**Steps to Identifying Issues**

1. **Draw on your personal experience, on your different literacies.** Start with your own sense of what’s important, what puzzles you, or what you are curious about. (Then build your argument by moving on to other sources to support your point of view.)
2. **Identify what is open to dispute.** Identify a phenomenon or some idea in a written argument that challenges what you think or believe.
3. **Resist binary thinking.** Think about the issue from multiple perspectives.
4. **Build on and extend the ideas of others.** As you read, be open to new ways of looking at the issue**.** The issue you finally write about may be very different from what you set out to write about.
5. **Identify the conversations to which your source essay responds.** Id there just one conversation, or is the issue a conversation that involves multiple perspectives?
6. **Consider the reading / writing situations for those conversations.**  How are our big six (purpose, person, claim, audience, genre, and medium) at work in the exchanges taking place in these conversations?
7. **Read to discover a writer’s frame.** What theories or ideas shape the writer’s focus? How can these theories or ideas help you frame your argument?
8. **Consider the constraints of the writing situation.** What are the genre requirements for you to enter into the conversation? What expectations does this particular conversation have of its participants? Craft your argument to meet the writing situation of your audience and your needs as a member of the conversation.

**Steps to Formulating an Issue-Based Question**

1. **Refine your topic.** Examine your topic from different perspectives. For example, what are the causes of homelessness? What are its consequences? What underlying conversations have led to the issue as you are now encountering it?
2. **Explain your interest in the topic.** Explore the source of your interest in this topic and what you want to learn.
3. **Identify an issue.** Consider what is open to dispute.
4. **Formulate your topic as a question.** Use your question to focus your inquiry.
5. **Determine how our big six** (purpose, person, claim, audience, genre, and medium) influence the shape and content of that question.
6. **Acknowledge your audience.** Reflect on what readers may know about the issue, why they may be interested, and what you would like to teach them.