CLSK – Winter 2015-16

Reading Discussion Groups

One of the most important projects you will do this term is the Reading Discussion Group. The reading discussion group is similar to a seminar class, where a group discussion is led by one or two other members. This type of class is common in American universities, especially in upper-level courses.

During a reading discussion, students do most of the talking instead of the professor. Professors value this kind of class because it encourages students to think critically and develop a deeper understanding of the topic they are studying.

A different pair of students in this class will lead a reading discussion group together once a week. These will usually take place on Fridays. This project will help you to improve many important skills: reading more critically, developing your discussion and debate skills, enhancing your ability to lead a discussion, etc. It will also give you the opportunity to explore a topic that is interesting to you.

DIRECTIONS: Each pair will sign up to lead a 30-minute discussion on an article of your choice. Please follow these steps carefully.

DISCUSSION LEADERS:

1. Choose three articles that you think would be interesting for your classmates to read. You must read ALL three. The article must be from a reputable newspaper, magazine, or journal. Sources like Wikipedia or blogs are **not** acceptable. Underline or highlight the most important information in each article. Choose articles that state a position, involve a controversial issue, and/or make an argument—these will be the best for promoting a lively discussion. **The articles should be about 1250-1750 words long**. Bring these articles to Ms. Hurdlik no later than the MONDAY before your discussion group.
2. After you and your instructor have selected an article, please put the article into Word format and **number each paragraph**. Email a copy of the article to Ms. Hurdlik no later than noon (12 p.m.) on the Tuesday before your discussion group.
3. Read your own article carefully and then create your discussion outline at home including questions and vocabulary. (See “discussion outline” form.)
4. Meet with Ms. Hurdlik no later than the Wednesday before your discussion group. You must bring your completed outline, questions, vocabulary list, etc.
5. **Practice with an ESL peer tutor**. You should practice presenting the key points, explaining the vocabulary words, etc. Make sure that you can pronounce the vocabulary words perfectly!
6. On Friday, you will present the main points of your article, explain vocabulary, and lead a discussion. You must also turn in a complete and grammatically correct copy of your outline including the key points, questions, and vocabulary.
7. IMPORTANT: Both discussion leaders must participate equally in this presentation. How you divide the duties is your decision.

DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS:

1. Read the article carefully and completely before the due date.
2. You will receive a participation grade for the reading discussions. You should be prepared to talk about the topic, answer questions, give your opinion, and possibly take a pop quiz on the article.

TIMELINE

MONDAY: Bring 3 highlighted articles to your instructor.

TUESDAY: Email a copy of the article as a Word document to your instructor by noon. All paragraphs must be numbered.

WEDNESDAY: Meet with your instructor to discuss your summary, discussion questions, and vocabulary list.

TUES, WED **or** THURS: Meet with an ESL peer tutor to practice your presentation.

FRIDAY: Give a short presentation and lead a discussion on the article. Give your

instructor a complete and grammatically-correct copy of your outline form (including key points, questions, and vocabulary.)

**Note**: If your discussion is not on a Friday, please adjust the days accordingly. For example, if your reading discussion is on a Monday, you should bring the articles to your instructor no later than the previous Wednesday. Please talk to your instructor to confirm deadlines.