Reading Club Discussion Questions

This is a small group discussion about the book you selected to read for the semester. Each group member should ask at least one question and should share something related to the book/topic during the discussion. There are some questions below to help get you started but you do not need to 'stick to the script' if there is something that you want to share with or ask of your group members.

Over View Questions

- What were the major strengths and weaknesses of the book so far?
- What surprised you about the section that you read?
- What emotional reactions did it promote (what mood does the author set)?
- Is the author’s background reflected in the book?
- Is the book easy to follow or challenging?
- Did the story make you question any of your own beliefs?
- What’s the overall message the author is trying to convey in this first section?
- Does the book discuss broader social issues?

Questions about the Characters

- Do you find the narrator(s) and other characters likeable? Believable? Trustworthy?
- Do you relate to any of the characters? Do they remind you of anyone you know (real or fictional)?
- Who are your favorite secondary characters?
- If the characters change, what events trigger those changes?
- Does the author give the characters freedom of choice, or are their actions fated?
- How would the story have changed if characters had taken different actions than what they did?

Questions about the Writing

- How does the point of view affect the story? Would it be significantly different if it was told from a different point of view?
- How is the pacing – is it quick or slow? Does it remain steady throughout the book or change? Does it fit the scope and style of the book? Do any sections drag, or are any rushed?
- Is there anything unusual about the author’s style?
- Does the author emphasize characterizations, plot, language or style?
- What themes does the author emphasize throughout the novel?
Questions for Memoirs

- Why do you think the author wanted to share his or her story? Was there anything especially surprising about the author’s story?
- If you were already familiar with the author, has the book changed your view of them?
- What’s the overall mood of the book?
- How does the author express their story? (humor, anger, etc.)
- Did you ever feel that the author wasn’t being completely honest?
- Were there any parts of the book where you would have liked more information?
- What did you particularly like or dislike about the section so far?
- Was there a lesson that readers take away from the author’s life?

Questions for Nonfiction

- What was the purpose of this book (for example: to inform, to entertain, to inspire)? Did the book succeed at its purpose? If not, why?
- Did you know anything about this person (or subject) prior to reading this book?
- If the book addressed an issue or problem, did the author cover all sides of the topic fairly and completely, or was the book written to promote a particular agenda?
- After reading the book, has your interest been piqued about the subject matter? Do you want to learn more about it?
- How does the author draw the reader in and keep them engaged in the text?
- Was the book accessible for general audiences?
- Did the author explain unfamiliar terms and concepts? Do you feel like you had a good grasp of the subject being discussed?
- Was the language neutral, or slanted toward a particular “side” being addressed?