

# TOUCHBEBBLES

VOLUME C

**Digital Binder**

Published by

**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).

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](http://www.touchstones.org)

All rights reserved. This digital binder is provided for authorized instructional use only and only through June 30, 2021. No part of this book may be reproduced or repurposed in any form without prior written consent of the authors.

ISBN: 978-1-937742-79-9

## WORKSHEET 1: GETTING STARTED WITH TOUCHPEBBLES C

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

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

2. Which Ground Rule will be the hardest for you to follow and why?

Complete Question 3 *after* the discussion.

3. Chose one of the goals (a through g as presented in the text) that you would like to achieve and write it here. Why is that goal important to you?

### 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 reporter presents the group's answers to the whole class, and the timekeeper keeps everyone on track. All participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure that the group gets its work done.

Form a circle with your Small Group. Make sure each person in the group is included. All students should share what they wrote for Question 1 in the Individual Work. Try to come to agreement about which Ground Rule will be hardest for the class to follow. Write your group's answer below. Why did your group choose this Ground Rule? Write the reason.

## **WORKSHEET 2: FOUR FRIENDS**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

1. In the space below write a question you have about this story or its message.

2. In your own words, what does it mean to cooperate?

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your group, be sure each student has a role. Each student should share her or his response to Question 1 in the Individual Work. Your group should come to agreement about which question they would want to explore with the whole class. If you choose more than one question, put them in order from first to last.

Write your choice here.

## WORKSHEET 3: ON GREED

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. In our modern world, humans need some amount of food, shelter, and money or currency to be healthy and live comfortably. How much a person needs depends on many things. Read the list below. Then decide which of these is most important in deciding how much a person needs. Give that choice a "1." Then decide the next most important thing, and give it a "2." Do this until each item below has a number next to it.

- \_\_\_ a. a person's age
- \_\_\_ b. the climate where a person lives
- \_\_\_ c. the number of people who rely on a person (children, parents)
- \_\_\_ d. a person's health
- \_\_\_ e. where a person lives (countryside, town, city, country)

2. Complete this *after* your teacher reads the text aloud.

Write a question about this text that you would like your class to discuss. If you do not have a question, write a phrase or sentence from the text that you would like to discuss.

### SMALL GROUP WORK

First decide who will report your group's decision to the class. Then hear each person's response for Question 2 in the Individual Work. Together, chose the question you think is better as a starting question for a discussion about this text. Write your answer here.

## WORKSHEET 4: IN THE WOODS

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Take a few minutes to look at the painting. Look at the whole picture and also look at the details. In the space below, write a list of things you see. Include objects, colors, and numbers of things.

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, choose one person to be chairperson, one to be secretary, one to be timekeeper, and one to be reporter. Each student should share her or his list from the Individual Work. What else do you see as you look at the painting together?

As a group, write a story that tells what is happening in the painting. Be sure to include details and ideas provided by each member of your group. Be creative but be sure that your story relates to the painting. Write your story here or on the back of this paper.



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.

## WORKSHEET 5: THE FISHERMAN'S CATCH

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Think of a time when you behaved badly. How did you know or learn that your behavior was a problem? Write your answer here.

2. What happens when you don't listen to what your classmates are saying? Write your answer here.

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, choose a chairperson to make sure each student participates. Choose a secretary to write down your group's work, and choose a reporter to share your group's work with the full class. If you have a fourth person in your group, that person should help keep track of time.

Spend a few minutes talking about what it means to have a discussion. What happens in a discussion? Can you have a discussion with only speaking? Can you have a discussion with only listening? Read each sentence below. If your group thinks it is true, put a T in the space before the sentence.

- \_\_\_ Speaking is more important than listening.
- \_\_\_ Listening is more important than speaking.
- \_\_\_ Speaking is just as important as listening.
- \_\_\_ Ideas and questions that are raised should connect with what others are saying.
- \_\_\_ It is important to agree with what others are saying in the discussion.
- \_\_\_ Every person should be welcome in the discussion.
- \_\_\_ Everyone should make room for other students to participate.
- \_\_\_ Students who listen well understand more information.
- \_\_\_ Students who speak a lot sometimes don't listen.
- \_\_\_ It is important to hear ideas from quieter students as much as from talkative students.

## WORKSHEET 6: THREE SAYINGS

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Reread number 3 from the text. What do you think makes a dog good and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How is a person who talks without thinking like a dog that barks? Explain your answer.

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, choose one person to be chairperson, one to be secretary, one to be timekeeper, and one to be reporter. Then read Number 3 (see below) as a group. What does your group think the author means? Does his example of the dog help you to understand what he is saying about people? Write your answer here.

3. A dog is not thought to be good because he can bark. And a person is not thought to be clever because he or she can talk.

## WORKSHEET 7: “THE RIDDLE”

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Some words in English are spelled the same as each other but they have different meanings. One of those words is “bear.” One meaning of bear is a noun that refers to a large and hairy four-legged mammal. Another meaning of bear is a verb that means to carry, bring, or transport. Think of two more examples of words that are spelled the same but have different meanings.

#### Example 1

word: \_\_\_\_\_

first meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

second meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Example 2

word: \_\_\_\_\_

first meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

second meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, you will write a riddle together. Start first with a word. It can be any word. Then write down ideas that describe that word. Next, create a four-line riddle in which you present clues to help your class figure out the answer. Try not to make it too hard. Be sure every person in the group contributes one line to the riddle.

Your group’s word: \_\_\_\_\_

Ideas that describe your word:

Write your riddle here. Make sure it has four lines or clues.



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.

## **WORKSHEET 8: HISTORY OF THE MAYA**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

Imagine that you are going to create a new type of animal. It can be anything at all and can have any characteristics you choose. What will your animal be and why? Describe it here.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your group, share your responses to the Individual Work. As a group, decide how your animals will live together cooperatively. What responsibilities will each animal have? How can the way they live together be a model for humans? Work together and write your answers here.

## **WORKSHEET 9: FROM TWO NEW SCIENCES**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

Think of an example of something small that is stronger than something big. Write that example here. If you can't come up with an example, think of something that is so big that its size can be a problem. Write that idea here.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your group, decide which is stronger, a mouse or a dog. How would you show or convince someone that what you decided is true? Write your answer here. (Be sure that everyone contributes and that you have a group reporter.)

## **WORKSHEET 10: LECTURES FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

1. If you wanted to help a parent whose child bites her nails, what advice would you give that parent?

2. How would you convince the child to stop biting her nails?

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your group, share your answers to Number 2. Decide what approach would work best and why. Write your answer here.

## WORKSHEET 11: A TALE FROM ARABIA

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Think of a time when you wished something were different from how it actually was. What did you wish could be different and how would you have changed it?

2. Think of a time when you followed advice from a friend or adult. Why did you trust that person's advice?

### SMALL GROUP WORK

As a group, read the two statements below. Write "A" for Agree or "D" for Disagree. If you wrote a "D," work together to come up with a solution or advice to offer the class.

\_\_\_ All students have a chance to speak in Touchpebbles.

Solution:

\_\_\_ All students listen respectfully to others.

Solution:



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.

## WORKSHEET 12: A MAN AND A DOG

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Of the people listed below, which understands you best? Rank the list in order from most understanding (1) to least understanding (5). Use each number 1 through 5 only once. If there is someone or something else—a pet—who understands you best, write that name in the blank space and include that person or thing in your ranking.

- \_\_\_ cousin
- \_\_\_ parent or grandparent
- \_\_\_ teacher
- \_\_\_ brother or sister
- \_\_\_ friend
- \_\_\_\_\_ other

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your group, discuss whether you believe that dogs are truly humans' best friend. If not, what animal is? Write your answer and an explanation below. Be sure that everyone in the group contributes ideas and that those ideas are reflected in the group report.

## **WORKSHEET 13: LOOKING-AT-EACH-OTHER-MEETING**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

Take a few minutes to look at the block-print. Decide what is happening in this scene and write your answer below. Be sure to include the clues that support your answer.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

Choose a chairperson, a secretary, a timekeeper, and a reporter. Then share your answers to the Individual Work. Do any of your ideas explain the scene in similar ways? If so, where do you agree?

Talk with everyone in your group about how you respond when you are talking with a friend and someone you don't know interrupts or tries to join the discussion? Write your answers here.

## WORKSHEET 14: TWO POEMS ON WIND

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Think for a moment about your Touchpebbles discussions. How do you know when another student wants to contribute? Read the list below and put a check next to the phrase you think is the best clue.

\_\_\_ How the person is sitting

\_\_\_ Expression on the person's face

\_\_\_ Movement the person is making

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (provide your own answer here)

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, share your answers to the Individual Work. Then discuss why it is hard to pay attention to others during a discussion. What does your group think is the hardest thing to do in a discussion? Come to agreement on an answer and write it down. Then think of ways you could overcome this difficulty, as individuals and as a group. Write those ideas here.

Greatest challenge:

Solutions:

## WORKSHEET 15: FRAGMENTS

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Which of these fragments is easiest to understand? Write your answer here.
  
2. Now rewrite the fragment in your own words. Make sure you've written a complete sentence.

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, make sure you have a reporter who will write your answer on the board.

Write your assigned fragment number here: # \_\_\_\_\_

Reread the fragment from the text. Then discuss the fragment as a group, hearing what each person thinks it means. Then, as a group, decide what you think the fragment means. Then rewrite the fragment as a group here. Be sure it is a complete sentence:



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.

## WORKSHEET 16: DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL ETHICS

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Think of a rule or social ethic that you try to follow all the time. Write your answer here.

2. Why is that idea or ethic important to you?

### SMALL GROUP WORK

In your small group, make sure you have assigned yourselves roles and that your reporter is prepared to share the group's work with the entire class.

What three rules or ethics are most important in our society? Come to agreement and write your answers here. Include a reason for each rule or ethic.

Rule 1:

Reason it is important:

Rule 2:

Reason it is important:

Rule 3:

Reason it is important:

## WORKSHEET 17: THE CRAZY KING

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Here is a list of groups to which you belong or might belong. Read each line and think about how much your personality and individuality shapes or does not shape that group. In other words, how different would that group be without you? For each one, circle the choice that you think is true.

- |                           |      |          |          |       |
|---------------------------|------|----------|----------|-------|
| a. Family:                | none | a little | somewhat | a lot |
| b. Friends:               | none | a little | somewhat | a lot |
| c. School or sports club: | none | a little | somewhat | a lot |
| d. Touchpebbles class:    | none | a little | somewhat | a lot |

### SMALL GROUP WORK

Share your answers for letter “d” from the Individual Work above. Discuss how your answers are similar to and different from each other’s. Also discuss your reasons for your choices. Then decide as a group what advice you would give to others just starting a Touchpebbles class. What is the best way to participate in a Touchpebbles discussion?

## **WORKSHEET 18: MAN IS NATURE'S AGENT**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

Think about your experiences in science class and your own ideas about science. What do you think the purpose of science is?

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your small group, choose your group roles. Then share your responses to the Individual Work. Write a group response to the Individual Work that combines your ideas and represents all perspectives in the group.



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.

## **WORKSHEET 19: WHAT EDUCATED WOMEN CAN DO**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

1a. Re-read the passage to yourself. As you do so, think of a question you would like to discuss about this text. Write your question here. If you do not come up with a question, write down a sentence from the passage that you would like to discuss.

1b. Now try to shorten and simplify your question. This will make it easier for others to understand. Rewrite your reworked question here.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

Assign yourselves the Small Group roles. Then hear each person's revised question from #1b in the Individual Work. Help members of your group who didn't create a question to come up with a question about the sentence they wrote in #1a. Then decide which question the group would like most to discuss. Write that question here and be prepared to explain your choice to the whole class.

## **WORKSHEET 20: THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

1a. If you were the Discussion Leader for this story, what question would you begin with?

1b. Why is that a good question to start the discussion with? Explain your answer.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

In your small group, think back to your discussion about the Four Friends (Lesson 2). Someone in the group should reread that story aloud. In what ways is this story similar and different? Decide as a group which story you think is the better example of collaboration and why. Write those reasons below.

## **WORKSHEET 21: COMMON IDEAS**

### **INDIVIDUAL WORK**

Choose one Common Idea and rewrite it in your own words. Then explain what you think the Idea means. If you can, provide an example that illustrates the Common Idea you chose.

### **SMALL GROUP WORK**

Your teacher will assign one of the Common Ideas to your group. Together, read the Idea aloud. Then, as a group, rewrite it in your own words. Be sure to have all members of the group contribute. Explain what you think the Idea means. Does your group believe your Idea is true some of the time, all of the time, or never? Explain your answers below.

## WORKSHEET 22: TWO WORKS OF ART

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Choose one of the works of art and examine it closely.

Write the title of the work you chose here:

On the back of this paper, make a list of things you see in this work of art. What stands out most to you in this work of art? Why? Write your answer and reasons below.

### PAIR WORK

In your pair, identify as many differences between the two works of art as possible. Make that list here and put a star next to the thing you think is the most different. Be prepared to explain your answer.



## APPENDIX G

### *Touchpebbles Student Checklist*

#### **In Touchpebbles...**

	Never	Sometimes	A lot
I talk to the whole class.	☹	☺	☺
I listen to my classmates.	☹	☺	☺
I ask questions.	☹	☺	☺
I explain how I get my ideas.	☹	☺	☺
I am quiet while others are talking.	☹	☺	☺

	Agree	Disagree
I'm a good listener.	☺	☹
I learn from my classmates.	☺	☹
I work well with my classmates.	☺	☹
I do not interrupt.	☺	☹

## APPENDIX H



### *Student Discussion Evaluation*

Think about your class discussion. Then read this list of statements. Put a “T” next to statements that you think are true. Put an “F” next to statements that you think are false.

Some people talked too much. \_\_\_\_\_

My classmates worked well together. \_\_\_\_\_

We interrupted each other often. \_\_\_\_\_

We showed each other respect. \_\_\_\_\_

Many students talked during the discussion. \_\_\_\_\_

Now think about your discussion again. What score would you give it?

Use this to help you:

Write your score here: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = okay

2 = not good

1 = terrible

Write the reason that you gave your discussion that score.





## WORKSHEET 25: THE PAINTING

### INDIVIDUAL WORK

Imagine you are a famous painter. You've been asked to paint a self-portrait for an important art collector. The collector wants you to capture your most important traits. Which two of your talents, abilities, or personality characteristics are most important to convey in your painting. Write your responses and explanations.

Trait 1:

Why it is important:

Trait 2:

Why it is important:

### PAIR WORK

Share your answers to the Individual Work. Decide with your partner's help which of the two traits you listed for yourself is most important. Put a star next to your decision. Do this for both of your Individual Work.

Then examine The Painting together for a few minutes. What details do you notice about the person in the painting? If this is a self-portrait, what is the artist saying is her most important trait or ability?

Now write a question about the painting you think is important for the class to discuss.