

Things to Consider When Forming Your Book Group

I. Membership/Logistics

What size group? (8-12 is ideal!)

What are the membership requirements? Is your group a neighborhood group, a group of friends, coworkers, mothers with small children, or some other group?

How will you determine who can or can't join the group? (For example, if your group is residents of your condominium, will you include just building members? Friends of building members?)

How often will you meet? For how long?



II. Book Selection

What are the criteria for selecting a book? Is it: in print, in paperback, available at the library? Does it come in multiple formats like, large print, Braille, or audiobook?

Will you limit by: genre, number of pages, recommendation of group member (some groups only read books at least one member has read before and can 'vouch' for.)

Will you vote for books, try to reach consensus or take turns? How will you evaluate this decision process and tweak it if necessary?

III. Leading the Discussion

Who will lead the discussion?

Who will provide background information on the author and the book?

Who will host the group (and who will provide treats)?

Will you take turns at these roles?

How will you guide the discussion?

Will each member bring 2 or 3 questions or specific passages to discuss, or will one person be responsible for discussion topics/questions?

Book Discussion Guidelines

I. Look at each book for what it *is*, rather than what it is *not*.

Make positive comments first. Try to express what you liked about the book and why. (e.g. "The illustrations are a perfect match for the story because....")

After **everyone** has had the opportunity to say what they appreciated about the book, you may talk about difficulties you had with a particular aspect of the book. Try to express difficulties as questions, rather than declarative judgments on the book as a whole. (e.g. "Would Max's dinner really have still been warm?" rather than "That would never happen.")

Avoid recapping the story or booktalking the book. There is not time for a summary. Refrain from relating personal anecdotes. The discussion must focus on the book at hand.

Try to compare the book with others on the discussion list, rather than other books by the same author or other books in your experience.

II. All perspectives and vocabularies are correct.

III. There is no "right" answer or single correct response.

Listen openly to **what** is said, rather than **who** says it.

Respond to the comments of others, rather than merely waiting for an opportunity to share your comments.

Talk with **each other**, rather than to the discussion facilitator.

Comment to the group as a whole, rather than to someone seated near you.

For more information, visit the Library's Big Read website at
www.ReadOneBook.org.

CCBC Book Discussion Guidelines
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