

Purpose

Write a response that evaluates a group discussion.

Summary

In this assignment, you will have a discussion with at least two peers. Your discussion will be planned on a topic that all participants have researched. You will then write an evaluation reflecting on your experiences with planning, speaking, and listening. You will complete the assignment by submitting your response.

If you need help connecting with peers for this assignment, speak to your teacher about options that might work for you. If you are working independently on this course and it is not convenient for you to work with one or more peers on this activity, you can work with friends or family members to complete the assignment.

Assignment Instructions

Step 1: Work collaboratively to set discussion rules and guidelines.

- a. Meet with other participants before the discussion to develop a plan.
- b. Confirm that the team knows the topic and text(s) that will be the basis of the discussion.
- c. Set clear goals with the team that include deadlines for preparation, the schedule of the discussion, the length of the discussion, and the roles of each discussion member.
- d. Ask a teacher or other adult for help with deciding how the role of the moderator will function.
- e. Determine the audience and purpose of the discussion.
- f. Decide on the formality of the discussion and on rules for consensus, vote-taking, and presentation of alternate viewpoints.

Step 2: Prepare your evidence

- a. Read the text given and any additional texts needed to help you thoroughly understand the topic.
- b. Gather facts, examples, and anecdotes about the topic, making sure to cite your sources.
- c. Determine your viewpoint based on your opinion of the facts you have gathered.
- d. Take notes to organize your viewpoint with evidence that supports each main idea.
- e. Research definitions for any terms and concepts you plan to present during the discussion.

Student Guide

Step 3: Participate in a formal group discussion.

- a. Come to the discussion prepared.
- b. Take turns listening and speaking.
- c. Use notes from your research to present your viewpoint.
- d. Support each point you make with evidence.
- e. Listen to questions raised by the moderator and other participants. Respond thoughtfully.
- f. Take notes as you listen. Reflect on points made, summarize perspectives, and build on ideas.
- g. Acknowledge where you agree and disagree with others, and when you need to, justify your views based on the reasoning presented.
- h. Help the group stay focused on the topic.
- i. Speak clearly, using formal language and an appropriate volume and rate of speech.
- j. Keep eye contact as you speak and listen.
- k. Use body language to show that you are engaging and interacting as part of a team.

Step 4: Reflect on the group discussion.

- a. Think about how you acted as a speaker in presenting your views.
- b. Consider how well you listened and followed the ground rules of the discussion.
- c. Reflect on how other participants made their points and provided evidence.
- d. Take notes on your overall impressions of how effectively the group discussed the topic.

Step 5: Prepare a written response that evaluates the group discussion.

- a. Using a word-processing program, write a two- to three-paragraph evaluation of the discussion.
- b. Include responses to these questions in your evaluation.
 - ☐ What did you do to prepare in advance for the discussion? How well prepared were you?
 - ☐ What rules were created for the discussion? Were they followed?
 - ☐ How well did you present your viewpoint?
 - ☐ How did your own background knowledge, experience, values, or beliefs affect the way you presented your views? Explain.
 - ☐ How successful were you at listening and responding to other group members?
 - ☐ How did you use evidence to explain and defend your views, including when someone disagreed with you?
 - ☐ In what ways did other participants use reasoning and evidence to make their points?

Student Guide

- ☐ Were there any times when someone did not use evidence or when the evidence did not match the viewpoint presented? Did a participant exaggerate or distort information? Explain.
- ☐ Was there a time when someone's viewpoint differed from your own? What might have influenced this opposing viewpoint? Explain.
- ☐ How was your language grammatically correct and appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience? Give an example.
- ☐ What kinds of hand gestures and facial expressions did you and other people use to match what was being said?
- ☐ How did you use eye contact, the volume of your voice, or other means to connect with others during the discussion?
- ☐ How well did the group solve problems and come to a consensus?
- ☐ Overall, how effective was the group discussion?

Step 6: Revise and submit your written response.

- a. Read over your response to make sure that you have answered each question completely.
- b. Revise, edit, and save your written response.
- c. Submit your response. Congratulations on completing your evaluation!