

ESSAY TOPIC GROUPS: A HANDOUT FOR STUDENTS

****YOU WILL HAVE ABOUT 35-40 MINS FOR THIS EXERCISE.**

****ASK ONE PERSON IN YOUR GROUP TO MONITOR THE TIME.**

1. Identify the two positions on the topic that your essay question addresses. (5 mins)

2. Do a round. Each person should share the point of view that she intends to argue in her essay. (5 mins)

3. Structure a debate:

- i) Divide the group into two, each small group representing ONE of the two positions. In choosing a group, it doesn't matter what your own position is. In fact, it would be a better learning experience to try to defend the position you do not agree with.

- ii) Working separately, each small group should list all the arguments in favour of the position it is representing. (5 mins)

- iii) Come back together as a whole group. One small group should start by presenting one argument. The other group should respond to it. Then the second group should present an argument and the first group respond. Continue until you have exhausted your arguments. (10 mins)

4. Revisit your point of view. Do another round. (10 mins)

Each person should

- i) comment on whether the exercise shifted her point of view in any way; and

- ii) identify the most important insight she had from the discussion.