

TOUCHSTONES:
EXPLORING AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES
VOLUME 1
Digital Binder

Published by

TOUCHSTONES®
DISCUSSION PROJECT

About the Touchstones® Discussion Project

The Touchstones Discussion Project is a nonprofit organization founded on the belief that all people can benefit from the listening, speaking, thinking, and interpersonal skills gained by engaging in active, focused discussions. Since 1984, Touchstones has helped millions of students and others develop and improve these skills in school, work, and life. For more information about the Touchstones Discussion Project, visit www.touchstones.org.

All contents developed by:

Geoffrey Comber
Howard Zeiderman
Nicholas Maistrellis

©2021

by Touchstones Discussion Project

PO Box 2329

Annapolis, Maryland 21404

800-456-6542

www.touchstones.org

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be displayed, reproduced or repurposed, in whole or in part, in any form without license or prior written consent of the authors.

ISBN: 978-1-937742-86-7

Worksheet for Lesson 1: An Introduction to Touchstones: Orientation Lesson

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Answer questions 1 and 2.

1. Which Ground Rule will be the hardest for the class to follow? Why?

2. Which Ground Rule will be easiest for you to follow? Why?

Complete question 3 after the discussion.

3. Choose two goals from the list in the text (items a. through l.) that you would like to achieve in your Touchstones discussions. Write the letters here.

SMALL GROUP WORK

The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group and making sure everyone participates. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The time keeper is responsible for making sure that the group is making progress so all work is completed on time. The reporter will share the group's work. All participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping the group to complete all work.

1. Form a small circle with your chairs so each person is facing the group.
2. Each person in the group should share with the group what he or she wrote down for question 1 in the Individual Work.
3. Everyone in the group should try to agree about what Ground Rule will be the most difficult for the class to follow. Write your group's choice below. Also explain why your group chose this Ground Rule.

Worksheet for Lesson 2 **“On Friendship,” from Aristotle’s *Ethics***

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Have you ever stopped being friendly with someone because the person changed? In what ways was that difficult or easy?

2. Write a short question about this topic or select a part of the text that you are interested in exploring. Write a reason why it interested you.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Share your responses to question #2 and explain briefly to the others in the group why that topic or passage interested you. Write each person’s response below.

Worksheet for Lesson 3

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano by Olaudah Equiano

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In this text, Equiano describes the power wielded by the slave-masters over the slaves. This abusive relationship is one extreme example of how power is exerted by one person over another. Power is also exerted in other types of relationships but usually to a lesser extent. After reading the text to yourself, consider the following relationship types listed below.

In which one of these relationships does a person hold the most power over another? Use numbers 1 through 7 (use each number only once), to rank these relationships. Assign the number 1 to the relationship in which one person has the most power over the other. Assign the number 7 to the relationship in which one person has the least power over the other. Then assign the rest of the numbers in between to rank the rest of the relationships (so that the number 2 goes to the relationship with the second-biggest power imbalance, the number 3 goes to the relationship with the third-biggest power imbalance, and so on).

- _____ Parent to child
- _____ Teacher to student
- _____ Friend to friend
- _____ Older sibling to younger sibling
- _____ Coach to member of a team
- _____ Boss to employee
- _____ Discussion leader to participant

SMALL GROUP WORK

In the last paragraph in the text, Equiano writes, “But by changing your conduct and treating your slaves as men, every cause of fear would be banished.” He offers this solution to show what could be gained by changing the power relationship between owners and slaves.

In your small group, discuss what it would mean to “treat slaves as men.” You may want to explore how this change could have been carried out and what it would have meant in terms of changed work and living conditions. One member of your group will be responsible for reporting your ideas to the rest of the class. Write your responses in the space below.

Worksheet for Lesson 4

“To My Old Master, Thomas Auld,” by Frederick Douglass

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Slavery is not unique to the history of the United States. Nor is it a practice that has been entirely eradicated. It is considered by some to be practiced today through all forms of human trafficking. In many civilizations, slavery has been practiced by dominant peoples over their conquered foes. In the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), there are accounts of the Egyptians enslaving the Israelites. Historical documents also tell us that slaves worked in every wealthy person’s household in the ancient Greek city of Athens. Some of these slaves even taught the nobles’ children. As long as humans have enslaved others, however, there have been arguments against and opposition to slavery.

In Athens, for example, the philosopher Aristotle argued that only a person who could not think for himself or act according to his own will could be considered a natural slave. What does it mean for a person not to think for himself? Is it possible for humans not to act according to their own will? Does Aristotle’s statement provide support for or against slavery?

1. Here is a list of six arguments against slavery. Read them all, and then decide which one of them is the strongest argument against slavery. Assign that statement a “1.” Then decide the next strongest statement against slavery, and assign it a “2.” Do this for all of the statements, using each number, 1 through 6, only once.

- _____ Slavery violates the right to liberty.
- _____ Slavery degrades the dignity of masters and slaves alike.
- _____ Slave-masters use cruel and unusual punishment.
- _____ Slavery prevents individuals from pursuing their own personal happiness.
- _____ Slave-masters keep slaves ignorant by denying them access to education.
- _____ Slavery assumes some people are superior to others when everyone is born equal.

2. Write a question about Douglass’ letter that you would like the class to discuss.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Today you will work on writing opening questions. Strong opening questions are easy for others to understand, even if the answers to them are not easy. For example, when we ask the question, “Is slavery wrong?” we are asking about the morality of slavery, and many people will have some ideas about how to answer this. Strong questions also involve some part of the text that you think is important or interesting.

In your small group discussion, everyone will read his or her question aloud. Then the group will work together to make each question easier to understand and talk about. Ask each other: What topic is important to you? What do you want to have discussed? Is there another way to say it? Is there another question that more clearly asks about that topic? Write your revised questions below. The questions that you write here will be shared with the large group.

Student 1:

Student 2:

Student 3:

Student 4:

**Worksheet for Lesson 5:
A Slave's Narrative (Narrative dictated by freed slave
Ralph to his former Master, a Virginian)**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In Lesson 4, you were asked to write a question for discussion about the text. In this lesson, you will write a question about the text, but you will have a slightly different goal in mind. Instead of writing a question focused on what you want to discuss, think of a question that will get many people in this class involved in thinking and talking about the topic.

Start by writing a question. Then decide if your question will be interesting to most of the class. You want your question to bring lots of participants into the discussion.

Here are some guidelines that may help you:

- Keep your question short. It should be easy for others to understand and remember.
- Your question is just one of many ideas that the class will discuss.
- Connect your question in some way to the ideas in the text.
- Think about which ideas in the text will be most interesting to your classmates.

Write a question about this text that you think the class should discuss.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Take turns sharing your questions within your small group. Then come to an agreement about which of your questions would be most useful for getting lots of students to participate. As you consider your options, refer to the guidelines above for a good question. Be ready to explain why your group has chosen this question. Write your group's question here:

Worksheet for Lesson 6:
***Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, by Harriet Jacobs**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. At some time, each of us has resisted doing something that is for our own good. It may have been because we were tired, scared, stubborn, or lazy, or perhaps we just preferred to do something else. For example, maybe your mother wants you to get involved in a team sport but you're tired at the end of the day and just want to go home. Reflect back on the text and then think of a situation in your own life where someone you trusted was unable to convince you to do something that was for your own good. Write about that situation here:

2. What could the person in your account have done differently to convince you? Write your response here:

SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, think about the situation described in the text. If you were Linda's friends, how would you convince her to leave right away? Come to an agreement on an approach that you all think would work immediately. Write that approach here:

Touchstones® Participant Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete this questionnaire by putting a check mark under the word that best describes your behavior.

Do you...

	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Interrupt others?	_____	_____	_____
Listen to all participants?	_____	_____	_____
Solicit other people's opinions?	_____	_____	_____
Build upon what others say?	_____	_____	_____
Stay focused and on task?	_____	_____	_____
Ask clarifying questions?	_____	_____	_____
Encourage quieter participants to speak?	_____	_____	_____

Which of these behaviors you would like to change in yourself and why?

Can you make this change by yourself or do you need help from others? Explain your answer.

Two Sorrow Songs and Excerpt from *The Souls of Black Folk*, by W. E. B. Du Bois

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Groups of people who are oppressed or whose public voices are ignored have long turned to alternate means of expressing themselves. For the Africans who were forcibly enslaved and brought to the New World over the course of three centuries, the isolation and marginalization they experienced at the outer limits of society was extreme. In surviving brutal oppression, abuse, and the deprivation of even the most basic human rights, they were forced to rely on creative means of communication for building a sense of community. Examples of acts of expression from within marginalized populations can be found in modes of religious worship, craftsmanship, poetry, and songs.

In today's reading, there are two Negro spirituals—songs that were sung by slaves and passed from generation to generation through oral tradition. Read the text again to yourself, and think about what these songs tell you about life as a slave. Compared with the other Touchstones texts that you've discussed from this book so far, do these songs more effectively or less effectively communicate a message? Write your answer here and explain your reasoning.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Your teacher will assign one of the two songs in the text to your group. Together, you will work to understand and paraphrase or summarize the message that the song delivers. Everyone must contribute his or her ideas and your group should be in agreement about the summary. Write your work here:

APPENDIX A

Touchstones® Discussion Evaluation

Directions: The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your class. Decide to what extent you think each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the class needs to improve in this area and circle “Yes” or “No.”

	<div> <div>None</div> <div>Some</div> <div>A lot</div> </div>										Need to Improve?	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Dominance by some individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Respect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Balanced participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Active listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Lack of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Asking one another questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Building on others’ ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Many people talking at once	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No

Pick one of the dynamics that you think the class should work to improve, and explain why.

How would you grade this discussion on a scale from 1 through 10, where “1” is the lowest score and “10” is the highest score? Provide several reasons for your answer.

APPENDIX D

Touchstones® Student Observation Worksheet 1

Directions: Read all of the questions below before the full class discussion starts. During the discussion, listen and watch carefully and answer the following questions.

1. How many participants are seated in the large circle?

2. When a period of silence occurs during the discussion, put a check next to the reason why.
☐ People are thinking about what to say next.
☐ People have run out of things to say.
☐ People are bored.
☐ Other: _____

How is the silence broken and who or what breaks it?

3. How many students spoke during the discussion? How many did not speak at all?

4. Did the students who did not speak look interested? What were they doing?

5. Did the students who spoke direct their comments to the class in general or did they look at the teacher when speaking?

6. Were there side discussions by students during the discussion? If yes, were those discussions distracting to the group?

7. How would you grade this discussion? Why?

8. What can the class do to improve their discussions in the future?

APPENDIX E

Touchstones® Student Observation Worksheet 2

Directions: Circle the number that best conveys what you observe during the full class discussion, on a scale from 1 through 10. The number “1” indicates that the behavior is not present during the discussion, and “10” indicates that the behavior is very present.

1. Dominance by one or more participants

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Balanced participation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Cooperative exploration of topics

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Disagreement for the sake of disagreement

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Debate that includes only a small part of the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Participation is helped and encouraged by the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Respect is shown to members of the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Participants seek diverse perspectives

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Participants ask questions to clarify ideas

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Class shows ownership of the discussion process

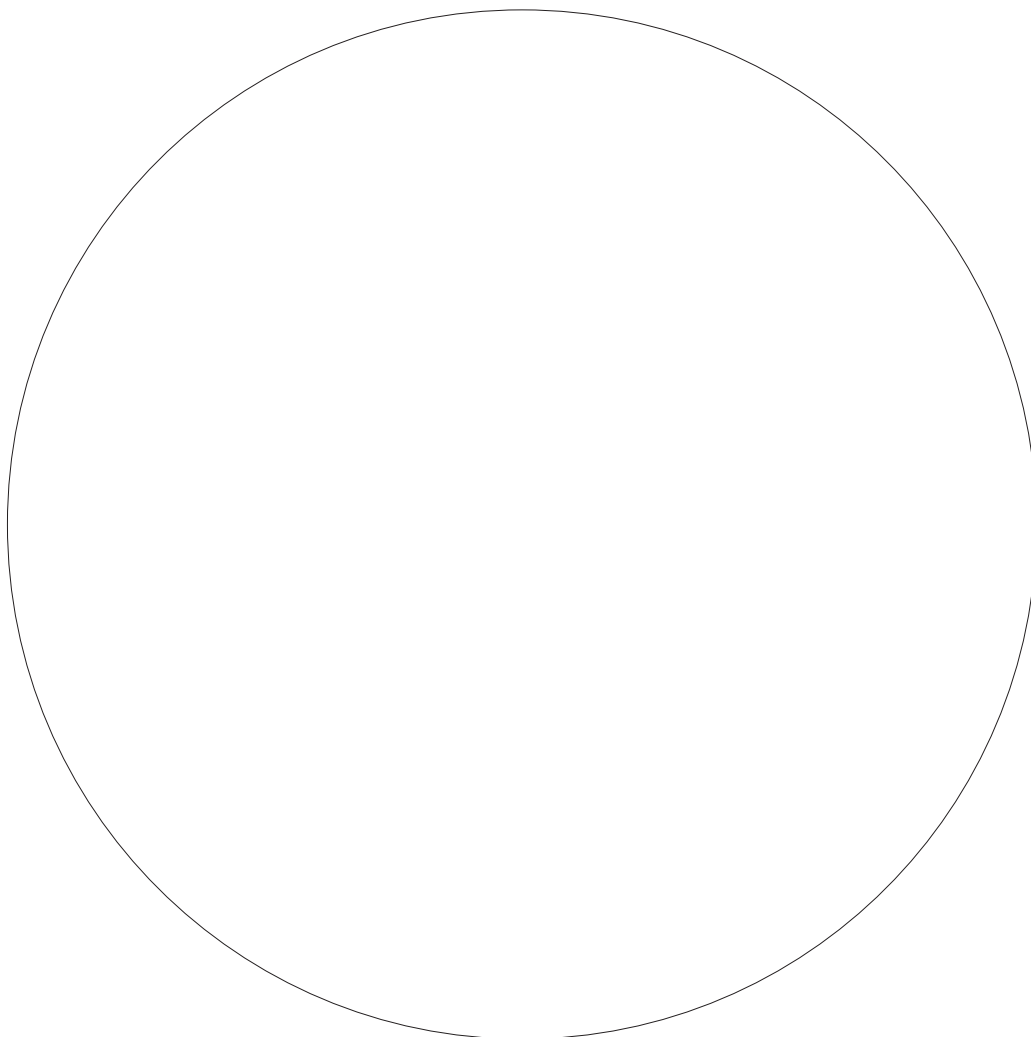
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX F

Touchstones® Discussion Map

Directions: A Touchstones Discussion Map helps to capture some of the activity that takes place during a discussion. This circle represents your class. For each participant in the discussion, put a small “p” or the participant’s initials to represent their place around the circle. Use an “L” to represent where your teacher or discussion leader is sitting. If there are 25 participants in the discussion circle, you will place 25 p’s or initials on the circle.

Only use this diagram for the discussion portion of your Touchstones class—do not mark responses during Small Group Work or small group reports. Your teacher or discussion leader will begin the full class discussion with a question. When a student speaks to respond to the question, draw a straight line from the teacher to the student who has spoken. When the next student speaks, draw a line from the first speaker to the second speaker. Do this each time that a person in the circle—either a student or your teacher—speaks. You are drawing a map, or a record of the discussion, line by line for each person who speaks.



Worksheet for Lesson 8: ***Man Know Thyself*, by Marcus Garvey**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In your last Touchstones class, you participated in a discussion evaluation. Your evaluation focused on the ways in which your group interacts, and you have shared your perspective and heard from your peers. Today, you will consider how you respond to different types of contributions to the discussion.

Below is a list that includes various sketches of people who participate in discussions. Read the list and consider the Touchstones discussions you have had so far. Think about how you tend to respond to each type of person on the list. To what type do you respond most?

Using the numbers 1 through 8 (and using each number only once), you will rank the eight types of contributors on the list. Assign a 1 to the type of person you would most likely respond to, and the number 2 to the next most likely, and so on, until you have assigned a rank to each type.

- _____ People who tell stories
- _____ People who generally listen to you
- _____ People who listen to everyone
- _____ People who ask questions
- _____ People who mention books, movies, or TV shows
- _____ People who make jokes
- _____ People who direct what they say to the teacher
- _____ People who have side conversations during the discussion

SMALL GROUP WORK

In the text, Garvey exhorts African Americans to become true leaders. He is wary of people in leadership positions who are, according to him, just doing what other people want. Garvey suggests that there are certain characteristics a leader ought to have.

Consider the list of qualities below. Which is the most important for a leader to have? Rank the list from 1 to 8, where 1 is the most important and 8 the least. Be sure that the entire group agrees on the most important and least important traits.

- _____ Reliable
- _____ Purposeful
- _____ Self-confident
- _____ Loyal
- _____ Courageous
- _____ Good judge of character
- _____ Thinks for herself/himself
- _____ Knows own strengths and weaknesses

Worksheet for Lesson 9: *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow, “An Autobiographical Sketch”* by Richard Wright

INDIVIDUAL WORK

The “Jim Crow” laws in the South were rules for how White and Black people were allowed to interact. These included actual laws and also related social customs. Jim Crow laws are examples of how inequalities are often reinforced through a variety of formal and informal expectations.

Think about your own interactions with other people. When do you feel equal? When do you feel unequal? Below are eight relationships from our daily lives. For each one, think about the balance (or lack of balance) of power in the relationship. You will assign ten points total to the relationship by giving the person with the greater power or authority a higher number. The person with less power in the relationship gets the remainder of the ten points. If you think the two people in the relationship described are equal, give them each a “5”. Your total for each line should be ten points. As an example, the first relationship is completed for you.

Relationships between People

<i>Points</i>	Person 1	<i>Points</i>	Person 2
<u>7</u>	Boss	<u>3</u>	Employee
_____	Child	_____	Parent
_____	Student	_____	Teacher
_____	You	_____	A friend
_____	Principal	_____	Student
_____	Citizen	_____	Police officer
_____	Discussion leader	_____	Touchstones participants
_____	You	_____	Your discussion class

SMALL GROUP WORK

Reread the section of the text in which Wright describes the incident in the elevator. What would you have done when the man removed your hat? Discuss the situation and come up with other things that the author could have done. What do you think the consequences would be for each alternative you present? Write your answers here.

APPENDIX D

Touchstones® Student Observation Worksheet 1

Directions: Read all of the questions below before the full class discussion starts. During the discussion, listen and watch carefully and answer the following questions.

1. How many participants are seated in the large circle?

2. When a period of silence occurs during the discussion, put a check next to the reason why.
☐ People are thinking about what to say next.
☐ People have run out of things to say.
☐ People are bored.
☐ Other: _____

How is the silence broken and who or what breaks it?

3. How many students spoke during the discussion? How many did not speak at all?

4. Did the students who did not speak look interested? What were they doing?

5. Did the students who spoke direct their comments to the class in general or did they look at the teacher when speaking?

6. Were there side discussions by students during the discussion? If yes, were those discussions distracting to the group?

7. How would you grade this discussion? Why?

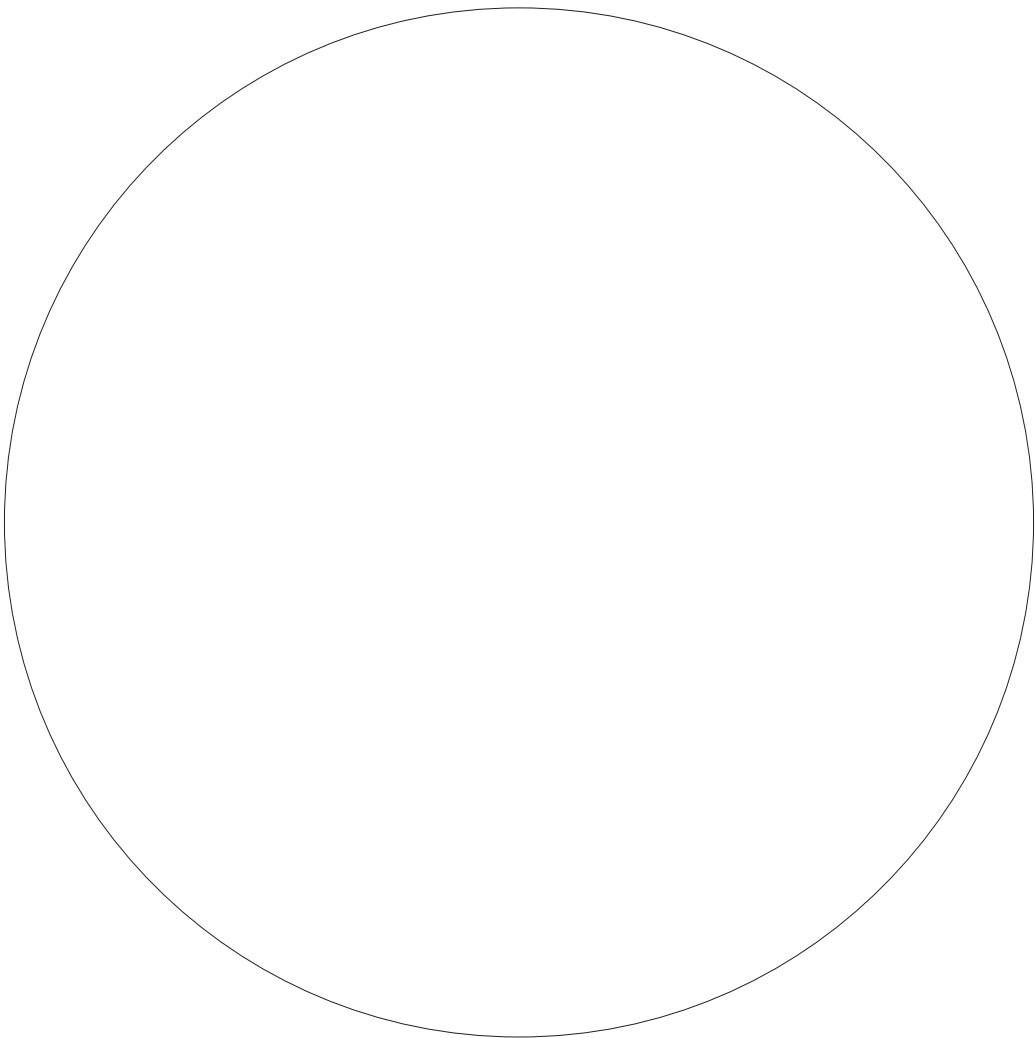
8. What can the class do to improve their discussions in the future?

APPENDIX F

Touchstones® Discussion Map

Directions: A Touchstones Discussion Map helps to capture some of the activity that takes place during a discussion. This circle represents your class. For each participant in the discussion, put a small “p” or the participant’s initials to represent their place around the circle. Use an “L” to represent where your teacher or discussion leader is sitting. If there are 25 participants in the discussion circle, you will place 25 p’s or initials on the circle.

Only use this diagram for the discussion portion of your Touchstones class—do not mark responses during Small Group Work or small group reports. Your teacher or discussion leader will begin the full class discussion with a question. When a student speaks to respond to the question, draw a straight line from the teacher to the student who has spoken. When the next student speaks, draw a line from the first speaker to the second speaker. Do this each time that a person in the circle—either a student or your teacher—speaks. You are drawing a map, or a record of the discussion, line by line for each person who speaks.



Worksheet for Lesson 10:
***Up From Slavery*, by Booker T. Washington**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Most people do not have the opportunity to name themselves—at least not when they are young. Most people today also know some of their family history. If you could choose either to have an identity shaped by ancestral tradition or an identity that you could create and build entirely by yourself, which would you choose? Why?

SMALL GROUP WORK

Everyone in your group agreed on the answer to the Individual Work. Share your reasons for your answer and then work together to create a single, compelling argument in support of your choice. You will present your group's argument to the entire class. In building your argument, think about how you can avoid liabilities or risks that your choice may bring with it. On the one hand, for example, having a distinguished and well-known ancestor may bring added expectations or assumptions that you will always behave or perform in a certain way. On the other hand, not having a distinguished ancestor may mean that one has to work harder to achieve certain social status or recognition. You will present your argument to groups that chose the opposite answer to the Individual Work, so be sure to think about what will convince them that your choice is the better one.

Worksheet for Lesson 11:
The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man,
by James Weldon Johnson

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Write a question about the text or the topics it raises that you would like to discuss with your class.

2. At one time or another, we all defend people or opinions that we know are flawed. Think of a situation when you stood up for someone or something you knew to be flawed and write it down. Briefly describe why you chose to defend this person or idea.

SMALL GROUP WORK

In the third paragraph of the text, Johnson states the opinion that “a mental attitude, especially one not based on truth, can be changed more easily than actual conditions.” Do you agree that it is easier to change someone’s mind than to change the conditions in which people live? Decide as a group whether you agree with Johnson or not and explain why.

APPENDIX B

Touchstones® Participant Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete this questionnaire by putting a check mark under the word that best describes your behavior.

Do you...			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Interrupt others?			
Listen to all participants?			
Solicit other people’s opinions?			
Build upon what others say?			
Stay focused and on task?			
Ask clarifying questions?			
Encourage quieter participants to speak?			

Which of these behaviors you would like to change in yourself and why?

Can you make this change by yourself or do you need help from others? Explain your answer.

**Worksheet for Lesson 12:
“We Wear the Mask” and “Sympathy,” by Paul Dunbar**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In the poem “Sympathy,” Dunbar uses a variety of images and illustrative language to convey a message to the reader. Read the poem again carefully and make a list of the images in the poem that help you understand what the poet is saying.

SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, compare your lists of images. Then paraphrase the poem together using as few words as possible.

APPENDIX B

Touchstones® Participant Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete this questionnaire by putting a check mark under the word that best describes your behavior.

Do you...			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Interrupt others?			
Listen to all participants?			
Solicit other people’s opinions?			
Build upon what others say?			
Stay focused and on task?			
Ask clarifying questions?			
Encourage quieter participants to speak?			

Which of these behaviors you would like to change in yourself and why?

Can you make this change by yourself or do you need help from others? Explain your answer.

Worksheet for Lesson 13:
***The Invisible Man*, by Ralph Ellison**
and
“The Idols of the Cave,” by Francis Bacon

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In *The Invisible Man*, Ellison vividly describes the experience of exclusion from society. Even in your Touchstones class, which functions as a kind of society, some participants may feel excluded for a number of reasons. Some participants may feel that their opinions are discounted and so they may be reluctant or may refuse to speak. In this way, such participants can become invisible to the rest of the group.

Below is a list of ten reasons why someone may not participate in a discussion. Read all of the reasons and then put them in order from the most difficult to overcome (1) to the easiest to overcome (10). Imagine that you are facing these issues and are trying to get past them so that you can participate. You will do this twice, once for what you think is true for most people and once for what is true for you.

Reason for Not Participating	Most People	You
1. After I speak, the next speaker takes the discussion in a different direction.	_____	_____
2. The teacher never makes eye contact with me.	_____	_____
3. One or more people usually attack what I say.	_____	_____
4. The group never talks about things that I think are interesting or important.	_____	_____
5. The teacher always agrees with a few students.	_____	_____
6. The discussion is never really open because a few students impose their own ideas or agendas.	_____	_____
7. I do not respect some of the students in the class.	_____	_____
8. A few students always comment on everything that is said.	_____	_____
9. People don't give reasons for saying what they believe.	_____	_____
10. The discussion covers too many topics or ideas, and there is no direction.	_____	_____

SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, work together to write a short description or summary of what Bacon is saying in the text of “The Idols of the Cave.”

Worksheet for Lesson 14: *The Negro Genius*, by Benjamin Brawley

Self-Assessment on Listening

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Do you feel that the listening skills of your class have improved over the course of the year? Yes or No
(*check one*)

Give three reasons in support of your answer.

2. Do you feel that your own listening skills have improved? Explain your answer in a few sentences and include specific reasons that support your opinion.

SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, discuss your responses to questions 1 and 2. If there is agreement, combine your responses into a short report to share with the entire class. Then consider what evidence your peers may offer that is counter to your report. If there is little or no agreement in your responses to questions 1 and 2, come to an understanding about where the class has improved. Then explain what the class needs to do to overcome its problems in listening. Write your responses here.

**Worksheet for Lesson 15:
“The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”
by Langston Hughes**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

In “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain,” Langston Hughes stands up for poetry that is grounded in one’s own experience and identity, especially racial identity. Hughes reveals to the reader that his race and love of jazz are intimately tied together. Hughes says in the passage that his poetry often drew on jazz for his subjects, rhythms, and images. Briefly explain why Hughes thinks he should continue to write jazz poems. Be sure to cite evidence from the text.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Compare your answers to the Individual Work. Work together to evaluate which of your group’s responses is closest to Hughes’ reasoning. Write your answer here and explain why your group chose that response.

Now work together to determine which of your group’s responses is furthest from Hughes’ reasoning. Write your answer here and explain why your group chose that response.

APPENDIX A

Touchstones® Discussion Evaluation

Directions: The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your class. Decide to what extent you think each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the class needs to improve in this area and circle “Yes” or “No.”

	<div> <div>None</div> <div>Some</div> <div>A lot</div> </div>										Need to Improve?	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Dominance by some individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Respect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Balanced participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Active listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Lack of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Asking one another questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Building on others’ ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Many people talking at once	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No

Pick one of the dynamics that you think the class should work to improve, and explain why.

How would you grade this discussion on a scale from 1 through 10, where “1” is the lowest score and “10” is the highest score? Provide several reasons for your answer.

Worksheet for Lesson 16:
***How It Feels to Be Colored Me*, by Zora Neale Hurston**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Write a short question that you would like to explore about this text.

2. Zora Neale Hurston felt a great difference between herself and a White man after they listened to music at a jazz club. In their remarkably distinct responses, she cannot help but notice his Whiteness and her Blackness.

When have you had an experience where differences between you and someone else have become very apparent? Those differences can be of any type. Write your experience here and explain how you felt then and how you feel about it now.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Take turns sharing your responses to question 2 in the Individual Work. As you listen to each experience, ask questions about that experience that can help you to understand why each person wrote about the situation he or she did.

APPENDIX C

Touchstones® Mid-Year Evaluation

Directions: Answer each question below.

1. On a scale from 1 through 10, score your participation in your Touchstones discussions so far. A score of “1” is lowest and a score of “10” is highest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you scored your participation as you did.

2. Which reason from the list below best explains why you are not always as active a participant as you can be?

- ☐ The texts are usually too difficult.
- ☐ Too many people speak at once.
- ☐ Other people express my ideas before I can.
- ☐ I don’t want to sound foolish.
- ☐ I prefer to listen to others.
- ☐ I have a difficult time speaking in front of others.
- ☐ I have not thought about what I can do differently in these discussions.
- ☐ Other reason _____

3. What can you do to improve your participation in Touchstones in the future?

4. What can you do to improve the discussions overall?

Worksheet for Lesson 17:
Lloyd L. Brown Talks to Mary Helen Washington:
Writing the Collective Narrative

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Read through the text again silently. Then list three or four topics in the text that you think the class should discuss. When you are finished, write a question about this text that you think would be good for the class to discuss.

Topic 1.

Topic 2.

Topic 3.

Topic 4.

Question:

SMALL GROUP WORK

One by one, share your topics with your small group. Then come to agreement on two of the topics that you think would be most helpful for the class to discuss. For one of those two choices, work together to craft an experiential question. An experiential question prompts participants to answer based on their own experiences. An example of an experiential question is, "When have you felt injustice?"

For the other topic, work together to write a question that connects directly with the text. Textual questions ask directly about a topic as it appears in the reading. Such questions require the reader to interpret what the author is saying. An example of this type of question is, "What does Mr. Brown mean by 'I was already radicalized by life'?"

As a group, decide which of the two types of questions would be easiest for you to answer. Why? Do you think the rest of the class would agree? Why or why not?

First helpful topic:

Second helpful topic:

Experiential Question:

Textual Question:

APPENDIX A

Touchstones® Discussion Evaluation

Directions: The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your class. Decide to what extent you think each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the class needs to improve in this area and circle “Yes” or “No.”

	<div> <div>None</div> <div>Some</div> <div>A lot</div> </div>										Need to Improve?	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Dominance by some individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Respect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Balanced participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Active listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Lack of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Asking one another questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Building on others’ ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Many people talking at once	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No

Pick one of the dynamics that you think the class should work to improve, and explain why.

How would you grade this discussion on a scale from 1 through 10, where “1” is the lowest score and “10” is the highest score? Provide several reasons for your answer.

Group A Preparation Worksheet for Lesson 19

Your group will conduct an upcoming discussion class. A lesson has already been written for an assigned text, but you must decide and plan how you will run this Touchstones class. You should apply everything that you have learned this year during your discussions. Minor modifications in the activities and timings outlined in your Lesson Plan are acceptable, but you cannot change the text for discussion. Complete this entire Worksheet before the end of class. It will serve as your group's roadmap to running a successful discussion. Suggested amounts of time to complete each part of this Worksheet are provided for you (adding up to a total of 30 minutes of group planning).

1. (**10 minutes**): First read through the entire Lesson Plan, Text, and Worksheet as a group. Your goal for this class will be to maximize participation. This means that your goal is to have as many students participating in the full class discussion as possible. Recall previous discussions and their analyses. What problems must be addressed when trying to get everyone (or as many people as possible) to engage in the discussion? Will you aim to have all students participate, or will you be satisfied if all but three or four participate? Will you count students who appear to be listening actively as participants, or is speaking essential? Discuss these questions as a group and write your answers here:

2. (**2 minutes**): What topics in the text do you feel will generate the most student engagement? Write them here.

3. (**1 minute**): What words in the text could be problematic?

4. (**1 minute**): Write at least one opening question. Keep the question short.

5. **(2 minutes):** Write at least three follow-up questions.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
6. **(2 minutes):** How will you use the Individual Work and Small Group Work to help you achieve your goals?
7. **(5 minutes):** What will be the greatest challenge when leading this discussion? What strategies will your group use to overcome those challenges? Who will read the text aloud to the class? Who will start the discussion?
8. **(4 minutes):** Will you use observers during the discussion? If so, decide who will observe and what tools the observers will use. Two forms for observers will be available from your teacher—the Student Observation Sheet and the Discussion Map. Let your teacher know if you plan to use either or both of these.
9. **(3 minutes):** Will you hold a discussion evaluation after the discussion? Who will run the evaluation? How will you integrate observer feedback, if you use observers? You will need to let your teacher know which evaluation tools you will use: the Discussion Evaluation Form or the Participant Survey.

**Worksheet for Lesson 19:
“Letter from Birmingham City Jail”
by Martin Luther King, Jr.**

INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. List two unwritten rules that exist in your school and decide whether each is just or unjust.

a.

b.

2. What is one unwritten rule that exists among you and your friends? Describe it here.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Share your responses to question 1 in the Individual Work. Identify two unwritten rules that everyone agrees are present in your school. Write those here:

Now discuss whether these rules are just or unjust. Write your answers here. If you cannot agree, be prepared to explain why there is disagreement in your group.

Group B Preparation Worksheet for Lesson 20

Your group will conduct an upcoming discussion class. A lesson has already been written for an assigned text, but you must decide and plan how you will run this Touchstones class. You should apply everything that you have learned this year during your discussions. Minor modifications in the activities and timings outlined in your Lesson Plan are acceptable, but you cannot change the text for discussion. Complete this entire Worksheet before the end of class. It will serve as your group's roadmap to running a successful discussion. Suggested amounts of time to complete each part of this Worksheet are provided for you (adding up to a total of 30 minutes of group planning).

1. (**10 minutes**): First read through the entire Lesson Plan, Text, and Worksheet as a group. Your goal for this class is to balance participation. Often in discussions, we encounter people who believe that some individuals have a great deal to offer and that others don't. Such people often speak frequently and dominate discussions without much regard for others. Meanwhile, other people in the discussion will feel less certain that they have something meaningful to say. Such participants are more hesitant to speak, although their ideas would be useful for the group to explore. Your task as discussion leaders is a difficult one because you are responsible for recognizing that everyone has something important to offer. Keep this in mind as you set strategies for building a balanced discussion.
2. (**1 minute**): What topics in the text do you think will help lead to a balanced discussion? Will it be easier to balance the discussion by asking a question about something the author says or by asking about your peers' individual experiences?
3. (**1 minute**): What topics in the text do you feel most students will connect to? Write them here.
4. (**1 minute**): What words in the text could be problematic?
5. (**1 minute**): Write at least one opening question. Keep the question short.

Lesson 20: Expanding One's Vision: Balancing Participation

6. (**2 minutes**): Write at least three follow-up questions.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. (**2 minutes**): How will you use the Individual Work and Small Group Work to help you achieve your goals?
8. (**5 minutes**): What will be the greatest challenge when leading this discussion? What strategies will your group use to overcome those challenges? Who will read the text aloud to the class? Who will start the discussion?
9. (**4 minutes**): Will you use observers during the discussion? If so, decide who will observe and what tools the observers will use. Two forms for observers will be available from your teacher—the Student Observation Sheet and the Discussion Map. Let your teacher know in advance if you plan to use either or both of these.
10. (**3 minutes**): Will you hold a discussion evaluation after the discussion? Who will run the evaluation? How will you integrate observer feedback, if you use observers? You will need to let your teacher know which evaluation tool you will use: the Discussion Evaluation Form or the Participant Survey.

Worksheet for Lesson 20: ***The Autobiography of Malcolm X, by Malcolm X***

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Each of us belongs to different groups. We are members of our immediate households, extended family, friend groups, neighborhoods, clubs or sports teams, ethnic groups, races, and so on. While memberships include people in a group, they also exclude people. The text for today's discussion explores how one group is excluded by another.

This text raises questions about how we identify as members of groups. Some of these groups are essential to how we think of ourselves and who we are. For example, you might belong to a choir because you think of yourself as a musician, and you consider music to be vital to your identity. Other groups, on the other hand, may not be essential to our concepts of self. Perhaps you play basketball with a particular group of people because they are your friends. Otherwise, you may have little or no interest in basketball and therefore do not see it as part of your identity.

1. Here is a list of groups. For each one, decide whether you belong to the group and then mark it as either essential (E) or not essential (N) to how you see yourself. If you are not part of a particular group, mark it with an X.

- _____ Family
- _____ City
- _____ Race
- _____ Team or Club
- _____ Friends
- _____ American
- _____ School
- _____ Church, Temple, Mosque, etc.

2. For one of the groups that you marked as essential (E), explain why that group is an important part of your identity.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Quickly brainstorm a list of topics in the text that would be interesting to discuss. Write those ideas here:

Decide which of these topics or ideas would most likely lead to a balanced discussion or could be used to balance the discussion. In other words, which topics are things that each of your classmates knows enough about to have something to say?

Group C Preparation Worksheet for Lesson 21

Your group will conduct an upcoming discussion class. A lesson has already been written for an assigned text, but you must decide and plan how you will run this Touchstones class. You should apply everything that you have learned this year during your discussions. Minor modifications in the activities and timings outlined in your Lesson Plan are acceptable, but you cannot change the text for discussion. Complete this entire Worksheet before the end of class. It will serve as your group's roadmap to running a successful discussion. Suggested amounts of time to complete each part of this Worksheet are provided for you (adding up to a total of 30 minutes of group planning).

1. (**10 minutes**): First read through the entire Lesson Plan, Text, and Worksheet as a group. Your goal for this class is to explore the individual and group assumptions that are present during the discussion. This task can be very challenging because such ideas or beliefs are so much a part of how we see the world that we don't notice them. As you lead this discussion, your job will be to help the group think more deeply about how it understands the world and where that understanding comes from. To help you, the text will play a central role in the discussion. It offers the students a way to see themselves more clearly by examining something that is unfamiliar.
2. (**2 minutes**): What topics in the text do you think will generate a broad and interesting set of ideas or responses?
3. (**2 minutes**): To what topics in the text do you feel students will have the strongest immediate response? What about these topics causes an immediate reaction? Write your responses here.
4. (**1 minute**): What words in the text may be problematic?
5. (**1 minute**): Write at least one opening question. Keep the question short.

Lesson 21: Redeeming Oneself and Others: Clarifying Assumptions

6. (**2 minutes**): Write at least three follow-up questions.
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. (**2 minutes**): How will you use the Individual Work and Small Group Work to help you achieve your goals?
8. (**4 minutes**): What will be the greatest challenge when leading this discussion? What strategies will your group use to overcome those challenges? Who will read the text aloud to the class? Who will start the discussion?
9. (**3 minutes**): Will you use observers during the discussion? If so, decide who will observe and what tools the observers will use. Two forms for observers will be available from your teacher—the Student Observation Sheet and the Discussion Map. Let your teacher know if you plan to use either or both of these.
10. (**3 minutes**): Will you hold a discussion evaluation after the discussion? Who will run the evaluation? How will you integrate observer feedback, if you use observers? You will need to let your teacher know which evaluation tool you will use: the Discussion Evaluation Form or the Participant Survey.

Worksheet for Lesson 21:
Excerpts from *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*
by Alice Walker

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Assume that all people are artists. What are some of the ways that people express their artistry or creativity? List at least three.

SMALL GROUP WORK

Each of us relies on countless assumptions every day in order to make rapid, almost instantaneous decisions. Without those assumptions we would have to spend precious time thinking through what to do or how to do it—even when considering simple tasks. We rely on assumptions to expedite our thinking and behavior, but assumptions can also be a liability. When we fail to examine the assumptions that shape what we think we know or how we interact with people, incomplete or flawed ideas may adversely shape our thinking or behavior.

Share your responses to the Individual Work and discuss your ideas about what happens when people are denied artistic expression. Write those ideas here. Then consider what assumptions your thinking or ideas are based on. Write those assumptions here, as well.

Group D Preparation Worksheet for Lesson 22

Your group will conduct an upcoming discussion class. A lesson has already been written for an assigned text, but you must decide and plan how you will run this Touchstones class. You should apply everything that you have learned this year during your discussions. Minor modifications in the activities and timings outlined in your Lesson Plan are acceptable, but you cannot change the text for discussion. Complete this entire Worksheet before the end of class. It will serve as your group's roadmap to running a successful discussion. Suggested amounts of time to complete each part of this Worksheet are provided for you (adding up to a total of 30 minutes of group planning).

1. (**10 minutes**): First read through the entire Lesson Plan, Text, and Worksheet as a group. Your goal when running this Touchstones discussion is to share the leadership of the discussion with your entire class. Collectively, you will encourage the group to assume responsibility for the discussion through your tone, attitude, and the questions you raise or interventions you make during the discussion.

This will require that you each enter the discussion based on what is needed by the group rather than what you would like to say about a topic or the text. You will intervene in different ways to achieve maximum participation, balance, active listening, and collaboration. In effect, you will simultaneously participate and lead.

In your group, you may want to consider which of you will focus on each dynamic in the discussion. For example, one of you may want to attend to and address issues of dominance, another to side conversations, another to silence, another to debate, and another to the interaction overall.

2. (**2 minutes**): What topics in the text do you think will generate a broad and interesting set of ideas or responses?
3. (**1 minutes**): What words in the text could be problematic?
4. (**1 minute**): Write at least one opening question. Keep the question short.

Lesson 22: Exploring Together: Sharing Leadership

5. (**2 minute**): Write at least three follow-up questions.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
6. (**8 minutes**): What will be the greatest challenge when leading this discussion? What strategies will your group use to overcome those challenges? Who will read the text aloud to the class? Who will start the discussion? Who will assume leadership when there is dominance, silence, debate, or some other dynamic that is counterproductive?
7. (**3 minutes**): Will you use observers during the discussion? If so, decide who will observe and what tools the observers will use. Two forms for observers will be available from your teacher—the Student Observation Sheet and the Discussion Map. You'll need to let your teacher know if you plan to use either or both of these.
8. (**3 minutes**): Who will run the discussion evaluation after the discussion? How will you integrate observer feedback, if you use observers? You will need to let your teacher know which evaluation tool you will use: the Discussion Evaluation Form or the Participant Survey.

Worksheet for Lesson 22: “West India Emancipation,” by Frederick Douglass

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Freedom and power are two of the primary themes in this excerpt. Douglass describes conditions under which increased human freedom is possible. He also outlines the forces in society that oppose those types of changes.

For this exercise, think about a struggle or change that you faced that was difficult to accept or overcome. Write a brief description of the situation and why it was difficult. Were you able to overcome that struggle? What did you learn about yourself in the process?

SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, discuss some of the ways in which your class has struggled in their discussions. What was the greatest personal challenge for each of you at the beginning of the year? What was the greatest struggle for the group as a whole? Was any of the change immediate? Was it sudden? How were these changes perceived or accepted by members of your class? Agree on two pieces of advice you could offer to someone who is struggling with change. Write that advice here.

APPENDIX A

Touchstones® Discussion Evaluation

Directions: The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your class. Decide to what extent you think each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the class needs to improve in this area and circle “Yes” or “No.”

	<div> <div>None</div> <div>Some</div> <div>A lot</div> </div>										Need to Improve?	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Dominance by some individuals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Respect	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Balanced participation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Active listening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Lack of interest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Asking one another questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Building on others’ ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No
Many people talking at once	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Yes	No

Pick one of the dynamics that you think the class should work to improve, and explain why.

How would you grade this discussion on a scale from 1 through 10, where “1” is the lowest score and “10” is the highest score? Provide several reasons for your answer.

APPENDIX B

Touchstones® Participant Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete this questionnaire by putting a check mark under the word that best describes your behavior.

Do you...			
	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Interrupt others?			
Listen to all participants?			
Solicit other people’s opinions?			
Build upon what others say?			
Stay focused and on task?			
Ask clarifying questions?			
Encourage quieter participants to speak?			

Which of these behaviors you would like to change in yourself and why?

Can you make this change by yourself or do you need help from others? Explain your answer.

APPENDIX C

Touchstones® Mid-Year Evaluation

Directions: Answer each question below.

1. On a scale from 1 through 10, score your participation in your Touchstones discussions so far. A score of “1” is lowest and a score of “10” is highest.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Explain why you scored your participation as you did.

2. Which reason from the list below best explains why you are not always as active a participant as you can be?

- ☐ The texts are usually too difficult.
- ☐ Too many people speak at once.
- ☐ Other people express my ideas before I can.
- ☐ I don’t want to sound foolish.
- ☐ I prefer to listen to others.
- ☐ I have a difficult time speaking in front of others.
- ☐ I have not thought about what I can do differently in these discussions.
- ☐ Other reason _____

3. What can you do to improve your participation in Touchstones in the future?

4. What can you do to improve the discussions overall?

APPENDIX D

Touchstones® Student Observation Worksheet 1

Directions: Read all of the questions below before the full class discussion starts. During the discussion, listen and watch carefully and answer the following questions.

1. How many participants are seated in the large circle?

2. When a period of silence occurs during the discussion, put a check next to the reason why.
☐ People are thinking about what to say next.
☐ People have run out of things to say.
☐ People are bored.
☐ Other: _____

How is the silence broken and who or what breaks it?

3. How many students spoke during the discussion? How many did not speak at all?

4. Did the students who did not speak look interested? What were they doing?

5. Did the students who spoke direct their comments to the class in general or did they look at the teacher when speaking?

6. Were there side discussions by students during the discussion? If yes, were those discussions distracting to the group?

7. How would you grade this discussion? Why?

8. What can the class do to improve their discussions in the future?

APPENDIX E

Touchstones® Student Observation Worksheet 2

Directions: Circle the number that best conveys what you observe during the full class discussion, on a scale from 1 through 10. The number “1” indicates that the behavior is not present during the discussion, and “10” indicates that the behavior is very present.

1. Dominance by one or more participants

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Balanced participation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Cooperative exploration of topics

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Disagreement for the sake of disagreement

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Debate that includes only a small part of the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Participation is helped and encouraged by the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Respect is shown to members of the class

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Participants seek diverse perspectives

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Participants ask questions to clarify ideas

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Class shows ownership of the discussion process

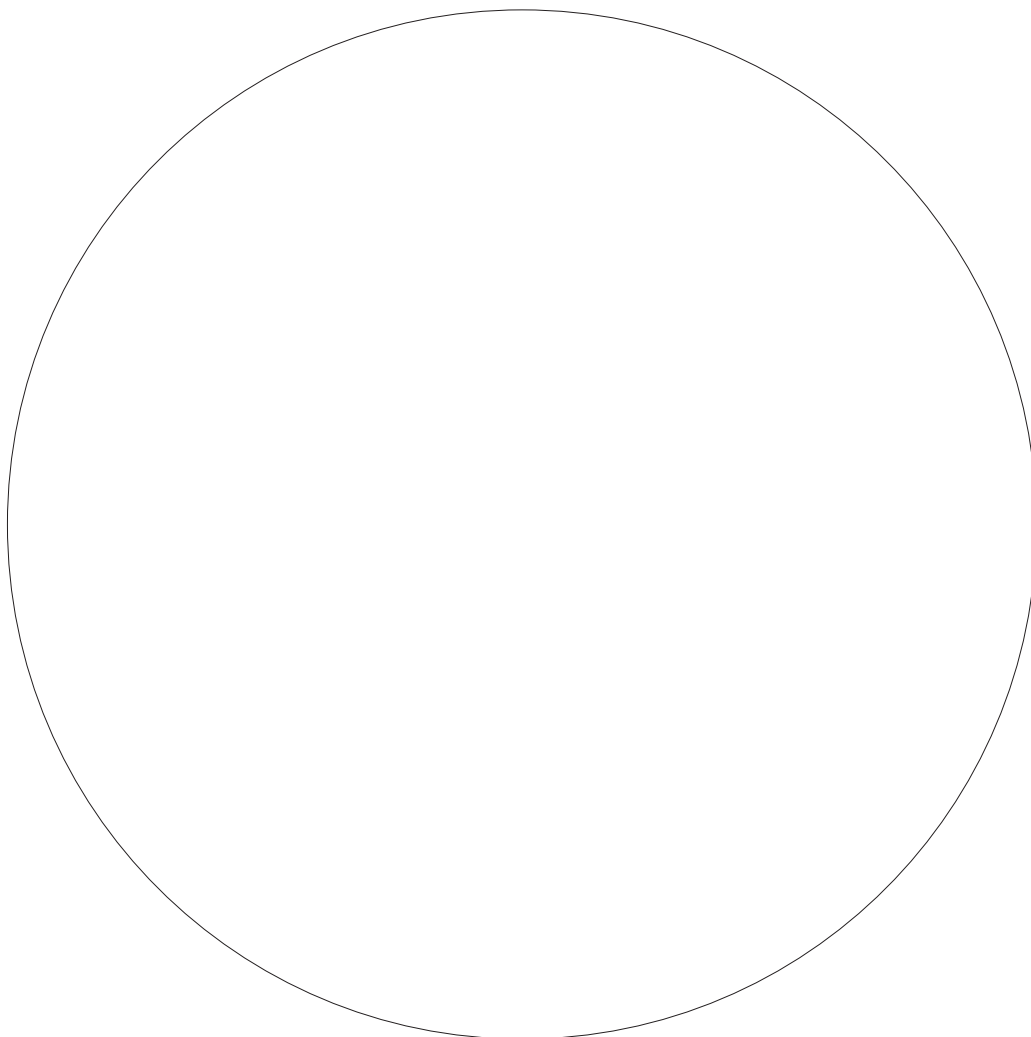
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

APPENDIX F

Touchstones® Discussion Map

Directions: A Touchstones Discussion Map helps to capture some of the activity that takes place during a discussion. This circle represents your class. For each participant in the discussion, put a small “p” or the participant’s initials to represent their place around the circle. Use an “L” to represent where your teacher or discussion leader is sitting. If there are 25 participants in the discussion circle, you will place 25 p’s or initials on the circle.

Only use this diagram for the discussion portion of your Touchstones class—do not mark responses during Small Group Work or small group reports. Your teacher or discussion leader will begin the full class discussion with a question. When a student speaks to respond to the question, draw a straight line from the teacher to the student who has spoken. When the next student speaks, draw a line from the first speaker to the second speaker. Do this each time that a person in the circle—either a student or your teacher—speaks. You are drawing a map, or a record of the discussion, line by line for each person who speaks.



Directions: In small groups discuss and answer each of the following questions. Record your responses in the space provided.

1. you don't understand what someone is saying?

2. you think that what someone is saying is confusing others?

3. you agree with what someone is saying and you want to add something to it?

4. you weren't paying attention but want to know what is happening now in the discussion?

5. you disagree with someone?

6. the same person has been talking for a long time?

Appendices

7. the same person or people are doing all of the talking?

8. you notice that someone keeps getting interrupted or cut off?

9. you can't hear the person who is speaking because he or she is talking too softly?

10. you can't hear the person who is speaking because others are making noise?

11. other students continue to cut you off or interrupt you?

12. someone misunderstands something that you have just said?

13. someone repeats something you have said earlier but doesn't give you credit?

14. you keep trying to enter the discussion but no one will make room for you?

Directions: Read all of the questions below to yourself before the discussion. During the discussion, pay careful attention to the discussion leader. Answer each question after the full group discussion ends.

- Touchstones®: Exploring American Perspectives, Volume 1

APPENDIX I

Touchstones® Discussion Leader Self-Evaluation

Directions: Consider your role as the discussion leader in your Touchstones classes. Then evaluate your own performance on a scale from 1 through 10, where “1” is something that you do rarely and “10” is something that you do regularly. You may wish to ask a trusted colleague to observe your Touchstones class and provide feedback on these same questions. We recommend that you revisit this self-evaluation tool throughout the year to chart your own development in Touchstones.

As a Touchstones discussion leader, I...

1. prepare the entire lesson in advance, including practicing reading the text aloud to myself
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. choose where I sit in the circle strategically and move students accordingly
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. project confidence and the expectation that every student will be an active participant
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. create small groups strategically
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. ask questions that create opportunities for new students to enter the discussion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. ask students to formulate and express an initial question about the text after it is read aloud
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. am aware of quieter students and use specific strategies to include them in the discussion
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. redirect students who look at me when speaking to speak to the class more generally
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. attend to students who are listening actively and value their participation as listeners
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. ask a variety of questions during the discussion for specific purposes (to bring new students in, to relate experience to the text, to return to a prior statement or question and elaborate, to slow the discussion down, to inject humor, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. ask students to engage in self-evaluation and group evaluation using the Touchstones evaluation tools

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. include student observation in the discussion evaluations on a regular basis

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. work with the class to set goals for successive improvements and monitor that progress

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. strive for discussions in which 80% or more of the class is speaking on a rotating basis so that all students' voices are heard over the course of several discussions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. consider individual student participation as being comprised of the Individual Work and Small Group Work as well as engagement in the full class discussion and discussion evaluation

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10