

Discussion Project

Basic Assignment. About ten times during October and November, a three-person group of students will facilitate class discussion around a particular text for a class period. Each student will serve in one group.

These groups will give you the chance to work with each other to develop questions, ideas, presentations, and approaches for directing class discussions. The class will be yours to lead. If you like activities and think you could devise one to help the class understand the assigned text better, then do an activity. If you like lively discussions, formulate some questions and instigate a conversation. Organize the class and the discussion in whatever way seems most productive and most interesting to you and your group.

I will expect each member of the group to participate in both the planning of the class as well as the in-class discussion.

Written Work. The final part of this assignment involves writing. One week after your group's class session, please turn in to me a typed (double-spaced) two-page reflection on your group. In this short paper, please discuss the following questions:

- What were the major aims of your panel? What were you trying to do?
- Which part or aspect of your panel did you find most successful? Why?
- Which part or aspect of your panel did you find least successful? Why?
- What did you learn about your text (or yourself) while preparing the panel? **Be specific.**
- How did your group work together? Who did what? What was your major contribution to the group effort?

Scheduling and Preferences. In order to coordinate the various class sessions and the reading schedule with your interests as students, I need to know which authors, texts, topics, ideas, and projects interest you. You should begin by browsing through volume B our anthology, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. You might also consider joining a group to lead discussion on a part of *Moby-Dick* for a day. As you browse, read some of the headnotes and introductions. Note the names of authors, texts, and issues that grab your attention.

Then, on the attached preferences sheet, list the Authors, Texts, Topics, and Other Issues that spark a personal or intellectual interest. Try to give me a number of preferences to work with, and feel free to list as many items as you'd like. Also, if there is anyone in the class with whom you'd like to work, write down that person's name and perhaps some texts you'd like to work on together. I will use these preferences sheets to make up the reading assignments and the discussion groups schedule. Keep this top sheet for your reference. Complete and hand in the bottom sheet.

Dates. On or before **Friday, September 7th**, I will collect discussion preference sheets. I will schedule panels during a regular class session sometime during October and November. Your panel response papers are **due exactly one week after your panel.**

Discussion Preferences

Name: _____

Authors

Texts

Topics

Other Issues and Interests/Miscellaneous Notes