

Threaded or Non-Threaded Discussion Topics in *Canvas*: Which to Choose?

When you create a new Discussion topic in *Canvas*, you have a choice of enabling a checkbox for **Allow threaded replies**. What does this do? Here are two examples of the same discussion in a class. The first example (below) uses the default option of **not** allowing threaded replies; the next page shows **threaded** replies.

Non-Threaded Discussion
Ken Black
Jun 25 at 8:16am
2 5

[This is an example of a Discussion topic that leaves the **Allow threaded replies** option **UNCHECKED**.]
Please introduce yourselves to the class!

Search entries or author Unread Subscribed

Reply

Wile E. Coyote
8:17am
My name is Wile E. Coyote, Super Genius. "Super Genius" is actually not part of my name, but I use it quite often when referring to myself and my obviously superior intelligence.

Road Runner
8:19am
Beep beep! Beep beep beep! Beep! BEEP! Beep beep!

Wile E. Coyote
8:22am
Why, you infernal bird! I'll run after you and catch you yet, courtesy of my newly-acquired Leg Muscle Vitamins. Beware!

Road Runner
8:23am
Beep beep beep beep beep, beep! Beep beep! Beep!

Minnie Mouse
8:25am
Hi, everyone! My name is Minnie Mouse! I'm so happy to be here! Isn't the world such a happy, lovely place all the time? You should be sure to visit my Magic Kingdom sometime in Anaheim, California or in Orlando, Florida!

Annotations:

- Discussion topic started, with **Allow Threaded Replies disabled**. (Default setting.)
- Student Wile E. Coyote replies to the instructor's post.
- Student Road Runner (a Road Scholar!) replies to Wile E. Coyote. Note it is indented under Wile E. Coyote's reply.
- Wile E. Coyote's reply to Road Runner's reply—and any additional replies—are **NOT** indented any further.
- The **ONLY** Reply icon is at the bottom of them all.
- Student Minnie Mouse replies to the instructor's *original* post, not to the others. It is not indented at all, and "equal" to Wile E. Coyote's original reply.
- Minnie's reply to the original also has a Reply icon.

Whether a discussion is threaded or non-threaded, students can **NOT** create individual threads within a Discussion Topic on their own. They can only **Reply**. On the other hand, by **default** *Canvas* **ALLOWS** students to create their own **Discussion topics**! You can turn this off by clicking the "gear" icon on the upper-right of the main **Discussions** landing page:



Threaded Discussion
Ken Black
Jun 25 at 8:31am

[This is an example of a Discussion topic with the **Allow threaded replies** checkbox **ENABLED**.]
Please introduce yourself to the class!

Search entries or author Unread [Menu Icons]

Reply

Wile E. Coyote
8:33am
My name is Wile E. Coyote, Super Genius. "Super Genius" is actually not part of my name, but I use it quite often when referring to myself and my obviously superior intelligence.
Reply

Road Runner
8:34am
Beep beep! Beep beep beep! Beep! BE
Reply

Wile E. Coyote
8:36am
Why, you infernal bird! I'll run after you! I've got my Fortified Leg Muscle Vitamins. Beep
Reply

Road Runner
8:37am
Beep beep! Beep beep beep, beep! Beep beep! Beep!
Reply

Minnie Mouse
8:42am
Hi, everyone! My name is Minnie Mouse. I'm a very nice girl. You should be sure to visit my Magic Kingdom sometime in Anaheim, California or in Orlando, Florida!
Reply

Callouts:

- Discussion topic started, with **Allow threaded replies** **ENABLED**.
- Student Wile E. Coyote replies to the instructor's post.
- Student Road Runner replies to Wile E. Coyote. Note it is indented under Wile E. Coyote's reply.
- Wile E. Coyote replies to Road Runner's reply. It is indented under Road Runner's reply.
- Road Runner replies to Wile E. Coyote's reply. It is indented under Wile E. Coyote's reply.
- Note that **ALL** replies have their own **Reply** link under each individual message, unlike within a non-threaded discussion, when it appeared on the bottom.
- Student Minnie Mouse replies to the instructor's *original* post. It is not indented at all, and "equal" to Wile E. Coyote's original reply.

Basically, **threaded** Discussions appear in a more hierarchical manner, with each additional reply further indented. In *either* case, you can always **close** all replies, and (for viewing ease) collapse all replies at the top:

Click "gear" icon at top of topic to **Close** entire topic for comments

Threaded Discussion
Ken Black
[This is an example of a Discussion to...]
Please introduce yourself to the class!

Search entries or author Unread [Menu Icons]

Collapse replies Expand replies

Mark All as Read
Delete
Close for Comments

Subscribed

For additional information on threaded discussions, consult this *Canvas* guide online:
<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2755>