

Discussion Process – 24 October – Week 4

1. First round (~20 minutes)

- **Group 1** meets to ensure that all team members are comfortable reporting summary of reading
 - How do you talk about the importance of these concepts?
 - What are the underlying issues?
 - What key points do your classmates need to know?
- **Groups 1, 2, 3, 5** review blog posts of Group 1 members – where reading summaries have already been posted (we can process more information in 60 seconds with our eyes than with our ears!)

2. Second round (~20 minutes)

- **Four new groups form**
 - There should be at least one member from team 1 in each group
- **Peer group 1 rep** -> share important points of primary/supplemental material
- Questions for presenters

3. Third round (~20 minutes)

- Group 1: How do we, as a society, decide to fund long-range research that may or may not “pay off” (aka “primary research”)? Develop at least two scenarios (questions, examples, etc) pro/con.
- Group 2, 3: Examine social forces – for example, the “national broadcast” radio/tv as a tool for unifying the nation versus today’s electronic niches. What trends do you foresee? How might government regulation affect these trends? Relate, if relevant, to Postman or Bush.
- Group 4: Discuss the effects of applying computing power to communication. Which influences do you find particularly fascinating? How has the audience changed? Relate, if relevant, to Postman or Bush.

4. Report Out / General Discussion (~20 minutes)

Types of summarizing/facilitating comments:

- Objective: I heard Molly make these points. What other points did you hear?
- Reflective: What’s exciting about Molly’s comment is ... What worries me is ... What other reactions do people have?
- Interpretive: Some of the implications of Molly’s thesis could ... What are other implications?
- Decisional: I hear a clear consensus that ... What decision do you hear us making?

Adapted from *The Art of Focused Conversation*

Group roles from earlier handout:

There are many roles to be played in small groups, and most are shared roles:

- Devil’s Advocate/Skeptic – looks for logical flaws in argument or takes an opposing view for the sake of full discussion
- Gatekeeper – ensures that each member of the group provides input (has a voice in the discussion)
- Initiator – suggests new ideas
- Recorder – maintains the record; may be “minutes” format or highlights of consensus points
- Reporter – the person who shares results with the entire class
- Summarizer – the person who summarizes points of a discussion, including consensus and dissent
- Time-Keeper – the person who keeps an eye on the clock