

# MAPPING THE FUTURE

# DIGITAL BINDER



# TOUCHSTONES® DISCUSSION PROJECT

# MAPPING THE FUTURE

DIGITAL BINDER

by  
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**TOUCHSTONES<sup>®</sup>**  
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](http://www.touchstones.org).

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## Orientation Worksheet

1. What do you hope to gain from this discussion group? Rate each of the following choices on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 indicating something you desire strongly and 1 indicating something you do not desire at all.

\_\_\_\_\_ Explore interesting texts and topics

\_\_\_\_\_ Clarify my own ideas

\_\_\_\_\_ Increase my communication skills

\_\_\_\_\_ Learn to be part of a discussion group

\_\_\_\_\_ Improve my listening skills

\_\_\_\_\_ Hear new perspectives

\_\_\_\_\_ Is there something else you would add to this list? Add it here and rate it on the same scale.

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2. What kinds of issues or problems do you think might arise in the group that would prevent the success of this activity?

3. *Mapping the Future* is organized around four stages of group development: (1) dealing with issues of authority and expertise; (2) learning to see every person as a legitimate speaker; (3) learning to listen and understand; and (4) learning to act simultaneously as a leader and a participant. Which stage do you expect to present the greatest challenges? Why?

4. Write a question to start a discussion on *Frankenstein*.

# Worksheet 1

The introduction to this session opens the topic of the role of rules and laws in all our lives. The texts consider the question of what might make a law unjust and what our reaction to such a law should be. The worksheet asks us to think about our own responses to the ground rules that will shape our discussions in Touchstones and to consider ways in which the rules of a discussion might be just or unjust.

1. Listed below are the ground rules we will follow in Touchstones Discussions.

1. Read the text carefully.
2. Listen to what others say, and don't interrupt.
3. Speak clearly.
4. Speak to all the members of the group.
5. Give others your respect.

Which ground rule will you find the most difficult to follow? Why?

2. Write another possible ground rule. What would the new rule help achieve?

3. After reading the texts, write a question that you would like the group to discuss.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 2

Both texts for this session are about power. Plato explores the power that the strong exercise over the weak, and Nietzsche conceives of power as the motivating force for all of life. In the introduction, we considered the role and authority of the leader of a discussion and the power that is exercised in asking the opening question. The worksheet asks us to think about other situations in which power is exercised over others and how the ways in which it is employed may affect outcomes.

1. The items below describe people who exercise power and authority in a particular leadership situation. Rank the form of leadership you believe to be most typically employed in the described situation on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most authoritarian leadership and 1 being the most shared leadership. Then think about the advantages and disadvantages of that style of leadership for achieving the stated goal. For example, a teacher's goal may be to interest students in a subject, and a teacher teaching in a traditional way might be rated as an 8 or 9. One advantage of this style of teaching might be that a lively and entertaining teacher may succeed in focusing students' attention. One disadvantage could be that the students are likely to remain passive and might not internalize that interest. For each item below, you are also asked to say what you would consider an ideal form of leadership for achieving the stated goal. You might, for example, think that a teacher would be more successful as a 6 or 7 rather than an 8 or 9, because some sharing of power with students would increase their motivation and initiative.

a) Doctor leading a team of nurses

Goal: To restore a seriously ill patient to health

Leadership style: \_\_\_\_ typical \_\_\_\_ ideal

Advantage of actual style:

Disadvantage of actual style:

b) A general leading a staff

Goal: To plan (not conduct) a military campaign

Leadership style: \_\_\_\_ typical \_\_\_\_ ideal

Advantage of actual style:

Disadvantage of actual style:

c) A principal leading a staff of teachers

Goal: To improve students' performance on tests

Leadership style: \_\_\_\_\_ typical \_\_\_\_\_ ideal

Advantage of actual style:

Disadvantage of actual style:

d) A basketball coach leading a team

Goal: To win the championship

Leadership style: \_\_\_\_\_ typical \_\_\_\_\_ ideal

Advantage of actual style:

Disadvantage of actual style:

e) A parent raising children

Goal: To get a child to assist in household tasks

Leadership style: \_\_\_\_\_ typical \_\_\_\_\_ ideal

Advantage of actual style:

Disadvantage of actual style:

2. After reading the texts, write a possible opening question for the discussion.



# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 3

The introduction to this unit raises the issue of expertise and the importance attached to it in our culture. Readings related to the fields of mathematics and science are effective for bringing this issue to the surface because these are subjects in which technical expertise is particularly valued, and in which those of us who lack this expertise may feel most intimidated and inclined to defer to experts. However, our particular selections from Nicomachus of Gerasa and Henri Poincaré—by asking questions relating mathematics to other areas of our experience—help create an environment in which experts and nonexperts can discuss these subjects seriously with one another. To get us started thinking about our perspectives on expertise, the worksheet helps us examine the areas in which we would seek advice from someone with expertise, and the areas in which we would want to make our own decisions.

1. For each of the items below, consider whether you would seek to be guided by another person and, if so, on what basis you would choose that person. Choose from among the following options, and write the corresponding number in the blank for each item.

1. A person who knows me and has my best interests in mind.
  2. A person with a rare talent in this area.
  3. A person with an advanced degree in this area.
  4. A person with a great deal of experience in this sort of situation.
  5. I would not choose to seek advice from another.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ a) What color to paint your bedroom
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) What career to choose
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Whether to marry a specific person
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) Why you are feeling a pain in your stomach
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) Whether to invest in a certain stock
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) Why you are depressed
- \_\_\_\_\_ g) What religion, if any, to adhere to
- \_\_\_\_\_ h) Whether to place an elderly parent in a retirement home
- \_\_\_\_\_ i) What computer to purchase
- \_\_\_\_\_ j) What to serve to important guests whom you don't know
- \_\_\_\_\_ k) Whether to support the cloning of human embryos for purposes of medical research

2. For one of the above, briefly explain the reason for your response.

3. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 4

The texts by Equiano and Arendt take up horrifying examples of the illegitimate use of power and its effects both on those over whom it is exercised and on those who employ it. The unit's introduction suggests that the problem of illegitimate power is also one we must consider in situations closer to home, even in our everyday interactions with one another. In the worksheet, we consider roles in which power is held legitimately and ask how likely it is in each that the legitimate use of power might verge into an abuse of power.

1. The following people hold power over others either generally or in certain situations. How would you rank them with regard to how likely it is that they would abuse their power? Rank each position on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the least likely to abuse power and 10 being the most likely.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) Doctor
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) Federal prosecutor
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) Military official
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) Prison guard
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) Teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) Police officer
- \_\_\_\_\_ g) Psychiatrist
- \_\_\_\_\_ h) State governor
- \_\_\_\_\_ i) Biological parent
- \_\_\_\_\_ j) Stepparent

2. Choose an item that you ranked with a 1 (or the item to which you gave your lowest ranking) and an item that you ranked with a 10 (or the item to which you gave your highest ranking). Briefly explain your ranking of these items.

3. After reading the texts, write an opening question.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
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Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 5

The introduction highlights the fact that each discussion group is unique in having its own history, its own institutional context, and its own particular mix of participants. The text becomes a tool—our ally—as we attempt to help our group members discover our strengths and work together most effectively. This unit’s readings by Saint Augustine of Hippo and R. G. Collingwood are both autobiographical. Thus they each raise the question of how our histories help make us who we are. The worksheet asks us to think about how these particular texts and the set of questions they raise might become a useful tool for us, given our own group history and situation.

1. Which problem from the last session did you choose to work to improve on?
2. How could this unit’s texts help you to solve that problem?
3. After your second reading of the texts, consider the following positive qualities in a discussion. Rate how well this unit’s paired texts can help you achieve each quality. Use a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being not very effectively and 10 being very effectively. For example, if you think that these texts will encourage the group to focus on the given quality, you might assign that quality an 8 or a 9. If you think that it is unlikely that these texts will foster the development of say, cooperation, you might rate the quality of cooperation as a 2 or a 3.

_____ Cooperation	_____ Balanced participation
_____ Building on one other’s contributions	_____ Respectful participation
_____ Participants assisting one another	_____ Active listening
_____ Asking one another questions	_____ Responding to one another
_____ Other _____	
4. For your lowest ranking, please give a brief reason for your decision.
5. For your highest ranking, please give a brief reason for your decision.
6. What opening question on these texts might help solve the group dynamics problem you chose to work on from the last session?

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Participant Questionnaire

In the best discussions, each person acts simultaneously as a participant and a leader. Furthermore, each group member acts with the interests of the group in mind and governs his or her participation accordingly. This self-evaluation form helps you reflect on your participation and recognize areas in which you would like to improve.

How much would you say that you participate?

☐ Less than most    ☐ About average    ☐ More than most

How often do you interrupt others?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you listen to all the participants?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you solicit other opinions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you build on what others say?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you keep focused and on task?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you encourage quieter participants to speak?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you prepare well for the sessions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

What is one way in which you have improved as a participant?

Name one way that you would like to improve as a participant.



## Worksheet 6

The unit's introduction highlighted the ways in which we separate our lives into the public and private realms and the differences in our behavior and assumptions within these divisions. The worksheet asks us to consider these differences for a number of specific cases. In the texts by Thucydides and Camus, we have examples of extreme situations in which the divisions and structures we use to order our lives are broken down and also examples of the drive we have to find normalcy by reclaiming our roles and the “proper” division between the public and private realms.

1. For each contrasting pair of beliefs or attitudes on the next page, think about how great a role each should play in the public and private dimensions of our lives. Then, express your view by dividing 10 points between the items of each pair. For example, suppose we view the pair of objectivity and subjectivity in relation to our public lives. One might think that objectivity should heavily outweigh subjectivity but both should be present. On that basis, one might allocate 9 to objectivity and 1 to subjectivity. Or, one might agree that both should be present but believe that they should be more balanced and allocate the points as 6 and 4, respectively. For our private or personal lives, you would then also decide how to allocate 10 points. Here, for example, one might think subjectivity is most important, but also assign objectivity 3 points because subjective approaches should still rely somewhat on facts.

	Public Realm	Private Realm
a) Objectivity	_____	_____
Subjectivity	_____	_____
	10	10
b) Efficiency	_____	_____
Spontaneity	_____	_____
	10	10
c) Skeptical attitude toward others	_____	_____
Trusting attitude toward others	_____	_____
	10	10
d) Problems have a definite, unambiguous solution	_____	_____
Problems solved by compromise between the parties	_____	_____
	10	10
e) Risk taking	_____	_____
Risk minimizing	_____	_____
	10	10

2. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

# Worksheet 7

Rousseau and Freud each propose a theory of the origins of civilization—and with civilization, the origins of the bonds of affection and necessity that both bring us together and drive wedges between us. The unit’s introduction suggests that these differences among us can become strengths as we seek to explore different perspectives. In the worksheet, we are asked to consider some of the bonds that civilization has created and how strongly we feel them to be at work in our lives and our society.

1. Below are a number of sources of bonding as well as division among people. Rate how strong a bond each source creates for you on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 meaning generally creates a very strong bond with others and 1 meaning creates a very weak bond. Then rate what you judge to be the strength of this bond more generally in society.

	You	The nation
same religion	_____	_____
same family	_____	_____
same ethnic background	_____	_____
same social class	_____	_____
same political party	_____	_____
same economic status	_____	_____
business partners	_____	_____
same position in an organization	_____	_____
same college	_____	_____
same gender	_____	_____

2. Choose one of bonds that you rated 8 or higher in respect to yourself, and suggest how you might work to form a close connection between you and someone with whom you do not share this bond.

3. Which bond do you think is the most likely to create conflicts that are hard or even impossible to overcome when it is not shared? Why?

4. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
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Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 8

The texts remind us of the ways in which our society has systematically excluded women and African Americans. The introduction to Unit 8 asks us to recognize the prejudices that are at work in our own discussion group—the perhaps subtle ways in which some members of the group find their contributions discounted and become in effect invisible. Below, we are asked to consider some reasons why a person might choose not to take part in a discussion and how hard these various barriers to participation may be to overcome.

1. Listed below are ten reasons why someone might not participate in a discussion. In the first column, rank them from 1 (easiest to overcome) to 10 (hardest to overcome) as you think they apply to most people. Then in column 2, rank them as they apply to you.

	Most People	Me
a) When I speak, no one picks up on what I say.	_____	_____
b) The leader never makes eye contact with me.	_____	_____
c) One or a few people generally attack what I say.	_____	_____
d) The group never considers topics that I consider important.	_____	_____
e) The leader always agrees with a few other participants.	_____	_____
f) The discussion is never genuinely exploratory; certain group members impose an agenda.	_____	_____
g) There are a number of people I do not respect in the group.	_____	_____
h) A few others always comment on everything that is said.	_____	_____
i) People don't give reasons for their ideas.	_____	_____
j) The discussion veers all over the place and we have no direction.	_____	_____

2. Consider the items you ranked 9 and 10 for most people. What advice would you give someone to help him or her participate in spite of that problem?

3. Which items did you rank the highest for yourself?

4. After reading the texts, write an opening question.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
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Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_



## Worksheet 9

The unit's introduction raises the issue of the presuppositions that shape our various views of the world. We see evidence of these in, for instance, the different perspectives with which we approach common experiences and the difference between the way we judge others and the way we judge ourselves. Paintings are often useful for our exploration of these issues because they are a type of "text" about which people feel freer to express the variety of their opinions without the fear of being labeled right or wrong. And this more open attitude also frees us to see how the examination of the perspectives of others both enriches us and enables us to better understand our point of view. The worksheet asks us to think about and compare (if possible) the judgments we make about ourselves with those our group makes about us.

1. Listed below are some descriptions of how people act in a discussion. Ask yourself which of these you think describes your participation. Then ask yourself which of these the other members of the group would consider to be descriptive of your participation. Put check marks in the appropriate boxes.

	How you describe yourself	How others describe you
a) You listen carefully to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) You don't argue for the sake of arguing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) You participate a responsible amount.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) You are interested in hearing new points of view.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) You try to help the sessions succeed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) You are willing to change your mind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) You ask helpful questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) You help others explain their ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) You build on what others say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) You raise useful questions and topics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Choose one of the above descriptions for which you believe there to be a difference in how you see your own participation and how others see it, and briefly explain the difference of judgment.
3. Write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

# Worksheet 10

The texts by Douglass and Gandhi both concern the effort to bring others—in these cases oppressors—to self-examination. How does one induce other people or groups to examine and perhaps reevaluate their own behavior? The introduction asks us to examine our progress as a discussion group and the challenges that remain to be met. As we assess the development of our group, we must ask ourselves about the goals toward which we are working. The worksheet gives us the opportunity to make explicit our intuitions about what ought most ideally to characterize our discussions together.

1. Listed below are pairs of beliefs that underlie our behavior in our public and private lives. Consider the traits that you think should, ideally, characterize a discussion. Then divide up 10 points between the items of the pair, allocating points to indicate the relative value of the attitudes within the context of an ideal discussion. For instance, considering efficiency and spontaneity, one might think that it is important for our discussions to move along effectively, but still more important that our discussions go where the process leads us without rigid control. So one might give efficiency a 3, spontaneity a 7. Another person might think that a discussion requires more attempts to reach a conclusion and give efficiency a 6 and spontaneity a 4.

## Characteristics of an Ideal Discussion

a) \_\_\_\_ Objectivity

\_\_\_\_ Subjectivity

10

b) \_\_\_\_ Skepticism

\_\_\_\_ Trust

10

c) \_\_\_\_ Efficiency

\_\_\_\_ Spontaneity

10

d) \_\_\_\_ Problems have definite solutions

\_\_\_\_ Problems have several plausible solutions

10

e) \_\_\_\_ Individuality and creativity

\_\_\_\_ Professionalism and expert knowledge

10

f) \_\_\_\_ Structure

\_\_\_\_ Flexibility

10

g) \_\_\_\_ Situations should be controlled

h) \_\_\_\_ Risk aversion

\_\_\_\_ Openness to new situations

\_\_\_\_ Risk taking

10

10

2. After reading the texts, write *two* opening questions—one for a discussion starting with the piece by Douglass and one for a discussion starting with the piece by Gandhi.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Participant Questionnaire

In the best discussions, each person acts simultaneously as a participant and a leader. Furthermore, each group member acts with the interests of the group in mind and governs his or her participation accordingly. This self-evaluation form helps you reflect on your participation and recognize areas in which you would like to improve.

How much would you say that you participate?

☐ Less than most    ☐ About average    ☐ More than most

How often do you interrupt others?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you listen to all the participants?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you solicit other opinions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you build on what others say?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you keep focused and on task?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you encourage quieter participants to speak?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you prepare well for the sessions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

What is one way in which you have improved as a participant?

Name one way that you would like to improve as a participant.

## Worksheet 11

The unit introduction highlights the complexity of language, the difficulties we have in communicating with one another, and our tendency to impose ourselves on whatever we encounter. The texts by Bacon and Weil consider, in different ways, the power of thought and language to lead us astray. The worksheet asks us to rank the members of our group according to their ability to listen genuinely. This exercise is undertaken not so much for the purpose of ranking our group members but for the purpose of forcing us to determine some criteria for deciding whether someone is a good listener.

1. On a separate sheet of paper, please evaluate privately the listening skills of the members of the group, including you, by putting initials along a line like the one below using the space bar. The scale ranges from 1 (a poor listener) to 10 (an excellent listener).

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 10

2. What criteria did you use to determine your highest ranking?

3. What criteria did you use to determine your lowest ranking?

4. Why did you give yourself the ranking you did?

5. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.



# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 12

The introduction explores the question of why misunderstanding occurs among us. The texts by Plato, Chatelet, and Wittgenstein propose differing accounts of what we share and where the possibilities for genuine connection with one another lie. The worksheet names three means—religion, philosophy, and science—by which people have often attempted to arrive at some sort of truth we would all share, and asks to which of them we ourselves would turn to answer certain questions.

1. The questions listed below are similar to ones that have absorbed people for many centuries. Some people have felt that they found answers—either yes or no—whereas others have contended that no answer could be found. Those who found yes or no answers used various approaches or methods to reach their conclusions; some used a religious approach, some a philosophical approach, and some a scientific approach. For each question below, decide which discipline—religion, philosophy, or science—would be most likely to supply a definite yes or no answer for you.

	Religion	Philosophy	Science
a) Does the universe end?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Is there a God?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Do humans cause global warming?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Is there life after death?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Will there always be wars?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Can a person live forever?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Will all human action someday be explained by science?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Will science eventually cure all diseases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Can technology improve the world?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. In question 1, you decided what questions could be best answered by religion, philosophy, and science. Briefly explain your reasons for choosing religion, philosophy, or science for particular questions.

a) When I selected religion, it was because:

b) When I selected philosophy, it was because:

c) When I selected science, it was because:

3. Write a question you would like to use to open the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 13

The unit's introduction addresses ways in which we approach difference, particularly the types of difference that often confront us across cultural boundaries. In the texts by Mencius and Woodrow Wilson—giving us Eastern and Western analyses of ways in which people should be involved with the world—we see an example of this type of difference. The worksheet asks us, as inhabitants of the West, to examine more closely our reaction to the Mencius text by comparing his ideas with our basic comprehension of what it means to be fully human.

1. As you read each one of the four sections in the passage from Mencius, evaluate how close each section is to Western ideas. Use a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the farthest and 10 being the closest.

Section I \_\_\_\_

Section II \_\_\_\_

Section III \_\_\_\_

Section IV \_\_\_\_

2. Consider the part of Section II in which Mencius describes four aspects that characterize what it is to be human. Mencius claims these four characteristics give rise to the following four principles: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and knowledge. Do you consider all four of these characteristics essential to what it means to be human? Why or why not?
3. Which characteristic do you consider to be most important in defining a human being? Is there another you would propose?

4. Imagine that you are a translator. Do the translations of the four characteristics seem appropriate, or would you use different English words to capture what is meant?
5. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 14

The unit's introduction presents the familiar question of difference, but this time, of difference as it confronts us not from another culture but from someone who shares our own cultural background. In the texts by Woolf and Hericourt, we have examples of women speaking out about their experiences in ways that deeply challenged the assumptions of their audiences. The worksheet asks us to rank a number of statements in order of believability and then to consider the criteria by which we arrived at our ranking.

1. Below are listed ten statements that many people would consider absurd or false or questionable. Rank these statements from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least absurd, false, or questionable and 10 being the most absurd, false, or questionable.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) The square has three sides.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) The table is both green and yellow everywhere.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) We will not have winter this year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d)  $2 + 3 = 7$
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) He can read another person's mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) I experienced the injury in his left arm when he was hit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ g) He is neither happy nor unhappy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ h) The sun stood still for three hours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ i) Time moved backward.
- \_\_\_\_\_ j) He can communicate with the dead.

2. Choose the statements you ranked 1, 5, and 10 and, in the spaces below, explain why you ranked them as you did—why you thought that these three statements were respectively least questionable, somewhere in between, and most absurd. A way to explain your ranking might be to state why you think each statement might sometimes be true or could possibly be true or could never under any circumstances be true.

Statement Ranked 1:

Statement Ranked 5:

Statement Ranked 10:



3. List a statement, either from above or your own experience, that a number of people you know believe but that you find absurd or very difficult to believe.
4. Write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Building on one other's contributions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet 15

In the unit's introduction, we explore the common perception that mathematics and science are realms, apart from everyday human experience, in which only certain people can excel. We also explore the perception that these subjects are areas in which judgment and decision-making have no part. The selections from Pascal suggests what some of the characteristics of a more mathematical, as opposed to a more intuitive, approach to the world might be. In the Heisenberg text, we listen in as two of the greatest scientists of our time grapple with ways to comprehend and express scientific truth. The worksheet asks us to consider whether various professions draw more on the “mathematical” or the “intuitive” characteristics of mind.

1. People often state that mathematicians and scientists think differently from poets and artists. Let us assume this distinction for the moment. Rank the professionals listed below along this spectrum, ordering those who think more like mathematicians on the math/science end of the spectrum and those who think more like artists or poets on the other end.

math/science (1)\_\_\_\_\_ art/poetry (10)

- a) Architect
- b) Baseball manager
- c) Doctor
- d) Journalist
- e) Lawyer
- f) Discussion leader
- g) Musician

2. Explain why you placed “doctor” where you did.

3. Explain why you placed “discussion leader” where you did.

4. Do you believe that there is a fundamental difference between people who are good at mathematics and people who are not? Why or why not?
5. After reading the texts, write an opening question for the discussion.

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Many people talking at once	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_

## Participant Questionnaire

In the best discussions, each person acts simultaneously as a participant and a leader. Furthermore, each group member acts with the interests of the group in mind and governs his or her participation accordingly. This self-evaluation form helps you reflect on your participation and recognize areas in which you would like to improve.

How much would you say that you participate?

☐ Less than most    ☐ About average    ☐ More than most

How often do you interrupt others?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you listen to all the participants?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you solicit other opinions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you build on what others say?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you keep focused and on task?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you encourage quieter participants to speak?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

How often do you prepare well for the sessions?

☐ Very Little    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ All the time

What is one way in which you have improved as a participant?

Name one way that you would like to improve as a participant.

## Session Strategy Worksheet

1. **Goals.** Consider the strengths and weaknesses of previous discussions and the progress of your group as a whole. What would you like for the group to accomplish in your session? Are there specific problems that need to be addressed, or perhaps a new skill that needs to be developed, or an issue that should be examined? Taking into account the texts as well as the history and needs of your group, what do you think would be important for the group to consider about these texts? Why?
2. **Handouts.** Will you have everyone complete a handout? If so, on a separate sheet, compose the handout that you will present. Will the participants complete the handout during the session, or do you need to distribute it before the session so that the participants can complete it in advance? Will you reserve any time in the session for a discussion of the handout? Will that time come before or after the general discussion?
3. **Small Group Work.** Will you have any small group work? If so, what will you have the groups do? Should the small group work come before or after the general discussion? Will you have the small groups report results to the larger group?
4. **Large Group Discussion.** How will you start the general discussion? Will you ask an opening question? Will you ask everyone to prepare and present an opening question? Or will you plan to move naturally from the reports of the small groups or consideration of the handout into the discussion? If you plan to ask an opening question, what will it be?
5. **Troubleshooting.** What problems do you anticipate may arise in the discussion of these texts? How might you plan to address such problems?
6. **Evaluations.** Will you have the participants fill out an evaluation sheet as part of the session? Will you reserve any part of the session for the group members to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the session and discussion?

# Discussion Evaluation Form

The items below are discussion dynamics that may or may not be present in your group. Decide to what extent you think that each dynamic was present in the discussion. Then decide whether you think the group needs to work to improve in this area.

	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
Dominance by some individuals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Silence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interrupting	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Respect	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Balanced participation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of interest	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Asking one other questions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Pick one of the dynamics that you think the group should work to improve, and explain why.

How would you rate this discussion on a scale of 1–10? \_\_\_\_\_



# Strategy Evaluation Worksheet

1. How would you rate the discussion on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least successful and 10 being most successful? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
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	None	Some	Great deal	Need to Improve?
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