts, and mark the posts. Or, if you want more of a student-led discussion, you can choose forum settings that allow students to create new threads, edit their own posts, and post anonymously.

Optionally, use the content editor to format text and include images, multimedia, mashups, and attachments to the forum’s description. You may also choose to enable grading for forums and threads.
The Forum page

Clicking on the forum name displays the **Forum** page showing all of the threads that have been added to date, as well as buttons to allow the creation of new threads and subscription to threads (if enabled). For each thread there is information regarding when the thread was created, who created it, whether there are any posts you have not yet read and how many posts the thread contains. There are also additional thread actions that can be performed, including mark as read (or unread), hide, make unavailable and lock/unlock. The thread can also be deleted here.
The Thread page

Clicking on the name of the thread shows the **Thread** page with the original post and any subsequent replies, allowing you to reply, reply with a quote of the post, edit or delete the post/reply. **Message Actions** allowed include marking the thread as read or unread. You can also use the **Expand All/Collapse All** to change between a full view of the thread and a collapsed view, where only the subjects for each post are displayed.
Replied to posts

In order to reply to a post, select the Reply option (if you want to quote part of the original post in your reply, Quote can be selected). This will open a content editor which will allow you to add text, image, multimedia and mashups as required, as well as attach files. Once your reply is completed, select Submit to post your reply to the thread or Save Draft to save the reply without posting (so you can return to the task later).
**Further information**

- [Set Up Discussions](#) from Blackboard Help.
- [Create Forums](#) from Blackboard Help.
- [Create Threads](#) from Blackboard Help.
- [Manage Discussions](#) from Blackboard Help.
- [Moderate Discussions](#) from Blackboard Help.

How to Create Discussion Board Forums – Blackboard video on YouTube: [Watch Video](#)

How to Use Blackboard Discussions – Blackboard video on YouTube: [Watch Video](#)

Blackboard Learn Quick Hit Video: Discussions – Blackboard video on YouTube: [Watch Video](#)