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TOUCHSTONES®
DISCUSSION PROJECT

About the Touchstones® Discussion Project

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

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Worksheet 1: The Orientation Class



INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Which ground rule do you think will be the hardest for the class to follow? Why?

2. Which ground rule will be hardest for you to follow? Why?

Complete question 3 *after* the discussion.

3. Choose one or two of the goals (items *a* through *k* in the text) that you would like to achieve through this program. Write the letters here.



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure that the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Each person in the group should tell the group what he or she wrote down for question 1 in the Individual Work.
4. Everyone in the group should decide which ground rule will be the most difficult for the class to follow. Write your group's choice below. Why did your group choose this ground rule?

Worksheet 2: The Odyssey

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Complete the following questions by yourself. If you need more space, write down your answers on a separate sheet of paper.



1. Suppose you meet someone again whom you knew very well three years ago, but now this person has changed. Which of the following situations would bother you the most? Rank the following from most disturbing to least disturbing with “1” being disturbs most and “4” being disturbs least.

- ___ He/she behaves exactly as you remember, but his/her face is badly disfigured by an accident.
- ___ He/she speaks and seems to think the same way you remember, but he/she is otherwise paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair.
- ___ He/she looks the same, but speaks and acts differently, as though he/she didn't know you.
- ___ He/she looks the same but now acts as though he/she is suspicious and afraid of you.

2. Write a sentence explaining why the sentence you marked “1” is the most disturbing.

3. What about *you* has changed most in the last three years? (physical, mental, character, etc.)

4. What about *you* has changed least in the last three years?

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting those answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping to make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Compare your answers to questions 1, 3, and 4 on the worksheet.



Worksheet 3: On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1a. You and a friend are standing at a street corner. You both see a large number of people shouting and running toward you. *You* see a mob coming to harm you. What might your *friend* see that is quite different?

1b. You and a friend are lying on the grass gazing at the sky. You both see a large cloud overhead. *You* see the cloud as the face of a cow. What might your *friend* see the cloud as?

1c. You are watching the news on TV and see scenes of two men beating each other. You are appalled and would like to see them arrested and put in prison. Is there any other way of seeing this situation?

2a. Put the three examples from question 1 in order of hardest (“1”) to easiest (“3”) to see in another way.

a. ___ b. ___ c. ___

2b. Why is the hardest one hard, and the easiest one easy? (Don’t write your reasons here—just think about them so you can contribute to the discussion.)



PAIR WORK

1. You and your partner should try to agree on your answer to question 2a in the “Individual Work.” Make sure you can give reasons for your final decision.
2. Decide how the three examples differ from one another. Which example is most like the incident relayed by the author? Why?



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Each small group should appoint a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group’s answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group’s answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping to make sure the group work gets done.
2. Discuss the author’s viewpoint regarding the ugliness and destruction of the land and the happiness the local resident feels when a valley is cultivated. The local resident wants the area around his home to be cultivated, but the author thinks it is best to leave nature undisturbed. Is there some way that both the local resident and the author can be happy about what they see? How would your group try to make this happen?

Worksheet 4: Why There Are Children

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. List one thing that changes like the moon and one that changes like the fruit.
2. Are these the only two ways that changes occur? If you can think of a different way, give an example of it.
3. Name one thing that matters to you now that would not matter to you if you lived forever.
4. Name one thing that matters to you that would still matter to you if you lived forever.
5. If you were given the choice, would you have people
 live forever like the moon? or live short lives and have children?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping to make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Compare your answers to questions 1 and 2 in the "Individual Work." In question 2, did anyone think of an example of change that is different from those stated in the story? How is it different? Can your group answer question 2?

APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

Please complete the following by circling the number for each line that best describes your own behavior.

Do you...

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>			<u>Sometimes</u>				<u>Almost Always</u>		
Interrupt others?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Listen to all participants?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
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Please make a note of which of your own behaviors you would like to change.

Can you make this change yourself or do you need help from others?

APPENDIX H

Touchstones Discussion Evaluation Form

Below is a list of different ways that describe how people behave during discussions. Not all of these descriptions are true in all discussions. But sometimes these behaviors are very common. Think about the discussion you just had with your class. Then read each of the lines below and decide if the behavior was present in your discussion. Put a circle around the number that best describes how much it was a part of the discussion. Then check the space that asks if you think your class needs to improve in that area.

	Not Present	Somewhat Present			Very Present	Need to Improve?	
A few people did most of the speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 5: Pensées

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Pretend you have \$100 to bet. Which of the following would you choose? Remember if you lose, you lose \$100.
 - a) You have equal chances of winning and losing. If you win, you win \$100.
 - b) You have equal chances of winning and losing. If you win, you win \$1,000.
 - c) You have twenty times as many chances of winning as of losing. If you win, you win \$100.
 - d) You have twenty times as many chances of losing as of winning. If you win, you win \$10,000.

2. Give a reason for your choice.

3. Give a reason against your choice.

4. In Pascal's bet, you are giving up something (freedom to act in whatever way pleases you) now so that you might gain something (eternal happiness) in the future. Name something else that is like this bet.

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping to make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Discuss and try to agree on one answer to question 1 in the "Individual Work." Mark your group's choice below.
 - a. b. c. d.
4. As a group, try to think of some examples for question 4 in the "Individual Work." The secretary should write any of the group's responses on his or her worksheet.

5. Someone that you think is a good friend of yours frequently bullies and makes crude jokes about your little brother or sister or against another weaker friend. You want the behavior to stop right away, and you tell your friend to stop, but he or she won't. He or she says it's just teasing, but you know it hurts a lot. List two other ways you could try to stop the bullying.

a)

b)

6. Which way would you choose? Why?



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Compare your answers to question 5 in the "Individual Work." As a group, decide which answer is best and why. The secretary should write down the answer. The participants should sign the secretary's worksheet to indicate participation in the activity. Why did the group choose that answer?

Worksheet 7: On War

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Complete the following questions after reading the text.



Consider the following list of different kinds of conflict or fighting:

- a. War between two or more countries.
- b. Being mugged in an alley at night.
- c. Boxing (as a sport).
- d. Arguing (fighting with words).

1. How is being mugged like a war?

2. How is being mugged not like a war?

3. How is boxing like a war?

4. How is boxing not like a war?

5. How is an argument like a war?

6. How is an argument not like a war?

Lesson 7: On War

7. Here is the list of different kinds of conflict or fighting that appears at the beginning of this worksheet. Is there any room for being decent and kind in any of these actions? (For example, how would you treat a prisoner of war? Would you trick and deceive someone to win an argument?) Take each example in the list and try to write a rule that brings fairness into that activity. If you can't, go on to the next one.

a. War between two or more countries:

b. Being mugged in an alley at night:

c. Boxing (as a sport):

d. Arguing (fighting with words):



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Discuss and decide on the one most important rule for each of the activities listed in question 7 above. The secretary should record the group's responses. Each member of the group should sign the secretary's worksheet to indicate participation in the activity.
4. Discuss: Why do people obey rules like the ones that you have come up with?

APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

Please complete the following by circling the number for each line that best describes your own behavior.

Do you...

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>			<u>Sometimes</u>				<u>Almost Always</u>		
Interrupt others?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Listen to all participants?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Solicit other opinions?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Build upon what others say?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Keep focused and on task?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Encourage quieter members to speak?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>

Please make a note of which of your own behaviors you would like to change.

Can you make this change yourself or do you need help from others?

APPENDIX H

Touchstones Discussion Evaluation Form

Below is a list of different ways that describe how people behave during discussions. Not all of these descriptions are true in all discussions. But sometimes these behaviors are very common. Think about the discussion you just had with your class. Then read each of the lines below and decide if the behavior was present in your discussion. Put a circle around the number that best describes how much it was a part of the discussion. Then check the space that asks if you think your class needs to improve in that area.

	Not Present	Somewhat Present			Very Present	Need to Improve?	
A few people did most of the speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 8: On Persuasion

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. We have all been convinced by others to buy or do things. Who in the list below is usually best at convincing you? Who is second best? Third, and so forth? Number the people on the list from 1 to 5 where “1” is the person best at convincing you and “5” is the person who is least successful.

___ parent

___ brother or sister

___ teacher

___ stranger

___ best friend

2. We have all bought things because of TV ads. What makes a TV ad most convincing to you? Check the reason that applies.

The ad is interesting or fun.

The ad shows a person you admire or would like to be.

The ad tells you why the product is good.

The company sponsors a show you like.

3. If someone wanted to persuade you to do something, what advice would you give that person about how best to persuade you?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group’s answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group’s answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure the group work gets done.

2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.

3. Discuss the question below. Try to agree on the order of the rank of the answers.

In the Touchstones classes you have had, how would you rank what the students want most? (Use the numbers 1 through 4, where 4 is what students most want, then 3, then 2, and then 1 is what students least want.)

___ The students want to say what they think.

___ The students want to hear what others think.

___ The students want to convince others.

___ The students want to work together.

Worksheet 9: Can Lying Be Justified?

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Complete questions 1 through 4 before your teacher reads the text aloud.



1. A white lie is a lie that a person thinks is right to tell another person. Most of us have told white lies and have had white lies told to us. Describe one that was told to you or one that you heard about.
2. In the case you described above, did you agree that it was right to tell that lie?
3. Is it ever right to lie? yes no
4. In question 3, if you marked *no*, explain why. If you marked *yes*, describe a case where it is acceptable to lie.

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting those answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Discuss and decide on reasons that support your answers to the questions above.



Worksheet 10: Mount Fuji

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INDIVIDUAL WORK

After you have looked at the photograph and the painting for a few minutes, answer the following questions on your own.

1. In a few sentences, describe the differences between the mountain in the photograph and the mountain in the painting.
2. What is the rippling substance under the boy? Why do you think so?
3. What aspect of the painting draws your attention most?
4. Think of an opening question for discussion.

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SMALL GROUP WORK

1. The chairperson of your group is responsible for organizing the group, making sure everyone participates, and presenting the group's answers to the whole class. The secretary is responsible for recording your group's answers. The participants are responsible for being cooperative and helping make sure the group work gets done.
2. Make sure everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
3. Take turns sharing what you wrote down for questions 1 through 4 in the "Individual Work" to your group.
4. Try to agree on one answer to question 2 in the "Individual Work."

Worksheet 11: The Lives of Greeks and Romans

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Now that you have heard and read the story of Cato as a young boy, try to picture him as a person who you might meet in your neighborhood or at school.



1. Write down what you like most about him.

2. Write down what you dislike most about him.

3. Would you like him to be your friend? Why or why not?

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Try to agree on an answer to the question below. The secretary should write down the group's response.
 - a) The last half of the story is about the family friend who is also a politician and who pretends to threaten Cato by holding him outside a window and saying he will drop him. What does Cato's reaction tell you about him?



APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

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Keep focused and on task?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
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Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 12: Society in America



INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. No leader has only good qualities. Even the best leader has some faults. Below are two lists of qualities that leaders may possess—column A is a list of good qualities and column B is a list of bad qualities. Try to add two more qualities to each list.

A

Honest
Very intelligent
Truthful
Quick learner
Has good friends
Charming
Hardworking
Even tempered

B

Dishonest
Unintelligent
Deceitful
Slow learner
Has bad friends
Rude
Lazy
Bad tempered

2. Now think of a leader that you appreciate. Pick *three* qualities from column A that you would want your leader to have, *but* because your leader is not perfect, also choose *two* qualities from column B.

My leader would be

A

a) _____ but he/she is also
b) _____
c) _____

B

a) _____
b) _____



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Each participant should read his or her answers to question 2 in the “Individual Work.” As a group, agree on one list of three good qualities and two bad qualities. The secretary should record your new list.

Worksheet 13: Fire and Ice

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Poems have many features that are not found in prose. This poem, for example, is written in lines with a particular rhyme scheme. Also, certain ideas are touched on but not said directly. For example, what connects the ideas of fire and desire in this poem? What about the other ideas that are raised by the poem? Now take a few minutes to translate the poem, as far as possible, into simple and direct English.

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SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Each member of your group should read his or her translation or paraphrasing of the poem. Decide what parts of the poem were the most difficult to rephrase and why.

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Worksheet 14: The Confessions



INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Often people ask us to explain something or ask us what we mean. Below are examples of such requests. Which would be easiest for you to answer and which hardest? Rank them from 1 (easiest) to 6 (hardest).

- ___ a) How do you play baseball?
- ___ b) Where is the best place to buy music?
- ___ c) What is the best movie showing in town this week?
- ___ d) What is time?
- ___ e) What makes a good friend?
- ___ f) Why do you like your favorite food?

2. For the questions you ranked as the hardest—ranks 4, 5, and 6—what sort of person might find it easier than you did to answer those questions?

<u>Question you ranked</u>	<u>Person who could answer such a question</u>
4	
5	
6	

3. Suppose someone asked you to explain something that you thought you understood, but when you tried to explain it, you found that you couldn't. How would you explain your difficulty?

- ___ a) I understand it but can't put it in words.
- ___ b) I really didn't understand it in the first place.
- ___ c) I sort of understand it but not enough to explain it.

4. Explain your choice:



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Read aloud and compare each of your answers to questions 3 and 4 in the "Individual Work."
3. Discuss and find several examples to help explain each response (a, b, and c under question 3 above).

Worksheet 15: On National Education

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Which of the following claims do you think are true? Mark those you believe are *true* with a **T** and the ones you believe *false* with an **F**.

___ a) When they are with adults and their parents, children are often afraid of being criticized for thinking they know things they may not know.

___ b) To develop their abilities, children should be encouraged to think for themselves.

___ c) Young people become open by being with others with whom they can say frankly what they think.

___ d) Children get lazy when relying on information from adults instead of seeking answers for themselves.

___ e) Children always prefer to play and talk with others of their own age rather than to play and talk with adults.

2. For each statement that you marked F, briefly explain why you think it is false.



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Read the sentence and the statements below aloud and discuss them as a group.
Do not mark any of the choices as a group.
3. Complete this work *individually* only after your group has discussed it.

Check the statements that *are* true of your Touchstones discussions and the statements that you think *should be* true.

Are True	Should Be True	
_____	_____	1. We are not criticized or made to look foolish for making mistakes.
_____	_____	2. We think for ourselves.
_____	_____	3. We say what we think.
_____	_____	4. We don't rely on answers or information from our teacher alone but try to get answers from ourselves and one another.

APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

Please complete the following by circling the number for each line that best describes your own behavior.

Do you...

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>			<u>Sometimes</u>				<u>Almost Always</u>		
Interrupt others?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Listen to all participants?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Solicit other opinions?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Build upon what others say?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Keep focused and on task?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Encourage quieter members to speak?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>

Please make a note of which of your own behaviors you would like to change.

Can you make this change yourself or do you need help from others?

APPENDIX H

Touchstones Discussion Evaluation Form

Below is a list of different ways that describe how people behave during discussions. Not all of these descriptions are true in all discussions. But sometimes these behaviors are very common. Think about the discussion you just had with your class. Then read each of the lines below and decide if the behavior was present in your discussion. Put a circle around the number that best describes how much it was a part of the discussion. Then check the space that asks if you think your class needs to improve in that area.

	Not Present	Somewhat Present			Very Present	Need to Improve?	
A few people did most of the speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 16: The Autobiography

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Which subjects do you like most? Rank the following from “1” (most) to “6” (least).

- ___ writing
- ___ science
- ___ music
- ___ reading
- ___ art
- ___ mathematics

2. Which subject are you best at and why?

3. Which subject are you worst at and why?

4. How could you improve in your worst subject?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.

2. In which group are you?

- Group A—better at math than writing
- Group B—better at writing than math
- Group C—the same in both subjects

3. Discuss why you chose to be in this group.

Worksheet 17: On Nature

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INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. How hard do you find it to believe the following claims? Order the claims on a scale from 1 to 7, where “1” is hardest to believe and “7” is easiest to believe.
 - ___ a) The earth moves.
 - ___ b) The chair you are sitting on is really mostly empty space between tiny atoms.
 - ___ c) The earth is round.
 - ___ d) Everything in the universe was once packed into a single point.
 - ___ e) There are more atoms in your thumb than you could count if you counted for the rest of your life.
 - ___ f) The light from some stars has traveled for millions of years.
 - ___ g) Nothing can travel faster than light.
2. How did you determine your choice as hardest to believe?
3. How did you determine your choice as easiest to believe?

S

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. As a group, discuss the following questions:
 - a) Do you think the universe goes on without stopping, or do you think someone could reach the edge?
 - b) Why do you think that?

Worksheet 18: Gorgias

INDIVIDUAL WORK



- Listed below are some everyday occurrences. Check the ones that you would change if you could.
 - a) Sometimes the weather is bad.
 - b) Some people break the law.
 - c) People get older and their bodies weaken.
 - d) People sometimes lie to each other.
 - e) Some people are rich and some are poor.
 - f) We are nicer to some people than we are to others.
 - g) It takes hard work to become good at something.
 - h) Clothing wears out and objects break.
- For two of the items you checked, explain why you would change them. If you didn't check any of the items, explain why someone might want to change two of them.

SMALL GROUP WORK



- Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.
- Decide as a group on an answer to the question below. The secretary should take notes.

Suppose you meet people who didn't want to change the two items that the class most wanted to change. How would you try to convince them that the class was right?

Worksheet 19: Letter to Her Mother

INDIVIDUAL WORK



Complete questions 1, 2, and 3 individually before you read the text.

1. What is your worst fault in Touchstones discussions? Rank the following with “1” your worst fault, “2” as your second worst, and so forth to “6” as your least fault.

- I talk too much.
- I interrupt others.
- I don't listen to others.
- I talk privately to my neighbor.
- I always talk to the same people.
- I talk to the teacher instead of the other students.

2. Which person listed below would you want to tell you about your faults?

- teacher
- close friend
- classmate you don't know well but respect
- someone who doesn't like you very much
- someone who would choose to hear his or her faults from you

3. Explain why you would be able to hear about your faults from the person you chose in question 2.

Answer the following questions individually after today's discussion.

4. What was good about this discussion?

5. What did not go well in this discussion?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Read and compare your answers to question 3 above.

APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

Please complete the following by circling the number for each line that best describes your own behavior.

Do you...

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>			<u>Sometimes</u>				<u>Almost Always</u>		
Interrupt others?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Listen to all participants?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Solicit other opinions?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Build upon what others say?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Keep focused and on task?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Encourage quieter members to speak?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>

Please make a note of which of your own behaviors you would like to change.

Can you make this change yourself or do you need help from others?

APPENDIX H

Touchstones Discussion Evaluation Form

Below is a list of different ways that describe how people behave during discussions. Not all of these descriptions are true in all discussions. But sometimes these behaviors are very common. Think about the discussion you just had with your class. Then read each of the lines below and decide if the behavior was present in your discussion. Put a circle around the number that best describes how much it was a part of the discussion. Then check the space that asks if you think your class needs to improve in that area.

	Not Present	Somewhat Present			Very Present	Need to Improve?	
A few people did most of the speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 20: The Autobiography of Malcolm X

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Would you like to learn the following subjects or skills from a teacher or an expert? Or, would you rather teach yourself? Put **T** for *from a teacher* and **M** for *by myself*.

- ___ a) basketball
- ___ b) mathematics
- ___ c) dancing
- ___ d) reading
- ___ e) cooking
- ___ f) driving a car

2. Select one of the items for which you preferred a teacher and explain your choice.

3. Select one of the items for which you preferred to teach yourself and explain your choice. If you always preferred a teacher, imagine teaching yourself one of these items and state one way that learning by yourself would be better than learning from a teacher.

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Discuss and decide on one reason why it would have been better for Malcolm X to learn from a teacher and one reason why it was better for him to teach himself.

Worksheet 21: Discourse on Method

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Of the abilities and powers listed below, which would you rank as your strong ones and which would you rank as your weak ones? Write **S** for strong, **W** for weak.

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| ___ a) Memory | ___ e) Judgement |
| ___ b) Imagination | ___ f) Understanding |
| ___ c) Common Sense | ___ g) Feeling |
| ___ d) Reasoning | ___ h) Emotion |

2. Of the items listed below, write **E** if you think *everyone possesses the ability in an equal amount* and write **D** if you think *people's abilities differ*. For example, if you feel everyone's memory is equally strong write **E**. If, on the other hand, you think some people have a memory that is better than what others have, write **D**.

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| ___ a) Memory | ___ e) Judgment |
| ___ b) Imagination | ___ f) Understanding |
| ___ c) Common Sense | ___ g) Feeling |
| ___ d) Reasoning | ___ h) Emotion |

3. Mark the statement you consider true.

- All people are born equally intelligent.
 Some people are born more intelligent than others.

4. Give a reason for your opinion in question 3 above.

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Each person should read his or her reason from question 4 above.
3. Discuss each person's reason and decide which is the strongest reason to support your group's opinion
4. Discuss: What is the strongest reason for the opposite opinion?

Worksheet 22: On Arguments

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Think about the last time you lost an argument with someone either in or out of school. What did you argue about?
2. After the argument you lost ended, how did you feel?
 - a) I felt I was wrong.
 - b) I felt I was right.
 - c) I felt unsure whether I had been right or wrong.
3. Rank the reasons that contributed to your losing the argument. Use **1** as the most important reason through **5** as the least important reason.
 - _____ a) The other person wouldn't listen to your reasons.
 - _____ b) The other person was more forceful than you.
 - _____ c) You made a mistake in how you argued.
 - _____ d) You were afraid of the other person.
 - _____ e) You were convinced by some of the reasons presented by the other person.
4. If the same situation occurred with that person or with another person, would you argue again or try some other approach? What other approach might you try?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Discuss the second text where Chuang Chou believes himself to be a butterfly. What are some differences between the time that you dream and the time that you are awake? How would Chuang Chou know that he was not the butterfly?

Worksheet 23: On Laziness

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Read the short essay by Montaigne. He tells us that when he tries to be lazy, his mind fills with fantastic monsters that have neither order nor purpose. Now turn to Bruegel's drawing. As you see, it is packed with apparently separate but clear images. For example, in the bottom-right corner, there is a bear-like animal looking at a human with a spoon and bowl on a bed with wheels. The whole thing is being pulled by a monster with a cloak and stick.



1. Select four images from the picture and describe them briefly.

a)

b)

c)

d)

2. Which image seems to you most connected or related to the idea of laziness? Describe the connection.

3. Listed below are some ways people behave that are sometimes criticized. How would you rank them? ("1" is the worst, "7" is the least bad.)

___ a) Being very proud of oneself.

___ b) Wanting to eat everything in sight.

___ c) Thinking one could never have enough money.

___ d) Being lazy.

___ e) Always wanting what others have.

___ f) Getting very angry over just about anything.

___ g) Always falling in and out of love with new people.



SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.

2. Discuss and try to agree on three images in the engraving that you all think best represent laziness. The secretary should record your group's decisions below.

a)

b)

c)

3. Compare and discuss your rankings from question 3 in the "Individual Work." The group should try to agree on a ranking of what is the worst (1) and what is least bad (7) behavior among the seven choices. At what number would your group rank laziness?

1 (worst) _____

7 (least bad) _____

laziness _____

Worksheet 24: The Way of Righteousness

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Carefully read all the sayings of Buddha. Think about them carefully and select the one that you agree with most. *Do not choose Sayings 1 or 2.*



1. Why do you agree with it?

2. What reason might there be for disagreeing with it?

3. How would you try to answer an argument for disagreeing with the saying?

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Select a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Reread the first and second sayings. As a group, discuss and answer the above questions for both of the sayings. The secretary should write down the group's ideas.



Worksheet 25: Selected Articles from the U.S. and U.S.S.R. Constitutions

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INDIVIDUAL WORK

Complete questions 1 through 3 individually before you read the selections.

1. What do you feel your country owes you? Mark with **Y** (yes) the items below that you believe are owed to you and everyone else. Mark with **N** (no) the items you feel are not owed to you.

- a) Be allowed to say what I want
- b) Be allowed to do what I want
- c) A salary of at least \$25,000 a year
- d) A job that suits my skills
- e) Free education
- f) Medical care
- g) An automobile
- h) Have my property protected from other people and the government
- i) Be allowed to go anywhere I want

2. For one item, explain why you answered **Y**. If you didn't answer **Y** to any, choose one and explain why someone might answer **Y** to it.

3. For one item, explain why you answered **N**. If you didn't answer **N** to any, choose one and explain why someone might answer **N** to it.

Complete the following after reading the texts:

4. Make up an extra ground rule or law for Touchstones discussions.

S

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Choose a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Share your responses to question 4 above. After everyone has had a turn, discuss and agree on one rule. Or, come up with a new rule together.

Worksheet 26: The Groom's Crimes

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. You are a player in a game. An official refereeing the game makes a judgment that you believe to be wrong. Which of the following is the correct response? Check the response you would follow or write one of your own in "d."

- a) Forget the incident and go on playing.
- b) Express your opinion and then go on playing.
- c) Argue strongly for your position.
- d) Other...

2. You are an official in a game. Some time after making a decision, you discover you were wrong. What should you do?

3. If you had been the wise man in today's story, would you have done anything differently?

SMALL GROUP WORK



1. Appoint a chairperson.
2. Members of the group should share their answers to questions 1 and 2 in the "Individual Work." Try to agree about the right thing to do in each situation.

APPENDIX G

Participant Questionnaire

Please complete the following by circling the number for each line that best describes your own behavior.

Do you...

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>			<u>Sometimes</u>				<u>Almost Always</u>		
Interrupt others?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Listen to all participants?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Solicit other opinions?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
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Keep focused and on task?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
Encourage quieter members to speak?	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>

Please make a note of which of your own behaviors you would like to change.

Can you make this change yourself or do you need help from others?

APPENDIX H

Touchstones Discussion Evaluation Form

Below is a list of different ways that describe how people behave during discussions. Not all of these descriptions are true in all discussions. But sometimes these behaviors are very common. Think about the discussion you just had with your class. Then read each of the lines below and decide if the behavior was present in your discussion. Put a circle around the number that best describes how much it was a part of the discussion. Then check the space that asks if you think your class needs to improve in that area.

	Not Present	Somewhat Present			Very Present	Need to Improve?	
A few people did most of the speaking	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Cooperation	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Silence	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Interrupting	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Paying Attention	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Speaking to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Asking each other questions	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Many people talked at once	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
It was difficult to enter the discussion	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___
Shows respect to the entire class	1	2	3	4	5	Yes___	No___

1a) From the list above, pick one of the ways where you think your class needs to improve. Please explain why.

1b) What steps can your class take to improve?

2) On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate this discussion? (You can choose any number from 1 to 10. 1 is the lowest or worst score and 10 is highest or best score.) _____

Worksheet 27: The Stonecutter

INDIVIDUAL WORK



1. Which of the following questions would you *not* take seriously? Write N for “not seriously” before each of those that you don’t consider real questions.

- _____ a) What do you want to eat?
- _____ b) How much is 12 x 20?
- _____ c) Do you want a million dollars?
- _____ d) What work would you like to do when you finish school?
- _____ e) What makes people happy?
- _____ f) Do you like anyone?
- _____ g) Do you watch television?
- _____ h) Do people like you?
- _____ i) Do you play any sports?
- _____ j) Do you ever dream?

2. There are many reasons why you might *not* take a question seriously.

Below are six:

- I) The asker already knows the answer.
- II) The asker doesn’t really care about my answer.
- III) There is no way I could know the answer.
- IV) The asker is just trying to start an argument.
- V) The asker is asking just so I’ll ask something back.
- VI) The asker doesn’t have the power to do anything about it.

3. Look at the questions in section 1 that you marked N. For each of these, choose the reason from section 2 that best describes why you assigned an N. You may use the same reasons or different ones.

- _____ a)
- _____ b)
- _____ c)
- _____ d)
- _____ e)
- _____ f)
- _____ g)
- _____ h)
- _____ i)
- _____ j)

Worksheet 28: The Pillow Book

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Read each of the three selections in today's text, then write down a question you think would lead to an interesting discussion for each section.



143. *Feeling That One is Disliked by Others:*

145. *Sympathy is the Most Splendid of All Qualities:*

146. *It is Absurd for People to Get Angry:*

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Each participant should share his or her question with the group.
3. The group should decide on the best opening question to ask the whole class about that section of the text. Your group can either choose someone's question or think of a new one.
4. The secretary should write the group's question here.



Worksheet 29: The Most Frugal Man in the World

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INDIVIDUAL WORK

1. Which of these good qualities do you tend to carry to extremes? Which do you tend to neglect? Put an E next to those you carry to extremes and an N next to those you neglect.

- ___ a) Honesty
- ___ b) Courage
- ___ c) Punctuality (being on time)
- ___ d) Justice
- ___ e) Generosity
- ___ f) Frugality
- ___ g) Studiousness
- ___ h) Cooperativeness
- ___ i) Competitiveness
- ___ j) Truthfulness
- ___ k) Other _____

2. Give an example of going too far in one of these three:

a) Cooperativeness

b) Truthfulness

c) Justice

s

SMALL GROUP WORK

1. Appoint a chairperson and a secretary.
2. Compare your answers to question 1 in the "Individual Work."
3. Discuss a, b, and c of question 2 in the "Individual Work." Each person should share his or her example. As a group, decide on an example for each of the three qualities listed in question 2 in the "Individual Work" (a, b, and c). The secretary should write down each example. Everyone in the group should understand why those examples were chosen.

Worksheet 30: A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities

i

INDIVIDUAL WORK, PART 1

Before you read the text, complete questions 1 and 2.

1. Which of the claims below do you feel certain about? Mark those with **C**. Which of the claims do you feel uncertain about? Mark those with **U**.
 - _____ a) The sun will rise tomorrow.
 - _____ b) You will be tired tonight.
 - _____ c) $1 + 2 = 3$.
 - _____ d) A tossed coin has come up heads nine times in a row. The next toss will be tails.
 - _____ e) The weather report says there is a 95 percent chance of rain. Therefore, you know it will rain.
 - _____ f) When a traffic light turns red, the cars stop.
 - _____ g) A tossed coin has come up heads one hundred times in a row. The next toss will come up heads.
2. Choose one item that you were uncertain about and explain why you were uncertain.

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INDIVIDUAL WORK, PART 2

3. Often in your Touchstones classes, you did not reach a conclusion at the end of the discussion. How did you feel about that?