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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.

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Worksheet I

Ground Rules

- 1. Read the text carefully.** In Touchstones discussions your opinions are important, but these opinions are your thoughts about the text.
- 2. Listen to what others say and don't interrupt.** A discussion cannot occur if you don't listen carefully to what people say.
- 3. Speak clearly.** For others to respond to your opinions, everyone must be able to hear and understand what you say.
- 4. Give others your respect.** A discussion is a cooperative exchange of ideas and not an argument or a debate. Don't talk privately to your neighbor. You may become excited and wish to share your ideas, but in Touchstones this is done publicly for the whole class.

Individual Work

1a) Which ground rule was hardest for you to follow last year?

1b) Why was this rule hard for you to follow?

2a) Which ground rule was hardest for the class as a whole to follow last year?

2b) Why was this rule hard for your class to follow?

Worksheet 2

Individual Work

You may recognize some of the behaviors described below. For each type of behavior, circle the reason that most likely explains why a person would behave that way. If you don't like any of the reasons provided, write your own answer for choice (d).

1. Marcia rarely speaks during the large group discussion, but she speaks in small groups and to friends outside of class.

- a) Marcia is afraid of being wrong in public.
- b) Marcia does not trust the group to take her opinions seriously.
- c) Marcia is shy, and will come out of her shell eventually.
- d) _____

2. Jermaine participates in discussions about mathematics and science but rarely about other works.

- a) Jermaine is not comfortable talking about his experiences.
- b) Jermaine needs to be certain about an answer before speaking.
- c) Jermaine likes these subjects and doesn't like others.
- d) _____

3. Sally only participates when she is correcting other people.

- a) Sally is most comfortable with a critical attitude.
- b) Sally wants to control the discussion.
- c) Sally does not believe other people want to hear her opinions.
- d) _____

4. Juan gets really good grades in other classes, but he hardly ever participates in Touchstones discussions.

- a) Juan is bored in the discussions.
- b) Juan does not believe he can learn anything from other students.
- c) Juan doesn't think he can teach other students anything.
- d) _____

5. How do you participate in discussions? Briefly describe your participation, and give two or three reasons why you participate in that way.

Resolution Chart

Write a resolution concerning how you would like to improve your participation in the discussions. Keep this chart in your notebook, and track your progress over the next five discussions.

Resolution: _____

	I Improved	I didn't improve
Lesson 3 Why or why not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesson 4 Why or why not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesson 5 Why or why not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesson 6 Why or why not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesson 7 Why or why not?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Worksheet 3

Individual Work

1. Write down a new ground rule that you would propose for the group. Why do you think that the new rule might be necessary?

Small Group Work

1. As a group, compare your new rules and then choose one that you all agree on.

Individual Work, Part 2

2. Write down the rule the class decided upon.
3. Listed below are five ways that a new ground rule could be selected for the group. Rank them (using the numbers 1-5) from best to worst (1 is best, 5 is worst).
 - _____ An outside expert could select a new ground rule.
 - _____ One person within the group could select a new ground rule.
 - _____ A small group of “serious” students could select a new ground rule.
 - _____ A new ground rule could be adopted through a majority vote.
 - _____ A new ground rule could only be selected if everyone in the group agrees on it.

Worksheet 4

Individual Work

Think of a situation in which you became suspicious of someone—a relative, a friend, a classmate, or someone you didn't know very well. Then answer the questions below.

1. Why did you become suspicious? (For example, did someone tell you bad things about that person, or did you see that person do something you didn't like, or something else?)

2. Were you right or wrong to have been suspicious? Why?

Pair Work

1. If you were suspicious or mistrustful of someone, what would you do? List three ways you might handle the situation.
 - a)

 - b)

 - c)

2. Choose the best approach from above and explain why it is the best one.

Worksheet 5

Individual Work

1. What method should we use to randomly choose a student to ask the opening question?

2. Why might randomly choosing someone to ask the opening question be a useful way to start the discussion?

3. What would you say to encourage a student who was nervous about this change in the class?

Writing Assignment 5

1. Write a paragraph about how you would feel if you had taken the same drink as the man in the story. Keep the paragraph in your notebook.

Worksheet 6

Individual Work

Reread the paragraph you wrote at the end of Lesson 5.

1. Of the items below, check the two that you consider the best features of your paragraph.

- a) ____ The idea that you expressed
- b) ____ The way you used language
- c) ____ The way it is organized
- d) ____ The examples you used
- e) ____ The reasons offered

2. Check the two items that you consider the worst features of your paragraph.

- a) ____ The idea you expressed
- b) ____ The way you used language
- c) ____ The organization
- d) ____ The examples you used
- e) ____ The reasons offered

Small Group Work

1. Have each member of your group read his or her paragraph aloud to the group.
2. As a group, decide which paragraph is the best one in your group.
3. Work together as a group to improve the paragraph you have chosen.
4. Choose someone to read your group's paragraph aloud to the whole class.

Worksheet 7

Individual Work

1. Listed below are four strengths and four weaknesses typical of participation in discussions. In the blanks next to the strengths, number your strengths from greatest (1) to least (4). Do the same for your weaknesses. When you finish, draw lines connecting the strengths and weaknesses that you gave the same number. Your greatest strength (1) should connect to your greatest weakness (1), second greatest strength (2) to second greatest weakness (2), etc.

Strengths in discussion

___ I listen carefully to others.

___ Others understand what I say

___ I don't interrupt.

___ I read the text carefully.

Weaknesses in discussion

___ I often talk to my neighbor

___ I only speak to certain other students

___ I only speak when I'm sure about an answer

___ I don't say what I really think.

2. Imagine that someone who knows you sees your list. That person notices the strength you numbered (1) and the weakness you numbered (1). After thinking about it for a bit, the person says, "It makes a lot of sense to me that you gave those two actions the same number because . . ." Write a few sentences below that this person might say to explain why your greatest strength and greatest weakness might go together.

Worksheet 8

Small Group Work

1. What was your resolution from your Resolution Chart in Lesson 2? Write a few sentences on how you tried to keep the resolution and whether you succeeded.

2. Write a resolution for improvement in Touchstones discussions that you think each of the other two people in your group should make for the future. They might be the same, but they will probably be different.

Resolution for _____

Resolution for _____

3. Briefly describe how *you* would go about keeping each of the resolutions you suggested.

4. Write down the resolutions suggested to you by the other two students.

Suggested by _____
Resolution:

Suggested by _____
Resolution:

Individual Work

1. Of the two resolutions suggested by your group members, which one will you adopt?
2. Of the two other members of your group, whom do you know better?
3. Tear off a scrap of paper. If the person you named in question 2 is the person who suggested the resolution you picked in question 1, then write “S” for “same.” If the person you named in question 2 is *not* the person who suggested the resolution you are adopting, write “D” for “different.” Your teacher will collect these and tabulate the results for the next class.

Worksheet 9

Individual Work

1. Of the following possibilities, choose the two that you feel characterize this discussion group as a whole. Give five points to what in your view is the biggest problem, and give three points to the next biggest problem.

- _____ a) We are uncomfortable with periods of silence.
- _____ b) There are too many side conversations.
- _____ c) We often speak at the same time.
- _____ d) We argue all the time.
- _____ e) Some people dominate the conversation.
- _____ f) We expect the teacher to run the discussions.
- _____ g) We don't build on what people say.
- _____ h) We talk too much about the text.
- _____ i) We don't talk enough about the text.

2. What would be the best method for counting up the results from question 1, in order to decide as a group what the biggest issue is?

Writing Assignment 9

Write a paragraph in your notebook about how the class should go about improving on the problem that the class voted was the biggest issue for your discussion group. These paragraphs will be used in the next Touchstones class.

Worksheet 11

Individual Work

For today's class you wrote a paragraph describing what a painting of Abraham and Isaac on the mountain would look like. Choose the answer that best describes your thoughts while you were doing the assignment.

1. When you wrote your paragraph did you imagine other people reading it? If so, who?

2. People often think that it's easier to write in a journal or diary than to write for others. Why do you think they feel this?
 - a) They are afraid other people won't understand them.
 - b) They are afraid they have nothing to write.
 - c) They are afraid other people won't be interested.

3. Which of the three items listed in question 2 is your greatest concern? Explain how this affects your writing.

Writing Assignment 11

Imagine that you are an artist and you plan to paint a picture based on the scene described in the passage below. Before the next Touchstones class, write a paragraph describing what your painting would look like. Some things you might consider: Would you show both Abraham and Isaac? Would you choose bright or dark colors? Would it be a clear or cloudy day? What kind of expressions would be on the faces if you decide to show the faces? Feel free to include whatever else you feel is appropriate.

“When they had climbed the mountain God had shown him, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood for the fire. Then he took and tied up his son Isaac. He put the child on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.”

Worksheet 12

Individual Work

1. People write letters to friends for many reasons. Rank the reasons that would prompt you to write on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 is most important, 4 is least important).

_____ To tell your friend what's been happening to you.

_____ To think about your friend while writing

_____ To receive a letter from your friend.

_____ To get your friend to think about you.

Explain your choice briefly.

2. Imagine that a friend once did something of which you strongly disapproved, and you criticized your friend. Now you find you have done a very similar thing, and you want to write a letter to that friend about what you have done. Circle your answer to show how you would approach such a letter.

Would you remind your friend that you criticized him or her?

yes no

Would you apologize for how critical you were?

yes no

Would you ask your friend for advice?

yes no

Which of the reasons best describes why you might write such a letter?

- a) To show your friend that you are honest by admitting what you did.
- b) To feel better by sharing with someone who has experienced something similar.
- c) To help yourself think about what you did by writing about it.
- d) To avoid having your friend find out from someone else.

Writing Assignment 12

After you have answered question 2, write the first paragraph of the imaginary letter in your notebook. Make sure your paragraph illustrates your answers from question 2. For instance, if you circled “yes” for the first question, make sure that in your paragraph you remind your imaginary friend about the time you criticized him or her. Bring your notebook to the next class.

Worksheet 13

Most, if not all of us, spend time on one activity we feel is very important to us, such as sports, listening to music, studying, watching TV, making certain kinds of things, spending time with friends, playing music, painting, or writing.

1. Which of the activities you enjoy is most important to you?
2. The following are reasons why you might consider the activity important. On a scale of 1-10 (1 is least important and 10 is most important) rate these reasons along with one of your own.

- _____ a) It is fun.
- _____ b) I feel better about myself.
- _____ c) It teaches me about the world.
- _____ d) It teaches me about other people.
- _____ e) It can help me achieve my goals.
- _____ f) It makes me a better person.
- _____ g) _____

3. Suppose you were trying to convince your closest friend to spend time on the same activity. Which two reasons would you use?

- a) _____
- b) _____

4. Suppose you were trying to convince someone whom you didn't know to spend time on this activity. In other words, imagine you are writing a commercial or advertisement about this activity for TV. What would you say to convince someone in the viewing audience to spend time on this activity?

Writing Assignment 13

1. In your notebooks, write one paragraph in which you try to convince your closest friend to do your favorite activity.
2. Write another paragraph in which you try to convince someone whom you don't know to do your favorite activity.

Worksheet 14

1. Who has the most power over your life? Certain people carry certain degrees of power in everyone's life. Rank the relationships in the list below from 1 to 6 (1 means "has the most power" and 6 means "has the least power").

_____ Older brother/sister over their younger sibling

_____ Policeman over a citizen

_____ Parent over a child

_____ Teacher over a student

_____ Senior over a freshman

_____ Writer over a reader

2. Certain situations give us a feeling of power. Rank the situations below from 1 to 6 (1 makes you feel the most powerful and 6 doesn't make you feel powerful).

_____ Knowing a secret

_____ Winning a game

_____ Winning an argument

_____ Getting a perfect score on a test

_____ Performing an activity well, like a jump shot, a piece of music, or a dance

_____ Disobeying a parent or teacher

3. List two reasons the feeling of power could be beneficial.

4. List two reasons the feeling of power could be harmful.

5. Imagine that you own slaves and someone is trying to convince you to free them. Who would be more convincing to you? A person who has owned slaves and freed them, or a person who was once a slave? Choose one and explain why.

Writing Assignment 14

In your notebook, write a paragraph in which you persuade slaveholders that slavery is wrong.

Worksheet 15

1. Authors write many different kinds of texts. Depending upon the type and purpose of their writing, you might prefer to have the author present instead of just the text, so you could ask questions, share ideas, debate opinions, or argue your own point of view. In the following list, write “T” where you would prefer just the text and “A” where you would prefer to have the author present. You cannot have both.

_____ a poem

_____ a novel

_____ a diary

_____ a science textbook

_____ a sports article

_____ a recipe

2. Choose one of the items above for which you answered “T”, and explain why.

3. Choose one of the items above for which you answered “A”, and explain why.

Writing Assignment 15

If someone wanted to change your mind about something you believed very strongly, would you prefer that person do it by speaking to you or writing to you? In your notebook, describe one of your beliefs, and explain the reasons you would prefer a person to persuade you in either speech or writing.

Worksheet 16

1. Imagine someone does not believe any of the claims listed below. Suppose you wished to convince that person by an argument or proof that these claims are true. Rank the claims from 1 to 8 (1 is the hardest to prove and 8 is the easiest to prove).

- a) ____ A certain food tastes good.
- b) ____ It rained yesterday.
- c) ____ Stones fall when they are dropped.
- d) ____ $1 + 1 = 2$
- e) ____ You can run faster than someone else.
- f) ____ A certain rap group is the best.
- g) ____ If a tree fell in a forest and no one heard it, there would still be sound.
- h) ____ Certainty is better than uncertainty.

2. For each of the items in question 1, write down briefly what you consider the best means of convincing someone. For example, for item (a) you might have the person actually taste the food instead of trying to present an argument.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)
- h)

Writing Assignment 16

Imagine that someone presents an argument to you that $1+1=3$, and you can't refute it. How would you feel if that happened? Would you believe the argument, and change your mind? Would you continue trying to find the flaw in the argument? Or would you decide the argument must be wrong even though you can't find anything wrong with the logic of it? Describe in your notebook how you would deal with this situation and give some reasons for your action.

Worksheet 17

1. Which subjects would most likely lead to a useless argument instead of a cooperative discussion? Rank the following topics from 1 to 4 (1 is the least likely to lead to argument and 4 is the most likely).

- _____ a) Whether abortion should be legal.
- _____ b) Whether God exists.
- _____ c) Whether men are superior to women.
- _____ d) Whether a person should repay evil with good.

2. Which of the following reasons best explains why these kinds of discussions are difficult? Add an additional reason of your own.

- _____ a) People don't know enough about the subject.
- _____ b) People feel too strongly about the subject.
- _____ c) People won't say what they really believe.
- _____ d) People won't listen to others who disagree.
- _____ e) People have nothing in common on which to base the discussion.
- _____ f) _____

Writing Assignment 17

Decide whether you agree or disagree with the following statement, and write a paragraph in your notebook defending that stance.

“If someone does something bad to you, you should respond by doing something good.”

Worksheet 18

1. If you were going to lead a cooperative discussion about the issues listed below, would it be better to have the discussion with or without a text? For each below, mark your choice.

	With text	Without
a) Is right to get even with someone?	_____	_____
b) Is right to experiment on animals?	_____	_____
c) Is it desirable to live forever?	_____	_____
d) Why are some people afraid of math and science?	_____	_____
e) Is abortion right?	_____	_____

2. Choose one of the issues for which you thought a text was necessary, and explain why.

Writing Assignment 18

For the same issue you used in question 2, what sort of text would be most useful? Choose one of the answers below and then write a paragraph in your notebook persuading someone to use the type of text you selected.

- a) A recent newspaper magazine article defending one of the positions.
- b) A text describing both sides of the issue.
- c) A story that illustrates the issue.
- d) A text that presents the issue or concern in a very unfamiliar way.

Worksheet 19

1. Before reading Emerson's argument, rank the opinions listed below on a scale from 1 to 7 (1 is the opinion with which you most agree, and 7 is the opinion with which you least agree).

_____ Imitating other people is a kind of suicide.

_____ The power that lives in each of us is new in nature and only we know what we can do.

_____ Usually we only half express ourselves.

_____ The divine idea in each of us can be trusted as long as we are faithful to it.

_____ Trust yourself.

_____ Accept the place that God has found for you and the friends you have.

_____ We are guides and benefactors of others, obeying God, and fighting against darkness and evil.

2. Which of the above opinions do you think the largest number of your classmates would agree with most? In other words, which opinion will most students have ranked with a 1.

3. Which of the above opinions do you think the largest number of your classmates would agree with least?

4. Read the Emerson text, “On Self-Reliance.” Then do the following exercise:

Listed below are some ways people behave in discussions. If Emerson were a member of your Touchstones group, what do you think he would be like in the discussion? Put a check in the “Emerson” column next to the items that you think would describe Emerson’s behavior. Then put a check in the “You” column next to the items that describe your participation in the discussions.

	Emerson	You
Tries to be understood by everyone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Says interesting things.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brings up personal experiences and allows them to be discussed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helps the group understand the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Argues well and convinces others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Builds on what others say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asks important questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admits being wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What do you think would be the major difference between the way you participate and the way Emerson would?

Writing Assignment 19

In your notebook, write a short argument in favor of the item in question 1 that you ranked a 7—the one you agreed with least

Worksheet 20

1. Match each of the following concepts to its opposite concept. The exercise has been started for you. Before you write the words in the blanks, decide which member of each pair belongs in Column A, and which member of each pair belongs in Column B. Column A should contain all of the concepts that seem to fit in with “War,” and Column B should contain all of the concepts that seem to fit in with “Peace.” When you are finished, Column A and Column B should each contain concepts that are somewhat similar to one another, and each row should contain a pair of opposites.

Concepts:

Cooperation	Public	War	Trust
Peace	Competition	Generosity	Reason
Feelings	Suspicion	Selfishness	Private

Column A

War

is the opposite of
 is the opposite of
 is the opposite of
 is the opposite of
 is the opposite of

Column B

Peace

2. Of all of the items you placed in Column A, choose one that best represents what is similar about all the items in that list. In other words, choose one that might make a good heading or title for that list. Then choose one for Column B.

Column A:

Column B:

Writing Assignment 20

Choosing one of the pairs of opposites from the list above, write a paragraph or two describing how the item in Column A could lead to the item in Column B. For example, if you chose the pair we began with, war and peace, you would need to write an argument how the condition of war could lead to the condition of peace.

Worksheet 2 I

Knowing one's heritage and ancestry may have various consequences on how we live our lives. Think of positive and negative effects of knowing your heritage and ancestry and list them below.

1. List two or three possible benefits of knowing your heritage.
2. List two or three possible negative consequences of knowing your heritage.
3. If you had the chance to rename yourself with any name you wanted, what name would you choose? Why?

Writing Assignment 21

1. The following statement is an excerpt from the reading for Lesson 21. Choose a stance towards the following statement (you can agree with it, disagree with it, or agree with some parts and disagree with others) and write an argument supporting your opinion.

“The influence of ancestry is important in helping any individual or race move forward as long as not too much reliance is placed upon it.”

2. Write an opening question for the discussion on Up From Slavery.

Worksheet 22

1. The following is a list of things people often believe will make them happy, and for which they strive. In each case, attaining these things might also make a person unhappy. For each item, list people that would be able to tell you how attaining it could make you unhappy. In other words, if you wanted to find out how attaining money could make you unhappy, who would you ask?

a) Money

b) Honor

c) Power

d) Fame

e) Pleasure

Writing Assignment 22

1. Pick one of the items from the list above and write a paragraph in your notebook explaining how having it could make you unhappy. Your paragraph should be written as if you are the person from whom you would seek to learn for that item. For example, if you said you wanted to ask a politician about the negative effects of power, write as if you are a politician.
2. Write an opening question for the discussion on the Consolation of Philosophy.

Worksheet 23

1. Any time that large numbers of people get together there will be factions: different smaller groups of people with similar interests and beliefs. Consider the ways in which factions can be good or bad.

List two ways in which factions might be good.

List two ways in which factions might be bad.

2. The following is a list of groups that may be made up of various factions. For each of them, come up with a few strategies you could use to remove factions or to get people from different factions to work cooperatively.

A discussion group:

A classroom:

A government:

A group of co-workers:

3. Write an opening question for the discussion on The Federalist Paper 10.

Writing Assignment 23

The following statement is an excerpt from the reading for today's class. Choose a stance toward the following statement (you can agree with it, disagree with it, or agree with some parts and disagree with others) and write an argument supporting your opinion with examples or reasons.

“The energy that produces different opinions concerning religion, government and many other points, and makes us follow different leaders—that same energy divides human beings into factions. It inflames them to dislike and hate one another.”

Worksheet 24

Students will need to have the text and the painting available to them to complete Worksheet 24.

1. The following is a list of things that people try to learn. For each, decide whether it would be easier to learn by yourself or with others.

	Better alone	Better with others
Painting	_____	_____
Reading	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Playing the piano	_____	_____
Philosophy	_____	_____
Chemistry	_____	_____

2. Pick one of the items you thought would be better alone and one that you thought would be better with others and explain why.

Better alone:

Better with others:

3. Imagine that you are doing the following things. Decide whether it would be better to do them alone or with others.

	Better alone	Better with others
Listening to music	_____	_____
Examining a painting	_____	_____
Conducting scientific experiments	_____	_____
Interviewing an author	_____	_____
Being in prison	_____	_____

4. Write down an opening question for the discussion.

Writing Assignment 24

Think of one, and only one, adjective that best describes the painting, Prisoners Listening to Music, and write a paragraph explaining why you choose that adjective.

Worksheet 25

1. There are many things that should be decided by an authority and many that should be decided by individuals. For each of the decisions below, who should make the decision—the individual or an authority figure like a teacher, parent, or government leader?

	Authority Figure	Individual
What subjects to study	_____	_____
What books to read	_____	_____
How to treat other people	_____	_____
What time to be home	_____	_____

2. Sometimes the things that individual people want turn out to be bad for the community as a whole. For each of the following communities, think of something an individual might want to do that would be bad for the community as a whole. For example, in a class at school, a student might want to listen to loud music, but that would prevent the rest of the students from being able to hear one another or concentrate on their work.

In school:

In a neighborhood:

In a country:

In a discussion group:

Writing Assignment 25

1. The following statement is an excerpt from the reading for today's class. Choose a stance toward the following statement (you can agree with it, disagree with it, or agree with some parts and disagree with others) and write an argument supporting your opinion. For whatever stance you chose, compare duties to one's country to other duties.

"It is certain a man's duties to his country are the highest he can fulfill."

2. Write an opening question for the discussion on A Theological-Political Treatise.

Worksheet 26

The Bhagavad-Gita comes from another culture and presents several ideas and views in ways that may be unfamiliar to us.

1. Read the text before completing Worksheet and Writing Assignment 26.

2. Each of the following is a phrase or sentence from the text. Rewrite each of them in your own words.
 - a) “The life of prayer is superior to the life of action”

 - b) “prayer in the form of true knowledge”

 - c) “prayer in the form of action”

 - d) “You must act in order to live.”

 - e) “He...who learns not to think about worldly treasures, who frees himself from worldly attachments, and then, offering himself as a sacrifice, acts, is superior.”

Writing Assignment 26

1. In a paragraph or two, describe how action can be sacrifice. Support your opinion with either the text or examples.
2. Write an opening question for the discussion on the Bhagavad-Gita.

Worksheet 27

1. Rank the following items from 1 to 5, where 1 is the source of the most prejudices and 5 is the source of the least prejudices.

- _____ Friends
- _____ Family
- _____ Oneself
- _____ Society
- _____ TV/Media

2. Which of the following decisions do you think people decide for themselves and which do you think are ideas or decisions received from others? On a scale of 1 to 10 rate each decision. (A 1 represents something that people usually decide for themselves, and a 10 represents something that is usually received from others.)

	Self									Others
What religion to be a part of	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
What career to go into	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Who to be friends with	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How to treat other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
What activities or hobbies to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Writing Assignment 27

1. In your notebook, describe the difference between opinions and prejudices in one paragraph.
2. Write an opening question for the discussion on *The Rights of Women*.

Worksheet 28

Read the text before completing Worksheet and Writing Assignment 28.

1. Identify the images or events in the text that relate to the title, *Almos' a Man*.

2. How would the story be different if it was *Almos' a Woman*? You may want to see how it would change the items you listed above.

3. Write an opening question on the text for your group to discuss.

Writing Assignment 28

Write two more paragraphs for the story. In other words, imagine what happens next. Do not be too concerned with imitating the author's style. You will compare your paragraphs with the paragraphs of the other students in class.

Worksheet 29

1. Come up with a list of four or five things in our society that cause problems to some people.
2. For each item, describe how that problem could be a good thing for others.

Writing Assignment 29

1. The following statement is an excerpt from the reading for today's class. Choose a stance toward the following statement (you can agree with it, disagree with it, or agree with some parts and disagree with others) and write an argument supporting your opinion. Provide examples and reasons for your opinion.

“Were no people discontented with what they have, the world would never change and reach anything better.”

2. Write an opening question for the discussion on Cassandra.

Worksheet 30

The man in the story convinces the two sick boys to change their beliefs. Decide whether he behaved wrongly with each.

1. Was he wrong when he convinced the first boy to give up his belief in one god?

Yes

No

Why?

2. Was he wrong when he convinced the second boy to believe in one god?

Yes

No

Why?

3. What is a belief that you think no one could convince you to change?

Writing Assignment 30

1. In today's reading, the Young Man who hears the story comments about the man in the story "The man's conscience was a fool. It didn't know right from wrong." Do you agree? Write a paragraph deciding whether or not the Young Man was right and explain your choice.
2. Write an opening question for the discussion on this text.